

Fake Leather...

Don't pay more for less



ARUSTIC

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Why choose leather?

The benefits of choosing leather are many. Leather is rich and strong, yet supple and luxurious. It is a tactile material and evokes a certain warmth and romanticism to it. I remember showing a friend an image of an Arustic bag and immediately she started gushing about how it brought back memories of her grandparent's house, the kind of furniture that they had and how there was a certain quality, longevity to things and how back then things were built to last.



(Above) Areni-1 shoe that was made in Armenia around 3500 BCE

In a nutshell she had described some of the benefits of leather and inspired me to share them too.

The benefits of leather

Durability: Leather has been used by humankind to make accessories and clothing for centuries, the oldest known piece of leather footwear is the Areni-1 shoe that was made in Armenia around 3500 BCE. Almost every culture and era utilised this material because they knew that leather was durable, strong and comfortable, these properties make leather ideal to protect both the body and goods.

Unique: No other material can match the uniqueness of natural leather. No two hides are the same, so no two bags will be the same. In the hands of our experienced Artisans the unique markings and features of the leather are enhanced. Your leather bag is as unique as you.

Beauty: Beauty is often said to be in the eye of the beholder. While there is no doubt about the visual appeal of leather, it is also true to say the beauty of leather is in the hands of the beholder. Leather appeals to the senses; you want to touch it, over, time that handling of the leather develops the patina which enhances the beauty of the leather.

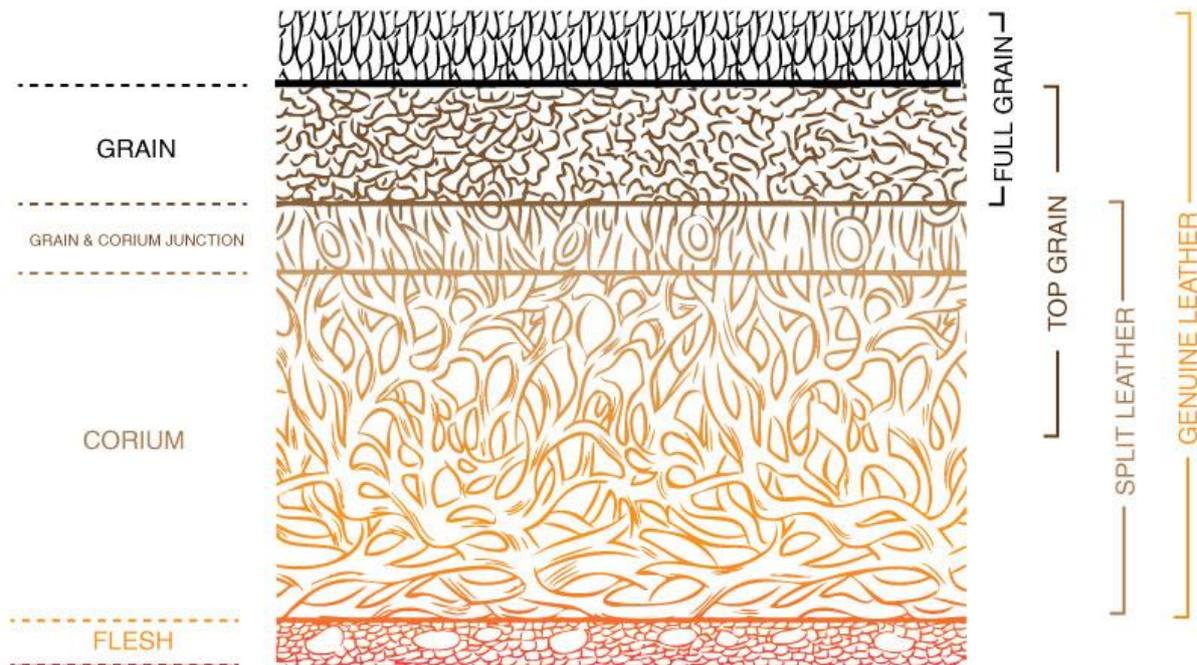
Scent: leather has a distinctive musky scent. It can be an overpowering smell when the leather is new but it is a huge part of its make-up, so much so that you can use it as test of whether something is made of leather or not.

Timeless: Leather is a timeless material and has and will remain forever fashionable. No other material used to make bags can match the sophisticated and stylish look that a leather bag offers. A bag is often a statement piece. Someone may not mind a cheap garment but if they can afford it, would love an expensive bag. Whether it is a natural colour or dyed leather, it will always add a certain degree of class.

Not all Leathers are created equal.....

The types of leather

Full-grain leather encompasses the entire grain of hide. No surface alterations or splitting takes place therefore the leather retains the little imperfections and inherent toughness. It's widely recognized as the best and highest-quality leather money can buy. It will develop a patina over time which attributes to its popularity. Often much more expensive, full-grain pays dividends with its durability.



Top-grain leather, not to be confused with full-grain leather is the grade of leather you will find in "fine" leather goods such as handbags. It is made by splitting a piece of full-grain leather and sanding away any imperfections in the hide. Top grain is the second highest grade of leather. Pigmentation or staining not only gives the leather an attractive appearance but also makes it smoother and more flexible to work with than full grain.



Corrected Grain (Bottom Cut/Split) Leather

Corrected grain leather, also known as genuine leather, is produced using the skin layers that remain after the top is split off. Just like the top grain leather, it is also sanded to remove natural imperfections. Usually, the surface is spray painted and embossed with a leather-like pattern to resemble natural appearance. However, the processing alters the inherent breathability of the leather.

Bonded Leather

Bonded leather combines the leftovers of the hide, including the dust and shavings with polyurethane or latex. Since it is only bits of leather glued together, it begins to break down with continued use.

Faux leather

Faux leather is one of several names given to artificial or synthetic leather. Faux leather is made from a fabric base, which is chemically treated with wax, dye, or polyurethane for a color and texture. Ultimately, it is manmade and exists to give the look and feel of real leather at an exceptionally lower cost.

Faux leather is not made to last, it does not last nearly as long as real leather, and unfortunately when it begins to wear out, it does not wear out attractively.

6 ways to distinguish whether your bag is made from leather

1. It may seem obvious but always check the label, (if there is one.) If it is labelled as 'manmade material,' it is definitely synthetic/artificial/faux leather. Manufacturers of leather are usually quite proud and want you to know they have used leather.



2. Check the surface grain. Imperfections are an integral part of leather. You should notice little pebbles and pores, little blemishes and uniqueness that signal leather. If these are absent it is likely that the product is a machine made piece
3. Press into the leather, looking for creases and wrinkles. Real leather products will appear very similar to when you press your own skin down.
4. Smell the leather, searching for a natural, musty smell. Remember it is a piece of animal skin, if it has a chemical or plastic sent it is not real leather.
5. Note the edges, real leather has rough edges whereas faux leather has even, perfect edges.
6. Drop a tiny amount of water on the leather. If it is leather, it will absorb a small drop of moisture quite quickly.

This was compiled by Arustic:

Arustic is a socially conscious fashion brand with empowerment at its heart, with the sale of each bag helps to empower people to alleviate poverty.

Arustic bags are handmade in Africa by highly skilled artisans using only the highest quality leather. When you purchase an Arustic bag, you get the beauty and skill of African workmanship amalgamated with quality, practicality and sophistication costing no more than a similar faux leather bag.

How your purchase makes an impact



Eradicating child labour



Investing in education



Empowering families and communities