PALLISER®
My Home, My Style, My Way™

PALLISER LEATHER 101

EXCLUSIVES & ESSENTIALS





LEATHER IS MORE THAN JUST THE AESTHETIC BEAUTY OF A NATURAL, UNIQUE PRODUCT.

IT'S ABOUT HAVING FURNITURE THAT REFLECTS THE STORY OF YOUR LIFE.

Leather is the choice you make when you welcome timeless, luxurious pieces into the heart of your home.

The rich history of each hide is an unsheltered one that results in natural scars, marks and imperfections. With leather you get so much more than just a cover for your furniture, you get a story that is as distinct as a fingerprint. This is one of the traits that makes owning leather so special.

When leather is dyed, it captures the colour based on the hide's individual cell structure. Each area of the hide will absorb dye in varying amounts making it darker or lighter than other areas. When the cushions on a leather sofa are slightly different shades than the back or arms, it simply means that the pieces were cut from a different area of the hide.

No man-made material can compare with the beauty of genuine leather. The inherent advantages of leather, as well as the range of grades and colours available, make leather furniture suitable for every lifestyle.

Unique, natural surface markings ensure every leather sofa is as interesting as it is individual. They're also found only on genuine leather…and top quality genuine leather at that.



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE GRAIN

Strong, supple, and in sync with our body temperature, top grain leather is always the top choice for leather furniture. But anyone shopping for leather furniture quickly learns that there's more to top grain leather than its location on the hide. A range of lifestyles and budgets have spawned many types of top grain leathers, or grades.

The easiest way to navigate the market's many choices is to remember that leather's authenticity, price, performance, texture and even colour all come down to the question of grain. Is it natural, corrected, or somewhere in between?

NATURAL (FULL) LEATHER GRAIN

The top of the top-grain selection is uncorrected or natural, full grain leather. These premium hides are the real deal – fully authentic because they retain all the natural textures and markings of the cowhide, with no imperfections changed or corrected. Only five percent of all upholstery hides rank in this elite status.

Full grain leathers are coloured with clear (aniline) or semi-clear (semi-aniline) dyes to highlight, rather than cover, their natural grain and markings. But with little or no opaque pigment in these dyes, each individual cell on the hide will absorb colour in its own way. Similar to the colour variation that occurs when a wood grain is stained, full grained leathers are fully unique, emphasizing leather's natural, one-of-a-kind quality.

CORRECTED LEATHER GRAIN

Most top grain leather is partly or fully corrected. These hides retain the quality, thickness, strength and supple feel of their top grain, but arrive at tanneries with too many unwanted blemishes. Some hides are gently buffed to even out the grain; others are sanded to remove unwanted markings and then embossed with a uniform grain pattern.

Many levels of corrected leathers exist, from slightly to heavily altered, depending on the original condition of the hide. Partly corrected hides look and feel more natural than fully corrected hides. And like full grain leather, their more natural graining, which is often not uniform in appearance, can make them more costly.

Partly corrected hides can be coloured with semi-clear (semi-aniline) dyes. But fully corrected hides are dyed with opaque pigments to help cover any unwanted natural markings.

Split leather is always fully corrected and dyed with opaque pigments. As the bottom layer of a hide that's been spliced, split leathers lack the natural graining of top grain leather, so they benefit from grain embossing and solid colour pigments. Split leathers are usually applied to the outside arms and back of leather furniture as a complement to top grain leathers which are located on the seats, inside backs and arms – basically everywhere your body touches.

Leather correction doesn't affect leather's durability in any way. Though natural grains are altered for greater uniformity, corrected leathers are extremely durable and can be more suitable to active lifestyles than uncorrected, full grain leathers.

SIGNS OF GENUINE LEATHER

Over time, a cow's hide, or surface grain, is subject to the varied markings of branding, veins, scars, wrinkles and bites. All are beautifully natural, authentic and integral to its hide. All are unique to leather… and a sign that it's genuine.

Look for any one or more of these natural markings on leather furniture.



BRANDING MARKS

Found on virtually every hide, a brand mark varies from a letter or a number to a shape or image, and are usually one of the largest natural markings.

If brand marks are smooth and add to the character of the leather, they will be placed on the sides or outside backs of leather furniture.



VEINS

A cow's blood vessels appear as irregular, marble-like veins on a hide. Usually more visible in the neck and across the backbone, veins are often more prominent in older cows, and can also reflect the cow's climate. In cold weather, veins contract to reduce heat loss through the skin. In warm weather, veins expand to increase it. You will find these in any position on leather furniture.

Given that veins are closer to the underside of the cow's hide, they appear most commonly in split leathers.



SCRATCHES & SCARS

While deep and unhealed scars are cut out of the hide, thin surface scratches are part of the natural characteristic of leather. Healed scars are as strong as the rest of the hide. Healed scratches and scars can appear in any position on leather furniture.

SIGNS OF GENUINE LEATHER CONTINUED...



WRINKLES, STRETCH MARKS AND CREASES

Wrinkles occur naturally wherever loose skin is located on the hide. They are typically found in the neck and shoulder, and can be common in belly areas. Wrinkles and stretch marks are typically placed on the sides and back of leather furniture.

Mild creases may appear anywhere on the piece.



BITES AND PIN HOLES

Mosquitoes, ticks, flies and parasites all take their pound of cow flesh, leaving behind small circular marks or tiny holes on a cow's hide. Bites are a common occurrence on hides and leather furniture, but mostly innocuous and typically small. Bites and pin holes can appear anywhere on leather furniture.



BELLY

As each hide takes on the characteristics of the cow it comes from, the natural belly stretches and markings will appear. These are generally located along the edges of the hide where the leather is loose, stretchy, and the surface has a 'bubbly' appearance.

LEATHER CHARACTERISTICS AND REACTIONS WITH USE ON UPHOLSTERED FURNITURE

Leather is a natural skin, even when upholstered on furniture. It has limited elasticity and will soften and relax as you sit in it and with use. All leathers will stretch and in most cases they will not return to their original shape. This is a natural characteristic of genuine leather and is not a defect – it actually will become even more relaxed and loose over time. This does not affect the wear of the leather but does increase the comfort!

Here are some examples of top grain leather upholstered on furniture, relaxing with use:





LEATHER GLOSSARY

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Aniline	A process of colouring the hide in a drum that penetrates the leathers throughout using transparent aniline dyes.
Bi Cast	Application of polyurethane surface coating on a split or top grain leather.
Base Coat	Colour that is applied to the crust colour to achieve the final colour of the protected aniline.
Buffed or Polished	Top grain leather that has been mechanically sanded to remove surface imperfections.
Chromium Tanning	Upholstery leather which has been tanned with chromium salts. This method makes the hide flexible and supple.
Crocking	The rubbing off of surface substances or colour onto another material. Commonly referred to as dye transfer.
Crust	The raw hide that has been tanned and dyed, but has not yet been completely finished.
Colour Fastness	Colour Fastness to light is a measure of how permanent a colour is on leather after exposure to light.
Corrected Grain	Outside skin is processed and sandpapered to minimize flaws and then pigmented and embossed.
Distressed	Process used to create an effect resembling a worn look or an aged appearance. Techniques used to create this effect include tumbling the hides with abrasive items in order to scratch the leather's surface.
Drum Dyed	A dyeing process in which leather is immersed in dyes and tumbled in a rotating drum allowing maximum penetration.
Embossing	A process that alters the natural grain of the leather by using etching, engraving or electrotyped plates to create a very uniform grain pattern.
Fat Liquoring	Process of replacing oils that have been depleted from the hide during the tanning process.
Fat Wrinkle	Natural wrinkles in the leather's grain that are unique to each hide. Normally visible only in the full grain leathers. Common around the neck and shoulder areas of the hide.
Finishing	Any post-tanning treatment such as dyeing, rolling, spraying, antiquing, waxing, buffing, embossing, glazing.
Full Grain	Leather in which the hair has only been removed while the grain remains in it's original state.
Glazed Finish	The leather surface is polished to high luster.
Gloss Finish	Higher shine/sheen level finish usually with the enhanced texture added.
Grain	Pattern characterized by the pores that are unique to the animal. They are visible on the outer surface of a hide after the hair has been removed.
Hand	A term used to describe the softness or feel of leather when touched with your hand.
Hides	Skins from cattle for leather furniture.
Leather	All hides and skins that are tanned.
Liming	The chemical process of removing the hair from the raw hide.
Matte Finish	Low gloss finish usually with enhanced texture added.
Milling/Tumbling	A process in which hides are tumbled in rotating drum to soften the hand or enhance the grain.

LEATHER GLOSSARY

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Naked Leather	Tanned, aniline dyed leather that has no protective top coat. Commonly referred to as pure aniline.
Natural Grain	Leather which the grain has not been altered in any way. The natural appearance of the grain is predominant showing visibly healed scares, fat wrinkles, insect bites, etc.
Nubuck	Top grain, aniline dyed leather that has been buffed to create a "suede like" nap effect.
Patina	A luster that develops with time and use.
Pigmented	Leather surface that is coated with colour pigments.
Pull-up	When leather is pulled, the oils or the waxes in the leather cause the colour to dissipate and become lighter.
Pure Aniline	A leather that is drum dyed but has little or no protected top coating to prevent it from cracking, staining or crocking.
Sauvage	A two toned effect utilizing two different colours of dye which adds depth and character to the leather.
Semi Aniline	Leather that has been aniline dyed throughout then protected by a clear or pigmented finish coating thus creating a more consistent colour than pure aniline leathers. Natural markings may be visible with some semi-aniline leathers.
Split	The middle or bottom layer of the hide. Split leathers are used in areas that are not under any stress, as backs or sides of sofa. Embossed to create a very uniform grain pattern.
Split Grain	The underneath layer of a hide which has been "split" off when the top grain is separated. If finished, the split is heavily embossed and surface treated.
Suede	Leather produced from the underneath layer/lower split of a hide processing a velvet-like nap effect. Suede does not have same durable characteristics as a top grain leathers.
Tanning	The process of turning raw hides into leather.
Top Grain	Top part of the skin or hide. The grain may be either full grain or embossed grain. The top grain of the hide is stronger and more flexible.
Wet Blue	Refers to the "blue" colour and appearance created by the chromium tanning process.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

DO NATURAL MARKINGS WEAKEN LEATHER?

Not in the least. Natural markings won't reduce the strength or performance of leather if skin damage is fully healed. If markings aren't healed, or if they compromise the hide's durability, we won't use them.

WHERE ARE NATURAL MARKINGS FOUND ON LEATHER FURNITURE?

Leather hides are carefully examined in our factory, with leather-cutting experts determining where each part of a hide should be placed. The front of upholstered furniture is typically kept more uniform, with just small or subtle natural markings. But the back, sides and under-cushion areas offer opportunity to include more unique markings.

CAN THE COLOUR OF LEATHER AFFECT HOW VISIBLE NATURAL MARKINGS ARE?

Yes. Dark colours tend to show fewer natural markings; light colours bring them out.

Leather finish, or method of dyeing, also affects the visibility of markings. Opaque (pigmented) finishes will conceal more of the natural grains and markings, while clear (aniline) finishes will highlight them. This is another reason aniline leathers are more costly; the dyeing process needs to thoroughly saturate the depth of natural veins, wrinkles and scars.

ARE MARKINGS FOUND ON EVERY PIECE OF LEATHER FURNITURE?

There are markings on every piece of leather that is used on upholstered furniture. Depending upon the finishing process of the leather will determine how visible it is. Natural, full grain leather will show multiple markings while corrected grain leather will be a bit harder to see.

DO A LOT OF MARKINGS MEAN IT'S A CHEAPER HIDE? ISN'T THIS JUST A WAY FOR FACTORIES TO SAVE MONEY?

Quite the opposite, actually. Few natural markings are found on low-cost leathers. Most cow hides have too many undesirable markings, and need to be partly or completely 'corrected'. The uniform, embossed grain on these lower-priced hides also creates less waste on the cutting table, yielding a lower price for the final product.

Natural markings, on the other hand, are a hallmark of the costliest leathers. Very few hides can be used in their natural, uncorrected condition, making them extremely valuable. Furniture made with uncorrected (or partly corrected) leather also requires more time in the factory. Experts need to determine which natural marks to use and where to place them on the furniture… all while ensuring consistent colouring and consistent direction of wrinkles and veins.

IF I WANT A LOT OF NATURAL MARKINGS ON MY LEATHER FURNITURE, CAN I ORDER IT THAT WAY?

The only way to ensure prominent natural markings is by choosing full grain or aniline-dyed leathers, or to a lesser degree, partly-corrected or semi-aniline dyed leathers. You can also add character to leather simply by using it. As a natural product, leather gets better over time, developing a warm patina along with natural wrinkles and a bit of stretching as you live in your furniture.

WHAT IF I DON'T WANT NATURAL MARKINGS ON MY LEATHER, BUT STILL WANT TOP QUALITY LEATHER?

All top-grain leathers offer good quality, but the best quality leather for each person is what's best suited to their lifestyle and preference. If a more uniform leather appearance is preferred, choose partly corrected leather in dark colours, or fully corrected top grain leathers with more pigment applied to cover some of the natural markings.

WHAT IS BONDED LEATHER? IS IT REALLY CONSIDERED A GENUINE LEATHER?

Bonded leather is a term used for an upholstery material made as a layered structure with a center core fabric (usually polyester) for strength, a backing layer of shredded leather fibres and a polyurethane coating on the top that is embossed with a leather-like texture. It is NOT genuine leather. It does not have the same properties as leather and should not be represented as such.

LEATHER CLEANING CARE

PIGMENTED, SEMI – ANILINE LEATHERS

To keep your leather looking beautiful for a long time to come please follow these instructions:

Leather should be cleaned often. Frequent and gentle cleaning is easier on leather versus less frequent, more aggressive cleaning. Cleaning will remove dust, dirt, and perspiration. We recommend that you first wipe off any dust, paying special attention to those areas where particles will collect, such as the area between the seat and the cushions.

Clean pigmented and semi-aniline leather should be cleaned with a mild soap and water solution (a mild soap will have a neutral pH so it is not harsh on your skin and therefore not harsh on the leather). For general cleaning, use a weak solution of soap; 3 – 4 drops of soap per liter of water. Use a slightly higher concentration to remove more excessive dirt. Always wipe off any residual soap solution from the leather with a clean, damp cloth. It is important that you do not saturate the leather. Always test the soap solution in an unseen area of the sofa to ensure the solution does not damage the leather.

Conditioning is not necessary. Cleaning to remove skin oils is the best prevention to any deterioration of the leather. The use of any conditioners or treatments on your furniture will void the manufacturer's warranty.

Some other important things to keep in mind:

- Special attention should be given when cleaning the areas where there is more skin contact with the leather
- Hair products and skin oils will chemically attack the finish on the leather.
- Exposure to sun and/or extreme light sources will cause fading and potential damage.
- Dark jeans and other clothing have a high risk of dye transfer onto the leather, especially when the leather is lighter in colour.
- Sharp objects will easily puncture and cut into leather.

COVER CARE – NATURAL AND FULL ANILINE

Leather should be cleaned often. Frequent and gentle cleaning is easier on leather over less frequent, more aggressive cleaning. Cleaning will remove dust, dirt, and perspiration. We recommend that you first vacuum off any dust, paying special attention to those areas where particles will collect, such as the area between the seat and the cushions.

Clean aniline leathers only using a slightly damp cloth and then immediately wipe with a dry cloth. Do not use any type of soap on aniline leathers. It is important that you do not saturate the leather.

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CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR LEATHER PURCHASE!

ENJOY MANY YEARS OF COMFORT AS YOUR LEATHER FURNITURE ADAPTS TO YOUR EVER CHANGING LIFESTYLE.

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