



Townsend's

Glossary of Terms

- **Aniline-Dyed**: Leather that is colored all the way through with a transparent dye. The effect is applied by immersing the leather in a dye bath. Because the finish is transparent and shows the natural markings of the leather, only the best quality hides can be used.
- **Antiqued**: Leather that is dyed with one color over another (usually darker over lighter) so as to create rich highlights and an artificial aged appearance. Also called distressed leather.
- **Buffed Leather**: Leather from which the enamel surface has been removed by abrasion. Often known as nubuck.
- **Combination Tannage**: Leathers tanned with more than one tanning agent, such as chrome and vegetable together, resulting in both softness and body in skins.
- **Corrected Grain**: Leather that has been buffed to remove blemishes, then embossed with a new, artificial grain created using pigments and other finishes.
- **Crocking**: Removing the crock, or excess coloring, that rubs off of a newly-dyed hide.
- **Crust**: Leather which has been tanned (treated to become nonperishable) but not colored or otherwise finished.
- **Distressed**: Another term for antiqued leather. Distressed leather is coated with a wax finish and then milled in order to create a worn, natural appearance. Due to its genuine look, each hide will have its own unique color variation
- **Drum Dying**: The process of coloring leather by tumbling it in a rotating drum immersed in dye. A very effective method allowing maximum dye penetration.
- **Embossed Leather**: Leather that has been "stamped" with a design or artificial texture under very high pressure. Used, for example, to create imitation alligator hide.
- **Enhanced Grain**: Leather that has been embossed with an artificial texture to imitate a natural grain.
- **Fat Wrinkle**: Wrinkles in the grain of leather caused by fat deposits in the animal that create beauty in the leather. Fat wrinkles are not visible in imitation grain leather.

- **Finish**: Any enhancing effect applied to leather after it has been tanned. Examples are dyeing, embossing, buffing, antiquing, waxing, waterproofing, and so on.
- **Full-Grain Leather**: Leather which has not been altered beyond hair removal. Full grain leather is the most genuine type of leather, as it retains all of the original texture and markings of the original hide.
- **Gaufrage**: a unique embossing process that creates upholstery leather of exceptional softness and beauty. The design impression is transferred to the leather by an engraved roller under high heat and low pressure for a soft natural hand without pattern match lines.
- **Glazed Leather**: Aniline-dyed leather which has been polished to a high luster by passing through glass or steel rollers under great pressure.
- **Grain**: A word used to describe the natural characteristics of an unprocessed hide, such as its pores, wrinkles, markings, and texture.
- **Grain (Leather)**: The outside of the hide or skin consisting of the pores, wrinkles and other characteristics which constitute the natural texture of the leather.
- **Grain Character**: The natural markings on the surface of the leather.
- **Hand**: A word used to describe the feel (i.e. softness or fullness) of leather, typically upholstery leather.
- **Handiwork / Hand Antique**: Leather that is finished with one color over another so as to create rich highlights and an artificial aged appearance. This is done by hand, either wiping a darker color on over a lighter base color or wiping the dark color off.
- **Matte Finish**: A flat or dull finish.
- **Naked Leather**: Leather that is aniline-dyed but has no additional finish which might mask or alter the natural state of the leather.
- **Nap**: Describes the soft, "fuzzy" effect achieved in leather by buffing or brushing.
- **Natural Grain**: A leather that displays its original grain.
- **Nubuck**: A leather whose surface has been buffed and brushed to create a soft, velvety effect. Differs from suede in that while suede is created from the flesh (inner) side of a hide, nubuck is created using the grain (outer) side, giving it added strength and durability.

- **Oil Tanned**: Leather that is tanned using oils to create a very soft, pliable finish.
- **Patina**: The aura or luster that develops in a quality piece of leather with age.
- **Pearl / Pearl Crust**: Leather which has been chrome tanned but not dyed or otherwise finished. Chromium salts cause the tanned hides to be light blue (pearl) in color.
- **Perforated**: Leather in which a pattern of small holes is stamped using a die.
- **Pigmented Leather**: Leather that has been coated with a flat surface color on top of or instead of the usual dye finish. Leather is usually pigmented to add durability and hide natural blemishes.
- **Plating**: The process of pressing leather under a heated plate. Often used in upholstery leather to mask imperfections.
- **Pull-up**: Describes the behavior of leather that has been treated with oils, waxes, and dyes in such a way that when the leather is pulled or stretched (i.e. on upholstery), the finish becomes lighter in the stretched areas. Considered a mark of high quality.
- **Retan**: A modifying secondary tannage applied after intermediate operations following the primary tanning.
- **Semi-Aniline**: Aniline leather to which a matching pigment layer is added to even out the color and add protection.
- **Side Leather**: Leather made from one half, or "side", of a full hide. Typically refers to leather whose top grain (outermost layer) has been left intact.
- **Skive**: To shave, slice or divide, to peel into a thin layer.
- **Split Leather**: Leather made from the lower (inner or flesh side) layers of a hide that have been split away from the upper, or grain, layers. Split leather is more fragile than side leather or full-grain leather, and is typically used in the form of suede.
- **Suede**: Split leather that has been buffed and brushed to create a fuzzy surface feel.
- **Top Grain**: Leather whose top (outermost) layers have been left intact, in contrast to split leather.

- **Two-tone / Tone-On-Tone**: An effect created by applying layers of similar or contrasting dyes to a piece of leather in order to create a mottled or aged appearance. Antiqued and Sauvaged leathers are examples of two-tone leathers.
- **Upholstery Leather**: Leather created from a whole hide and intended for use in furniture, automobiles, airplanes, and other upholstery applications.
- **Weight**: A term which describes the heaviness or thickness of leather. Typically given in ounces per square foot or millimeters (thickness).
- **Whole Hide**: Refers to leather created using a full hide, as opposed to a side, and typically intended for use as upholstery leather.