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Leather Craft

By Jake Berlin

Preparing For a Leather Craft Project

Once you've decided on your leather craft project, you'll need the right tools and room to do the work. Being prepared ahead of time will make your task more enjoyable and give you a sense of satisfaction when you're done. If you're like most of us you'll probably be working on more leather craft projects over time, so creating a designated area is probably a good idea.

What to Cut On

Regardless of the project, you'll need to cut your piece of leather. Choose a flat surface protected with a rubber mat. The latter will help protect your tools and prevent them from becoming blunt. Alternatively, you can purchase a self-healing cutting board that comes with a grid work. Any cuts made in the board seal up. This product is readily available at such shops as Staples.

Marking the Cut

Use a ruler or yardstick and a pencil to mark the cut. Just make a light mark with the pencil. A rounded edge will help if you're cutting a curve. Then place a metal straight edge along the line you have drawn. Using the tip of an X-acto knife, cut along the line, keeping the knife against the metal edge

Trimming the Edges

If you want to trim the edges of the leather, lay the piece out on a flat surface. Make sure the leather is damp, and keep it so by using a spray bottle full of water.

You'll need what's called an edge beveling tool to smooth the cut edges. The two prongs that form its V shape need to be positioned so that they are facing upward on both sides of the edge.

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Keeping the tool at a 45 degree angle, with your index finger on the top of the tool, push it away from you along the cut edge, holding the leather craft piece firmly with your other hand.

As you work, small strips of leather will come off. It's a good idea to practice on small scraps of leather before using the leather craft beveller, so you feel comfortable with it and what it can do.

Tools to Use

- * Cutting board, preferably self-healing kind
- * Ruler, pencil, metal straight edge, rounded edge
- * X-acto knife
- * Leather craft edge beveling tool

Summary

- * Use a cutting board
- * Mark where you want to cut before you cut!
- * Dampen the leather when trimming the edges
- * Butt the knife against a straight edge or a curved edge for more control

More on Tools

For working in leather crafts, consider the basics: an awl and spare point, a retractable X-acto knife and spare blades, a retractable knife with a break-off blade and a rotary punch.

In addition, you'll need needles, a lump of beeswax and some waxed linen thread. As well, a pair of pliers to pull the needle through the leather is a must, and scissors you can use for cutting the leather.

Then there are edge slickers and bevellers that are used to finish the edges, drive punches for bigger holes and thong cutters for making laces. A T-square, compass and yardstick are essential to ensure that your leather craft piece is measured accurately.

If you're just starting out with leather crafts, you might not want to spend a lot of money on tools. Once you've worked with the basic set and completed a few leather craft projects, you'll have a better idea of what tools work best and what you use most.

At that point, a little research and some comparative shopping can lead you to acquiring better quality leather craft tools that will enhance your work. Of course, even the most expensive tools won't help if you haven't taken the time to develop and perfect your skills.

If you do your very best with what you have, it doesn't matter if you can't afford the most expensive leather craft awl or the latest knife. Quality will show anyway.

Summary

* Start with a basic leather craft tool set

* Buy better quality tools once you've completed some projects and have a better idea of what will enhance the quality of your work

*** Hey! Need To Know More About Leather? ***

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Leather Handbags

By Amanda Pavis

There's no such thing as too many leather bags. Because of their durable fabric, and how wear-and-tear actually add texture and actually make them look better, leather bags are the ideal for "everyday" use—perfect for everything from work to the church cake bake.

In fact, if you're going to spend thousands of pounds on a designer bag, then get classic brown or black leather bags. It's the best, and most practical, fashion investment you can make.

Leather bags come in many shapes, colors and styles. Aside from the basic black and brown leather bags, you can also find dyed leather bags in every shade from baby pink to a bright lime green. These "trendier" leather bags are great for adding a little spice and style to the standard suit.

Designers are also injecting a lot of playfulness into their lines of leather bags, by incorporating other fabrics and unusual accents.

You'll see leather bags with Swarovski crystals and metal studs, leather bags with faux fur trim, leather bags with fine Indian embroidery, leather bags with jewel-encrusted buckles.

Designers are also developing new shapes, including 2005's hobo bag and messenger bag. This indicates that leather bags, while classic, can still be very, very "now."

How can you distinguish authentic leather bags from fakes? The smell. Genuine leather has a distinct aroma that faux leather just can't fake.

Quality leather bags should also be free of any scratches, scuffmarks or fine lines.

Leather bags will last you a lifetime if you take care of it properly. Don't store leather bags in damp,

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dark places as the material will crack and flake (and periodically take the leather bags out to aerate them).

Leather bags should be wrapped in soft tissue before storage to avoid scratches.

If stained, leather bags should be brought to the drycleaner's—don't submerge in the wash, as leather bags take a while to dry and can get moldy!

If you're a working woman, ideally you should own at least 4 types of leather bags: structured leather bags (like a purse or shoulder bag) for the office, larger leather bags for travel, and rectangular leather bags for documents and files.

Amanda,s Comments are for the best information visit the

<http://www.handbag-s.com>

website for an

insight, into my elite and exclusive publication with revealing information, on how to buy wholesale handbags direct. Also for tips, hints and news visit

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