

a guide to
Fine Leather



Flexsteel[®]
America's Seating Specialist



natural variation &
shading

natural texture
the hallmarks of premium leather

Premium leather hides used for upholstering furniture exhibit slightly non-uniform surface qualities, depending on the area of the hide from which they were cut. Pigment-dyed leathers are buffed and embossed to obscure these natural texture characteristics. Variations in texture are not flaws, and will not affect leather durability.

Common surface variations of full aniline and semi-aniline leather hides are shown below.



Scratches

Smooth to the touch, these rub marks may accept dye with slight variation to the surrounding area.



Wrinkles

Natural folds highlight unique grain patterns, creating one-of-a-kind upholstered furniture.



Healed Scars

Barbed-wire scratches and deeper rubs create organic surface texture and enhance distinctively authentic leather character. These marks do not affect the durability of the hide.

No two leather hides are exactly alike, because each has a different history. Many factors affect the look and texture of a leather hide, from climate, age and heredity to ranching methods.

A sofa covered in South American leather, for example, will not look the same as one covered in domestic leather, even if they are technically the same color, because hides from warm-climate cattle are thinner and do not absorb quite as much dye.

Furthermore, ranchers in some parts of the world use barbed wire fencing, while others do not. This affects the type of range marks the hide will exhibit.

Just as the individual planks of a natural oak floor are not identical, in terms of grain and color, the pieces of natural leather on your Flexsteel furniture will not always match perfectly. In general, the most valuable leather furniture will feature slightly differing color tones, along with range marks. This is because the rarest and finest hides start out so beautiful, they require the least amount of cosmetic work. When leather furniture shows only minimal natural scars and marks, the leather is not better; it has probably been corrected or buffed—treatments not needed on the very best hides.



Premium aniline-dyed leather displays subtle variations of color across the surface of the hide. When the hide is cut and sewn together on your sofa, care is taken to attempt to match adjacent pieces, but subtle color differences may occur (notice the banding of the arm shown at left).

These are not signs of poor quality; in fact, they highlight the unique and natural quality of premium leather, left unmasked by opaque dyes and varnishes.



caring for your
leather

Instructions for Care & Cleaning



Take care not to place your furniture too near a fireplace, stove or radiator. We recommend at least two feet of space between your furniture and the heat source to prevent excessive drying.



Protect your leather furniture from all forms of sunlight. All natural leathers (especially aniline and nubuck) will fade when placed in sunlight. Do not place your furniture near windows, under skylights or in direct sunlight.



Keep leather clean by dusting weekly with a soft, clean cloth or by vacuuming with a soft brush attachment.



Comfort wrinkles will naturally occur over time, as you settle into your leather furniture. To minimize wrinkles, fluff cushions regularly. Wrinkles are not considered damage, but part of the character fine leather develops over time.



Avoid using ink pens, nail polish, nail polish remover or other harmful household products near your leather furniture that might result in spills and cause permanent damage. Immediately attend to spills by blotting the area with a soft, clean cloth. Do not wipe or rub the spill, which may cause the stain to spread or penetrate the leather more deeply.

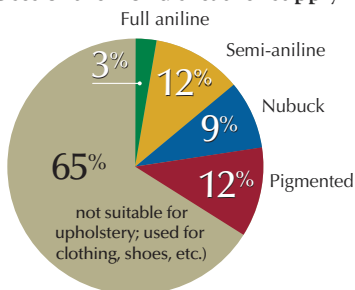
Avoid setting magazines or newspapers on your leather furniture. Ink may transfer onto the leather, causing permanent damage.

Take extra care with sharp instruments and pet's claws. Leather is stronger than fabric, but will puncture with force, causing need for a difficult repair.

Genuine top-grain leather is the world's finest type of leather. Aniline, semi-aniline and nubuck styles of top-grain leather will exhibit naturally occurring marks, such as barbed wire scars, wrinkles and healed scratches. These "hallmarks of the trail" are not flaws, but evidence of the unique beauty of premium leather.

Most hides cannot be used for furniture. That's one reason leather furniture is so valuable. Just three percent of the world's leather supply is appropriate for our finest leather; pure aniline-dyed.

Uses of the world's leather supply



- Like fine upholstery, genuine leather will fade if exposed to strong light.
- Leather can become permanently stained if food and liquid spills are not wiped off immediately.
- Body oils may stain leather, but will dissipate and blend over time to become part of the leather's unique patina.

extraordinary *craftsmanship*

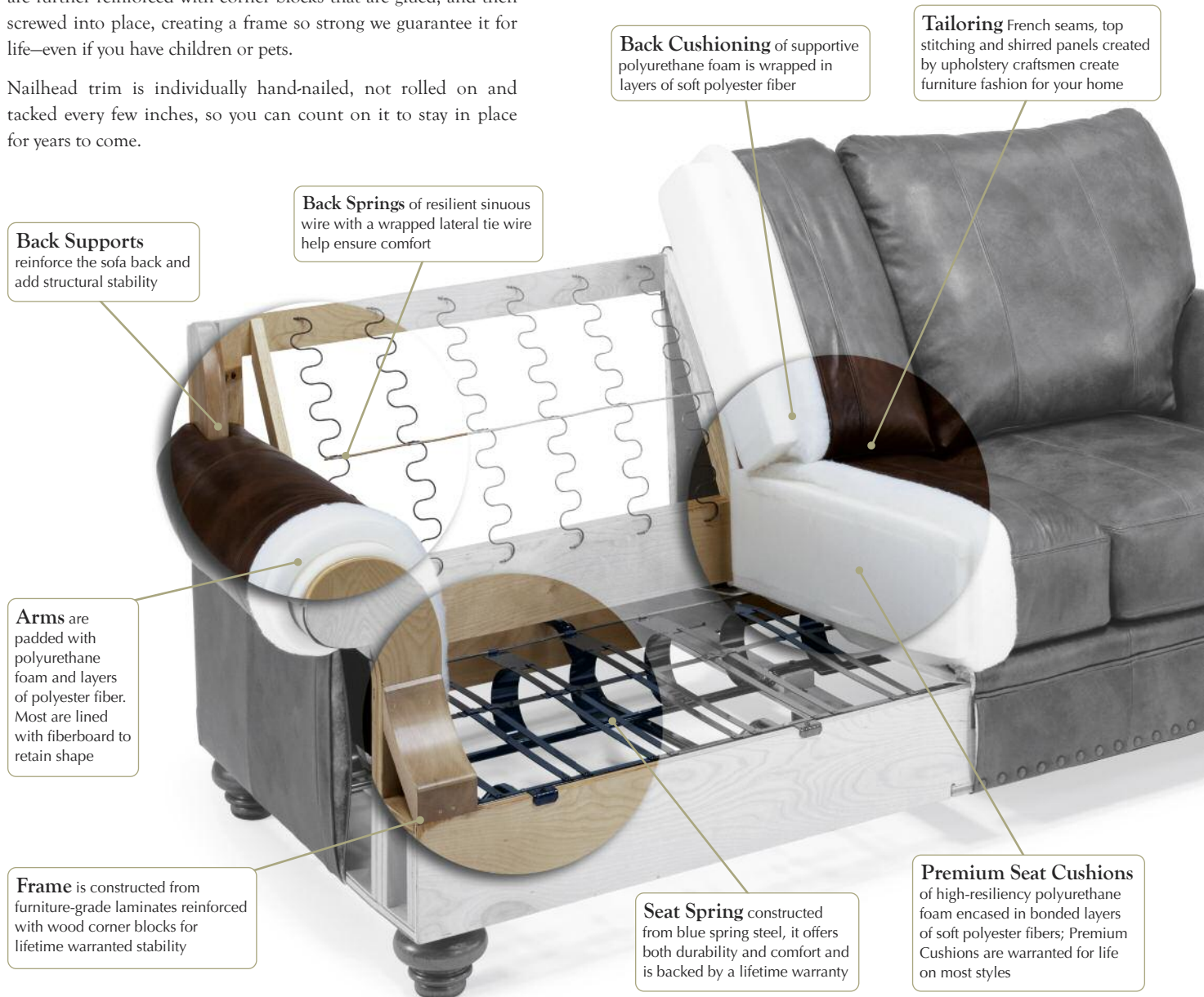
The smallest details have a tremendous impact on how your leather upholstered furniture looks... and lasts. Our highly experienced craftsmen take great care through every step of our manufacturing process to ensure your long-term comfort and satisfaction.

Incredibly strong frame construction features dado-cut, overlapping joints reinforced with additional hardwood blocks. All base rail joints are further reinforced with corner blocks that are glued, and then screwed into place, creating a frame so strong we guarantee it for life—even if you have children or pets.

Nailhead trim is individually hand-nailed, not rolled on and tacked every few inches, so you can count on it to stay in place for years to come.

Stylish options, such as contrasting pillows with fringe or braid and a variety of wood finishes, make it easy to express your personal style.

Detailed inspections are done after your furniture leaves the production line, so we have as much time as we need to make sure it lives up to our standards... and yours.



Back Supports reinforce the sofa back and add structural stability

Back Springs of resilient sinuous wire with a wrapped lateral tie wire help ensure comfort

Arms are padded with polyurethane foam and layers of polyester fiber. Most are lined with fiberboard to retain shape

Frame is constructed from furniture-grade laminates reinforced with wood corner blocks for lifetime warranted stability

Back Cushioning of supportive polyurethane foam is wrapped in layers of soft polyester fiber

Tailoring French seams, top stitching and shirred panels created by upholstery craftsmen create furniture fashion for your home

Seat Spring constructed from blue spring steel, it offers both durability and comfort and is backed by a lifetime warranty

Premium Seat Cushions of high-resiliency polyurethane foam encased in bonded layers of soft polyester fibers; Premium Cushions are warranted for life on most styles



the comforts of
hand crafting

Flexsteel is proud to offer you three choices in top-grain leather.

Each has distinctive qualities of appearance, comfort and maintenance, as well as price. Softer leathers may require more care to retain their beauty. If you have an active lifestyle with children and pets on the furniture, the very best leather may be the worst choice for you.



Full Aniline Leather:

- The finest leather available, always made from premium-quality, full top-grain hides (the surface of a full-grain hide has not been mechanically altered)
- The softest, most luxurious and natural-looking leather
- More likely to fade and stain; will feature noticeable range marks, barbed wire scars, wrinkles, scratches and brands
- Unretouched, resulting in subtle color and shading differences from hide to hide—and even within a hide
- Generally more expensive than other types of leather



Semi-aniline Leather:

- High quality, high-value leather, always top-grain
- Soft and beautiful; durable and practical
- Often coated with clear sealant to enhance stain resistance
- Slightly more uniform in color and texture than full aniline
- Fewer noticeable range marks
- Generally less expensive than full aniline leather



Pigmented Leather:

- Least likely to fade or stain
- Sanded surface and a faux embossed pattern create a highly uniform and consistent texture
- Coated with clear sealant to enhance stain resistance
- Opaque dyes create rich and uniform coloration that minimize natural marks and scars
- Excellent durability with minimal maintenance

You'll be comforted to know that your Flexsteel leather upholstery is always in good hands. First, hides are hand-selected by our buyers. Each hide is inspected by a trained leather craftsman. Then, many pieces of leather are hand-cut, cushions are hand-stuffed, and trim and final assembly are hand-done. At Flexsteel, we create your heirloom-quality leather furniture with great care.

Because it's a natural substance, like silk, wool or cotton, leather breathes and always feels comfortable against your skin. Never stiff or sticky, natural leather adjusts to your body temperature. Its comfort will only increase with age, like your favorite pair of leather shoes.

For all its luxurious softness, Flexsteel leather furniture is not delicate at all. It's nearly impossible to wear out and difficult to puncture or tear. It will resist splitting or cracking. With only minor maintenance, leather is as durable and practical as it is beautiful and comfortable.

the language of *leather*

Aniline Transparent dye for fine leather hides. It permeates the entire hide and results in rich color.

Aniline Leather Leather that has been dyed only with transparent aniline dyes; no opaque coatings have been added. The finest, full top-grain hides are aniline dyed.

Antiquing Artificially aging a hide's appearance. Usually hand-done; best suited for full-grain leather.

Buffing The mechanical process, before coloration, that minimizes the scars and scratches on a hide.

Corrected Grain Leather Leather that has an artificial grain embossed onto it after the natural range marks have been buffed out.

Cowhide In upholstery terms, the entire hide of a bovine—about 45-55 square feet.

Drum Dyeing Also known as vat dyeing. Assures full dye penetration; hides are immersed in dye and tumbled in a steel drum.

Effect Coat A smokey, marbled, two-tone look that adds surface interest and dimension.

Embossing Permanent artificial grain patterns, added through heat and pressure to corrected grain hides.

Fat Wrinkles Marks in leather grain caused by natural fat deposits. These marks are usually not seen in corrected grain leather.

Full Grain Hides that the natural grain pattern has not been mechanically altered. All aniline leather comes from full-grain hides.

Glazing Also called top-coating. The application of protective transparent resins to the leather, resulting in a high-gloss or matte finish.

Grain The natural pattern of pores and wrinkles on a hide.

Hand An industry term for the feel of leather. For example, "The hand of this pure aniline leather is excellent—very soft."

Kela Sauvagé A mechanical process that adds a sauvagé look during the finishing stage. A relief roller creates a marbled look and enhances the finish's character.

Milling Massaging of hides, through tumbling to ensure softness.

Nubuck Leather which is lightly buffed after dyeing (usually aniline dye) to produce a suede-like nap. Generally it features a moisture repellent. Should be brushed regularly to maintain nap.

Patina The luster or shine that develops on leather surfaces with time and use.

Pigmenting Colorings and coatings to the leather to cover imperfections, resulting in wear- and fade-resistant hides.

Premium Select The finest leather hides available, exhibiting few imperfections. About five percent of all hides are premium select quality.

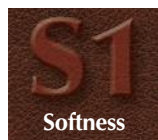
Sauvagé Adding depth to a hide's finish, this marbled appearance comes from blending similar colors during the dyeing process.

Semi-aniline Leather Hides that have been dyed throughout and have a surface finish applied. These leathers offer both a soft hand and protective benefits.

Splits The under layers of leather, generally finished as suede, or embossed with corrected grain for use on secondary surfaces of upholstered furniture.

Top Grain The uppermost layer of a hide. This is the highest quality part of a hide, applicable for fine upholstery leather.

Tumbling A mechanical process that softens the texture and enhances the grain of hides. Hides are tumbled in drums for several hours.



Softness is the essential and defining characteristic of leather. The exquisite

hand of a fine leather is an unmatched sensory. The overall comfort level and cost of your leather are directly linked to the softness quotient.

4. Nature Soft Rarest and most expensive leathers.

3. Techno Soft Suppleness created with technology.

2. Flexi Soft Leathers enhanced by mechanical action.

1. Firm Leathers boasting tremendous "value."



Leather is often indexed into narrow categories. In fact, countless varieties are

available. The cost of Special Effect leather is in direct relation to the expertise, effort and degree of difficulty required to create the various looks.

4. Multiple Effects Defined by more than two special effects such as hand-rubbing, heavyweight texture or metallic finishes that create an upscale look and price.

3. Active Effects Injection of oil or wax to create a color-burst when stretched during the upholstery process. Often referred to as pull-ups.

2. Mechanical Effects Color or surface effects on leather created with automated techniques. Includes effects like: two-tone sauvagé, wiped, reptile embossed, nubuck and distressed.

1. Uniform Color Leather sprayed with a pigmented coating, creating a universally-accepted, uniform color throughout the hide or furniture.



Surface Grain mirrors the Softness category. The more intact the

original Surface Grain, the more natural and soft the leather. Alteration of leather's Surface Grain creates a specific relationship to the cost of the leather. The cost is reduced in proportion to the level of grain removed.

4. Full Grain / Full Top Grain

Key word is "full" meaning 100% natural grain, typically the most expensive leathers.

3. Top Grain Originally a full grain which has been altered through light sanding, barely noticeable to the naked eye.

2. Corrected & Embossed

Grain A top grain leather that has been thoroughly sanded, then embossed with a natural-looking uniform grain pattern.

1. Split & Embossed Grain The second layer split from a full grain hide, which is heavily pigmented and embossed with a less natural, uniform grain pattern.



It is important to match your lifestyle to the serviceability that is applicable.

Leather is a versatile material that offers many distinct choices. They range from easy-care leathers with high resistance, to those focused on fashion and style.

4. Minimal Resistance

Expensive and luxurious; typically a nubuck or suede, designed for fashion and style application.

3. Natural Resistance The most expensive and elegant of all leathers, typically pure or naked, will gain a patina over time.

2. Standard Resistance

Impervious to most spills and stains, easy to clean, best for residential serviceability requirements.

1. Maximum Resistance

Impervious to spills and stains, very easily cleaned, best for heavy-duty or commercial requirements.

Creating an atmosphere of
beauty & comfort
Flexsteel leather furniture



Sofas



Chairs & Ottomans



Modular Sectionals



Reclining Seating



Accents



www.flexsteel.com