



Intensive Footwear Leather Course



2 Day Programme

DAY 1 – Understanding the Raw Material and Suitability for End Products

Join us for coffee before the course starts

Welcome to Leather Wise and introductions

A chance to learn a little about each other...

Where does it all begin – sourcing from farm to tanner?

The skins and hides we use are sourced from many places globally. We will look at some of the facts and figures relating to the international industry and some of the issues facing the supply chain.

Time for a well earned cuppa!

Why do we inherit problems?

Depending on source, and welfare conditions, hides and skins can be subject to natural and manmade damage. We will look at some typical problems and the impact these have on leather quality.

Buffet lunch (and time to phone work!)

Why do we make leather from cowhide (... and other animals)?

There are many reasons for choosing certain hides and skins for making different types of leather. In this session we will look at the components of skin and explain how different animals have different skin structures.

We will then be able to understand the various attributes and limitations of using a particular skin or hide in relation to the end product. For example, the reasons why pigskin is commonly used for making shoe linings or why sheepskin is suitable for slippers but not your safety footwear!

Time for another cuppa!

Getting to grips with the jargon (a touchy feely session!)

One really confusing aspect of using leather is the variety of names and descriptions that are commonplace in the industry. We will look at some of the more popular terms and explain what characteristics the leather will have. Some of the terms we will look at are: Aniline, Semi-aniline, Pigmented, Finished Split, Coated Leather, Suede, Nubuck, Pull-up, Full Grain, Corrected Grain....and more.

End of DAY 1

DAY 2 – Leathermaking and Ensuring ‘Fitness for Purpose’ for Footwear

Introduction to the leathermaking process

The leathermaking process is broken down into a number of key stages. Prior to our visit to the tannery we will introduce these stages and explain the importance of them.

Visit to the Tannery at the British School of Leather Technology

We will visit a small-scale tannery and follow the leather making process stages. You will get the opportunity to experience some of the unique sights and smells!

Tour of the testing laboratories to see how we ensure ‘fitness for purpose’ of leather

After the tannery we will look at the physical testing of leather and microscopy techniques used for quality assurance and solving problems that occur.

Buffet lunch (and time to phone work!)

Recap on key leather production stages and all the associated industry jargon

Once we have seen the various stages of leather production and looked at the laboratories you will realise how complex leather making is. We will briefly review the main production stages and any jargon that we have encountered!

Testing and specifying footwear

Following on from our testing laboratory tour we will discuss why we have Specifications. The reasons include needing to ensure that chemical ‘nasties’ are not present in our consumer goods and that the goods perform satisfactorily in use. We will look at the typical aspects of a Specification for Footwear.

Time for another cuppa!

What do we officially mean by the term ‘Leather’?

We all take leather for granted and use it everyday, but do we really know what it is and what characteristics it has? For anyone using and supplying leather and leather products it is important to understand what you can (and can’t) do legally. Within this session we will also look at the issue of footwear labelling.

How can we look after leather and what issues are there for those involved in Quality Assurance and Customer Services?

Now we know what leather is it leads us to consider what happens when it all goes wrong? We will use examples to illustrate typical problems that you might encounter – and how we can help you to resolve the problems. These might be problems related to the leather, the footwear construction or even customer abuse – we’ll try and help you get to the bottom of the problem.

Time to go home after a busy course!

Things you need to know:

- This course is suitable for anyone working in the footwear sector
- Arrival and coffee at 09.15
- Course starts 09.30
- Buffet lunch included
- Course finishes 16.30 (unless we talk a lot!)
- Please wear ‘sensible’ footwear as the tannery floor can be wet/ slippery
- Let us know if you have any special needs – dietary/access etc.

Contact Amanda Michel if you need any help, tel: 01604 497568,
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