

How to care for Leather Handbags

I thought today it might be wise to go over a few of the fundamentals with regards to handbag leather care and storage. Our legal team have insisted that before I give any help or advice, you must read the following disclaimer.

Leather care disclaimer

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How to care for leather handbags

If you have ever owned a leather handbag, I am sure you will already be familiar with our friend the 'fingerprint'. I am sure you have all been out to a club wearing your favourite handbag, only to have some complete idiot touch it with their sticky alcohol infused hands. One finger print this week, another next and over time you will soon start to notice a build up of unsightly stains. Of course it doesn't have to be this way, and by following a few simple steps which only take a moment, you can hope to extend your handbag enjoyment for many years to come.

The type of cleaning treatment you follow depends on the type of leather the bag is made from. Here are three examples for the most popular materials we sell.

Grain leather handbags

- Regularly wipe clean using a slightly damp cloth, or brush away contaminants using a soft brush, typically a brand new and unused blusher brush I find works best.
- The use of proprietary cleaning agents or polishers should be approached with caution and carried out only in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Less is always better, avoid using any excessive quantities.
- Once or twice yearly you should wipe your handbag using a cloth dampened with White Spirit to thoroughly cleanse the leather surface from old and discoloured waxes. Using a proprietary polish you should then give the bag a light treatment, before finally rubbing one last time all over using a soft clean cloth.

Patent leather handbags

- Clean using only a damp cloth, plus a little neutral detergent if needed.
- Pigskin leathers should be treated with a silicone preparation to protect and ensure longevity.
- Minor contamination on all grain leathers can frequently be removed by gentle rubbing with a soft India rubber eraser.

Suede leather handbags

- Brush regularly with a soft suede brush or rub gently using a plastic foam block.

- Minor stains and marks may be removed with a hard rubber eraser, or by touching up the surface with a fine emery paper.
- The leather should retain its colour and appearance if it is regularly treated with a fluorocarbon aerosol spray product. These make the leather water repellent, and offer protection from both grease and dust.
- There is a wide range of suede cleaning and colouring products on the market, all of which can provide excellent results - provided that the product manufacturer's recommendations are strictly observed.

How and where to store leather handbags

Avoid storing leather handbags in any type plastic or polythene bags for any prolonged period of time. Plastic and Polythene are both materials which have a tendency over time to react with leather. The type of the reaction depends on the type of leather used to make your handbag. At the very least you are likely to see a discolouration of the leather take place, therefore ruining your favourite handbag.

The ideal storage location for any handbag should be in a dedicated cloth bag, or pillow case and away from heat or direct sunlight. The bottom of a wardrobe is usually a good place, ideally where it is cool, dry and airy.

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Katey. x