

Understanding furniture upholstery



When selecting the covering of your new sofa, there are a number of different upholstery options to choose from that look like leather. It is important to understand what you are buying to ensure that it is the right product for your needs.

LEATHER

Leather is durable, flexible and made from tanned animal hide. It can be sanded or buffed, sealed with oils, waxes or dyes or finished in a protective polyurethane (PU) coating to make it more resistant to stains.

LEATHER WHERE IT COUNTS

Sofas and lounges upholstered in “leather where it counts” or “leather and vinyl” are upholstered partly in leather and partly in synthetic (usually PVC or PU). In this case 100% leather is usually used on the contact areas (seating area and the top of the arm rests) and the remainder of the sofa is covered in 100% synthetic upholstery.

PELLISSIMA/BONDED LEATHER

Bonded leather is predominantly synthetic material. It is not leather, but has been made to give much of the luxury look and feel of leather, with less of the cost and worry.

Bonded leather consists of a layer of PU on the contact side backed with a fabric core and a layer of leather fibres or reconstituted leather.

LEATHER LOOK UPHOLSTERIES

PVC (vinyl), polyurethane (PU) and fabric are man-made products that can give much of the look and feel of traditional leather at a great value price. Apart from their practicality, these fabric upholstery options also appeal to people who prefer to avoid the use of animal by-products.

