

# The Leather Supply Chain



## 1. LIVESTOCK

Livestock is kept for meat or milk production. Bovine (e.g. cow, bulls), ovine (e.g. sheep, goat), and pigs are most common.



## 2. SLAUGHTERHOUSE

Hides and skins are a by-product of the meat industry. If these hides and skins were not used for leather, they would be wasted.



## 3. BEAMHOUSE

Hides are cleaned from dirt, blood, salt and hair, the collagen structure is opened, they are fleshed, processed with base chemicals and split into grains and splits. Splitting in this stage is common for upholstery and automotive leather. Hides are offered to tanning in full substance as well.



## 4. TANNING

In tanning the collagen of the hides is transformed into leather. Herewith the collagen of the hide is protected to microorganisms. Drying the leather at this stage would yield hard unhandleable leather. Different tanning agents can be used, e.g. Zeology, chrome, glutardialdehyde (GDA), synthetic products or vegetable extracts.



## 5. WET-END

In wet-end the leather is given its final properties by the application of syntans, fatliquors and dyes. Each leather article requires different wet-end products and mechanical actions.



## 6. FINISHING

The 'finishing' touch of leather making. Via several processes the leather is upgraded. A final film of several layers is used to protect the leather, increase its performance and to create fashionable colours and patterns.



## 7. MANUFACTURING

The finished leather is cut in a cutting plant. After combining the leather with other materials (e.g. a zipper or shoelaces) the final handbag, steering wheel or jacket is ready for the consumer.



## 8. CONSUMER

The consumer will use the durable leather article for years to come.

Please read more at [www.leathernaturally.org](http://www.leathernaturally.org)