

# Leather Identification



## Introduction

It is critical to understand the type of leather before attempting to clean it. This understanding will help you anticipate results before you clean, and the products needed to complete the job. Anticipating the time involved in cleaning and the quantity of products used will allow you to price the job correctly. The three leather types are : Protected, Aniline, and Nubuck.

## Definitions

**Protected:** also known as Finished, Semi Aniline, Everyday, Pigmented and Painted, these Leathers have combined the best aspects of a natural product and have utilized tannery technology to create a product that is more uniform in appearance and color.

**Aniline:** Also known as Natural, Pure, Naked and Unprotected, these are leathers that are colored with transparent dyestuff. This means you can see the actual surface grain markings. These leathers have very little or no protective treatments applied to them.

**Nubuck:** Also known as Chaps, Distressed, Bomber and Suede, Nubuck is an Aniline leather that has been brushed, sanded or scratched to create a velvet or pile feel or look to the grain side of leather. Suede is the flesh side of the hide and is of lower quality.

## Procedure

1. Evaluate the leather Visually Protected leathers will have a consistent coloration due to pigmentation, while Aniline and Nubuck will have a varied hue. Any leather with a nap will be Nubuck or suede.
2. Feel the leather. The softer the leather, the more likely it is Aniline or Nubuck. The stiffer the leather, the more likely it is Protected.
3. Go to an inconspicuous place and scratch the leather with your fingernail. Aniline & Nubuck will scratch and will be a lighter color.
4. In an inconspicuous place, rub Leather Cleaner into the leather. Aniline & Nubuck leather will darken as the cleaner is absorbed into the leather. The cleaner will not absorb into Protected leather.
5. The final test will determine the difference between Aniline & Nubuck. In an inconspicuous place, rub Leather Protector on the leather and dry with hair dryer. Aniline will dry clear with no difference in texture. Nubuck will dry darker with a slight change in texture. Leather Protector mats down the nap of Nubuck causing the area to be darker.

## Helpful Hint -

- Many manufacturers are including a cleaning label to indicate the type of leather.

## Caution-

- Many leather care products will ruin Aniline & Nubuck. Accurate identification is critical to your success.

## PRODUCTS NEEDED

- [Leather Cleaner](#)
- [Leather Protector](#)
- Soft Cloth
- Blower/Hair Dryer