



STYLE TALK

Of fair and faux leather

Leather is often associated with risk when imagining an ensemble beyond belts, shoes and wallets. Catwoman and Batgirl are the queens of leather.

Winter can be the only suitable season for our humid nation to pay daily tribute to these superheroes. To create your own uniforms, to save or seize the day, here are a few insights, care tips, styling tips, and shops to head over to serve your leather or pleather needs.

But first, an ethical disclaimer. When it comes to buying genuine leather, the best way to steer away from adding to the cruelty induced demand; buying second hand leather pieces from antique shops or someone you know is an ethical alternative.

INSIGHT

A good leather piece, whether genuine or faux, should resist moisture, show imperfections and look better over the years. Good leather does not necessarily have to be genuine. Given that leather is a natural product, it should wear out with time and should not last long.

Faux leather, or pleather fabric base, is completely man made —waxed and dyed to mimic the look and feel of genuine leather. If the jacket or shoes or pants you are thinking of buying is cheap, it is definitely faux leather. And it could even be a better option. Faux leathers are super resistant to wear and tear, and the surface is smooth to touch.

CARING TIPS

Genuine leather is an investment. The real thing pleases aesthetics and authenticity for sure, but the maintenance is pretty difficult.



First step before you do anything is to read the instruction tag. Different leathers are processed differently, so be instruction specific and alert, when caring for your leather product.

If a leather or pleather garment gets wet, you have to hang dry it away from direct sunlight. Slow drying is good. Unless its patent leather. Patent leather is virtually waterproof.

Store leather garments on padded hangers as sharp edges can make them wear out on those points faster. Avoid plastic covers as it will insulate the breathability consequently promoting mould. Store in dark, dry places as sunlight will cause fading. The only time it can see the sun is when you are wearing it.

Do not let perfume or hairspray or any kind of cosmetic spray come in contact with your real or faux leather. It can cause discoloration. And if you stain your leather, you have a good reason to grieve.

Lastly, although you do not need to iron leather or pleather, if you must, make sure it is not with direct contact, place a cotton sheet as a barrier. When it comes to heat, real leather will not burn easily. Pleather on the other hand can run wildfire at five to ten seconds of contact with a lighter and will start smelling like burning plastic.

STYLING TIPS

The leather jacket is a wardrobe must have. It is a cult classic. To make the best out of your leather jacket, make sure you do not bulk up in the layers below. Keep the look sleek to complement your body shape. T-shirts and leather outerwear is a great combination.

Biker jackets for guys go great with



trainer icons like Vans or Converse if you do not have the guts to wear boots. Ladies may mistake you for The Wild Ones (1953) cast. And with today's faded crew cut, you would be turning heads everywhere with the whole ensemble.

Leather bomber jackets are all the rage for 2017/18. Make sure the fit is snug at the shoulders. Try not to pair bombers with ripped jeans, it will be like a clash of the trend titans. Keep the look classy with black chinos or casual navy-blue trousers. Bombers also go really well with tucked in T-shirts.

A special tip for girls, if you are going for an 'all black' look, try a patent leather piece. The glossy patent leather will add a cool contrast without subduing the rest of your outfit. Even a patent leather pair of shoes or boots will add texture to your minimalist look.

WHERE TO GET THEM

At Apex you can find a range of novelty leather boots, sandals, dressy and formal shoes. Materials ranging from cow, buffalo, goat and sheep leather.

If you want custom made leather jackets, there is RAVEN, (www.facebook.com/ravenleatherZ; www.ravenleatherZ.com) —a Dhaka based online leather shop, and they provide services nationwide. Their specialties are Goth and heavy metal themed jackets and they are always ready to cater to your winter needs.

Cats Eye has a collection of printed pleather jackets in different colours, all within Tk 5000. They also have the essential genuine leather shoes and belts.

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