Upholstering a Leather Bench

Using leather to cover an upholstered piece does not have to be intimidating. Natural and durable, leather is easy to care for and can be a great addition to your upholstery portfolio. This how-to guide covers the steps to upholster a decorative bench, including how to figure hides and special tips for working with leather. For additional tips and tricks, see our webinar titled “Upholstering a Leather Bench”.

Materials & Supplies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rowley Products</th>
<th>SKU</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cardboard Tack Strip - ½&quot;</td>
<td>CS50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Polyester Batting</td>
<td>PF76</td>
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<tr>
<td>R-TEX Black Cambric</td>
<td>PA40/</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decorative Nails</td>
<td>UN20/B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Magnetic Tack Hammer with Nylon Tip</td>
<td>MH12</td>
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<tr>
<td>R-TEC Upholstery Air Stapler</td>
<td>NSG10</td>
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<tr>
<td>71 Series Staples - ⅜&quot;</td>
<td>NS33/E</td>
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<tr>
<td>R-TEX Polyester Welt Cord - ¼&quot;</td>
<td>WCP2/</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scissors</td>
<td>CU22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upholstery Staple Remover</td>
<td>MH22</td>
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Other Products Used:

Needle-Nosed Pliers

Upholstering a Leather Bench: Step-By-Step Instructions

This how-to guide covers the steps to upholster a bench in leather, using decorative upholstery nails as both functional and decorative elements.

Tearing Down the Bench

1. Starting with the exposed staples on the Cambric, remove Cambric.
2. Remove bottom welt cord.
Loosen Nosing bottom staples and outside arm bottom staples.

Remove Nosing and Outside Arm.

Remove any additional welt cord.

Remove Seat and Inside Arm pieces.

Keep padding on the Inside Arms and Seat, but remove all other padding as you will need to replace it as you re-upholster the bench.

Check for any stray staples or pieces of staples that could snag your new fabric / leather – remove them.

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**Cutting Pieces:**

1. From your cut plan, lay the measurements out on the hides and cut, using the hides to their best.

2. Cut and mark each piece.

3. Make enough welt cord to cover the areas you want to use welt, plus a few inches for joining.
Upholstering the Seat:

Working in the opposite order from which the bench was torn down, add fabric pieces in their correct location, make relief cuts and staple to secure.

1. Lay the Seat piece out, folding back the sides to expose the frame.

2. Mark and cut a Peace Sign relief cut to get around the leg.

3. Make a relief cut for each leg, cutting from the frame join to half way through the leg, at an angle.

4. Pull fabric through to outside and staple.

5. Tuck under flap and staple; Staple other side of leg cut as needed so no staples will be exposed at the end of the project.

6. Complete other side of Seat.

7. Staple Back under the frame; Staple the front within the Nosing area.

Upholstering the Inside Arm:

1. Lay the fabric over the arm so all areas are covered.

2. Fold it back so it rests on the Seat to expose the frame.

3. Make Peace Sign relief cuts at the legs.

4. Pull through and staple on top of the Seat fabric, within the Arm frame.

5. Pull the top fabric over the curve of the frame and staple.
Fold in and staple pleats on all four arms, removing bulk as needed.

Upholstering the Nosing:

1. Staple on a row of welt cord, making good ends on both ends.
2. Add the Nosing fabric using cardboard tack strip to get a tight, straight line under the welt.
3. Fold the ends of the Nosing fabric back onto itself at the outside edges and staple to secure.
4. Add a layer of padding to the exposed area.
5. Pull fabric down and staple under frame.
6. Make relief cuts for legs and staple.
Upholstering the Outside Arm:

1. Lay the fabric piece right side down over the roll of the arm and position so ½" is in the staple area.
2. Staple using cardboard tack strip for a straight, tight edge.
3. Stop the tack strip at the outside of the arm and fold the fabric back over itself for a clean side fold.
4. Close the hole by stapling any material over the hole.
5. Add a layer of padding.
6. Pull the fabric over the padding and staple under frame.
   A. The sides will not be stapled for this project.

Finishing the Bench:

1. Staple on a row of welt to the bottom of the frame, cutting away the welt lip around the legs.
2. Staple on a layer of Cambric to the bottom.
3. To close the sides of the Outside Arms, add decorative nails in the pattern of your choice.