

Stock Leather, Floor Only Leather or Custom Leather: Which is Best for You?

Written by Chris Repp

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Most furniture stores sell some of each of 3 buying categories of leather furniture; stock furniture, as is or floor sold furniture or custom furniture. Stock furniture means the store will have a model on display but when you buy it they have a number of the same sofas in a warehouse somewhere for you to receive. Floor display or As-is furniture means that you buy the exact piece that you look at on display. Custom furniture means you see a display model which may be similar to your sofa but you may choose your own covering and sometimes even shape from a catalog of choices. Each way of buying has pro's and con's. Here are a few:

Stock Leather: You see displays but you buy a stock piece

Pro's:

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- Easy replacement-Usually the store has multiple pieces in a warehouse for you to make sure you get one that is in good condition.
- Quick delivery-Usually stock leather can be shipped to you quickly after you buy it so you don't have to wait long to get it home.
- Popular styles and colors- Because a Mfg is going to mass produce this leather, it is usually made in a popular style with some of the most popular colors for you to choose.

Con's:

- Can't customize- You can't customize this leather. It will usually be sold in a few colors only.
- Warehouse stored-Leather carried in stock is stored in a warehouse. In a warehouse, furniture is subject to damage. Be sure your piece is not damaged.

As-Is or Floor Only Leather- The exact pieces of furniture you see at the store, are the pieces you can purchase and take home.

Pro's:

- Stylish furniture- Many floor only stores are run by small, stylish owners or managers who hand pick stylish furniture to display.
- Good decorative accents- It is also often displayed with accent pieces which give you a good feel for the leather in a room or with stylish coordinating pieces.
- Few surprises-You get to look over your exact piece before it is shipped to you. No surprises as long as the delivery crew takes good care with your leather.
- Quick delivery-Usually you can leave with your sofa if you have a truck to haul it.

Con's:

- Limited quantities- Once the piece on the floor is gone, it may not be coming back.
- Limited replacement ability- Should your leather be damaged, it can't always be replaced quickly or easily.
- Limited choice-What you see is often what you can get. Rarely do these stores have pieces in different colors or configurations.

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Custom Leather- You can see display models but choose almost any covering and configuration changes you'd like.

Pro's:

- Endless choices-This leather is almost endlessly customizable. You can pick different colors, grades of leather, types of leather and even shape the piece for any configuration of a room. If you want a 4 cushion sofa instead of the normal 3 cushion for an extra wide space, you can probably customize it.
- The right fit for your lifestyle- By choosing any grade of leather, and by reading the information on this site, you can choose a leather grade that is just right for your lifestyle. As we've already discussed, lower to middle grades can be just right for an active family lifestyle. Want an exquisite butter-soft high grade of leather, you can do that too.
- Often good sales staff- Many times custom leather outlets focus on good customer service and will educate you correctly about what type of leather to buy. Of course, read the last section to learn leather and keep them honest.

Con's:

- Wait time- Often custom leather furniture takes a while because each piece is constructed to your specifications. This process can take weeks to months to complete. Ask in advance how long the process will take to prepare to wait for your custom leather
- Difficult replacement- Because your piece is custom and not a stock piece, it will be difficult to replace if it is damaged. Also, many stores have more strict return policies on custom purchases, so ask about them in advance.
- Variations from piece to piece- Each piece of leather, especially in higher grades, will be unique. Many times the leather is hand-crafted and will be well made but not the same from piece to piece like a machine crafted product. Also the leather may have scars, markings and normal variations that you may not see on the floor display.

So look on the website or ask your furniture store if they sell stock pieces, floor only pieces, custom pieces or a combination of these options. Then,

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knowing the pro's and con's of each will prepare you to get the leather that is just right for you.