

Factsheet

LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX®

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The LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® is a worldwide consistent, independent testing and certification system for leather and leather articles of all levels of production. Examples of articles that can be certified are: semifinished leather products (e.g. Wet-blue, Wet-white, Crust etc.), finished leather, leather fiber material, ready made articles (garments of all types, accessories, leather gloves, leather handbags, leather covers and much more).

The precondition for the certification of leather materials and leather articles/products in accordance with LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® is that all parts of an article meet the required criteria – in addition to the leather, for example, also textile fabrics, sewing threads, inserts, prints, labels etc., as well as non-textile accessories, such as buttons, zip fasteners, rivets etc.

For the leather materials the conditions and criteria of the latest valid LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® are applied, for non-leather components contained (e.g. textile materials, metallic accessories etc.) the requirements of the latest valid STANDARD 100 by OEKO-TEX® have to be fulfilled.

DESIGNED FOR

- › Brands / Retailer
- › Traders of leather products
- › Sourcing offices
- › Manufacturers of leather materials and leather articles along the entire supply chain
- › Etc.

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

Criteria

The central focus of the LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® has been the development of test criteria, limit values and test methods on a scientific basis. On the basis of its comprehensive and strict catalogue of measures for harmful substances, with several hundred regulated individual substances, the LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® takes account of:

- › Important legal regulations, such as banned azo colourants, chromium(VI), formaldehyde, pentachlorophenol, cadmium, nickel release, PFOS etc.

- Numerous harmful chemicals, even if they are not yet legally regulated.
- Requirements of Annexes XVII and XIV of the European Chemicals Regulation REACH as well as of the ECHA SVHC Candidate List insofar as they are assessed by expert groups of the OEKO-TEX® Association to be relevant for leather materials and leather articles/products. Discussions and developments that are considered to be relevant are taken into account as quickly and effectively as possible through updates to the LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® requirements.
- Requirements from the US Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA) regarding lead.
- Numerous also environmentally relevant substance classes.

The LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® therefore contributes to high and effective product safety from a consumer's point of view. Test criteria and limit values in many cases go far beyond applicable national and international standards.

Laboratory tests and product classes

The LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® tests for harmful substances are fundamentally based on the respective purpose of the leather materials respectively leather articles/products. The more intensive the skin contact of a product and the more sensitive the skin, the stricter the human-ecological requirements that need to be complied with.

Accordingly, a distinction is made between four product classes:

- Product class I:** Products for babies and toddlers up to 3 years age (leather clothing, leather gloves, crawling sheepskin, fur etc.)
- Product class II:** Products that are worn close to the skin (leather trousers/-jackets, leather underwear etc.)
- Product class III:** Products used away from the skin (lined leather jackets/overcoats, leather handbags, leather belts etc.)
- Product class IV:** Decoration/Furnishing materials (upholstery leather covers etc.)

BENEFITS and ARGUMENTS for the LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX®

- The independent assessment and verification by the world-leading "3rd party" OEKO-TEX® Institutes represents a very strong, confidence-building measure for a company's materials and products.
- The human-ecological criteria catalogue, which has a scientific basis, is uniform around the world and is thus applicable everywhere on the same terms. The criteria and limit values are continually further developed and, in any case, at least once each year.
- Identification and avoidance of chemicals that are harmful to health in the product in accordance with the LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® criteria catalogue by means of comprehensive and high quality product tests.
- Modular certification system (avoids duplicate tests on unchanged products).
- Testing of representative samples in the laboratory by the assigned approved OEKO-TEX® Institute.
- Participation in the OEKO-TEX® system which has taken a lead role for many years with its concept.
- It forms the basis for many Restricted Substance Lists (RSLs) for retail chains, discounters, producers etc. and thus the basis for many delivery conditions.
- Product monitoring by means of regular control tests on the market and through on-site company inspections by independent auditors from the OEKO-TEX® Association.
- As a manufacturer-independent label, the LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® is a helpful marketing tool which can clearly document your responsibility with regard to the human-ecological product safety of your articles to your customers along the supply chain through to brands, retailers and consumers.

- All companies that have their products or materials certified in accordance with the LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® have the opportunity to present their company and product portfolio free of charge in the OEKO-TEX® online directory (“Buying Guide”) under www.oeko-tex.com/products. With an average of around 5,000 website visits per day and visitors from more than 200 countries around the world, the OEKO-TEX® website is an ideal advertising platform that attracts international attention and is also a very good sourcing platform.
- You can enter the data for your company presentation yourself in the OEKO-TEX® Buying Guide in the Self-Service Portal under www.oeko-tex.com/customers. Your responsible OEKO-TEX® Institute will be pleased to send you the access details upon request.
- More than 10,000 companies and manufacturers already trust the OEKO-TEX® system and label.

QUALITY ASSURANCE MEASURES AND ASPECTS

Declaration of conformity

With the signed declaration of conformity, the applicant/certificate holder agrees that the OEKO-TEX® Association and the mandated OEKO-TEX® Institute may carry out control tests on products certified according to the LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® during the validity period of the certificate to check compliance with the conditions and criteria required.

Company audits

To specifically support and optimize operational quality assurance within the companies participating in the OEKO-TEX® system around the world, the OEKO-TEX® member institutes carry out an audit on-site with the applicant companies as an obligatory component of certification. Company monitoring takes place shortly before the time, or soon thereafter, when the certificate is issued and is repeated at least every three years.

Control tests

The OEKO-TEX® Association carries out control tests of certified products every year for at least 25% of all certificates issued. For this purpose articles with the OEKO-TEX® label that are available in retail outlets and sample materials from the companies are tested. In addition, independent auditors also carry out random checks within the scope of unannounced company visits to companies with the OEKO-TEX® certificate.

INFORMATION ON THE CERTIFICATE

- The validity period of an issued certificate is limited to a maximum of one year.
- The LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® certificate describes the certified products (article group) and clearly lists the product class achieved.
- Three months before the validity period for the usage of the LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® label expires, the certificate holder can apply for a certificate prolongation for a further year.

LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® LABEL

- A standardised label for the identification of certified products clearly highlights the independent “3rd party” review for all interested parties.

