



If cows could talk, we bet they'd ask you to "wear your own skin." But they can't, so we'll help them out by giving you the fast facts about leather.

No matter how you slice it, leather is dead skin. Before animals are turned into belts and shoes, they are forced to live in crowded, filthy conditions on factory farms. They suffer through painful procedures like castration, branding, and dehorning—without even so much as an aspirin for the pain. After being crammed into trucks and carted off to the slaughterhouse, many animals are still fully conscious when they're hung upside-down and their throats are slit.

WHY CALL SOME ANIMALS "PETS" AND OTHERS "PANTS"?

What if your leather shoes were made from cocker spaniels? Would that make a difference? Well, guess what: Some leather products are actually made from dogs and cats—and because they are generally mislabeled, or not labeled at all, you could be in shoes made out of spaniels and not even know it. Now think about it: The millions of cows, pigs, sheep, and goats who are tortured and killed for their skins each year feel pain just as dogs and cats do. It shouldn't matter what type of leather you're wearing—it's still someone else's skin.

WHOSE
SKIN
ARE YOU IN?



BUYING LEATHER DIRECTLY SUPPORTS ANIMAL ABUSE

You know that the meat industry is unbelievably cruel. But did you know that the only way that many beef producers stay in business is by selling animals' skins for leather? Beef isn't a profitable business without leather (think 49-cent hamburgers). But people who make a living by slaughtering cows can really cash in on leather sales. So when you buy leather, you're supporting the meat industry and all the animal suffering that it involves.

SYNTHETICS ARE SO EASY

There's no excuse for wearing leather once you know the facts. Here's the good news: Animal-friendly options are everywhere. Many of the best sports shoes are leather-free because synthetics perform better. All the biggest shoe designers have "fakes" in their lines—and buying synthetic knock-offs is a lot cheaper than the "real thing." Don't even mention jackets—if you want that look, there are dozens of animal-free choices. You don't need fashion advice from a pamphlet, so we'll leave you with one last thought: Dead bodies decay, including the skin. Leather is loaded with chemicals to keep it from decomposing in your closet. Faking it is better for you, the environment, and animals.

To find everything from pleather platforms to animal-free jackets that will fake out the hardest of the hardcore, e-mail PETA2@peta.org, call 757-622-PETA, or visit CowsAreCool.com. Ask for PETA's free "Shopping Guide to Compassionate Clothing," and we'll also throw in some free stickers. And for tons more info on cruelty-free living and getting active for animals, visit peta2.com.