

Cities II Regulated Exotic Leathers

Crocodiles

Prized for their scaled skin, the world's 23 crocodylian species were initially listed under Appendix I. But due to the development of captive breeding on farms and ranches, 13 species are now commercially traded under Appendix II. This has reduced sourcing from quota controlled hunting of wild stock to less than 6%. Of the numerous variety of species, the leather industry works principally with four.

Type/Origin	Skin Details	Comments	Average Dimensions
Saltwater Crocodile (Australia and Asia)	Largest species, it has small scales with follicle marks at the bottom. The belly scales are without bone making the leather soft and flexible.		Width 35cm-55cm Average Length 4-4.5m but can grow to 10m
The Nile Crocodile (Southern Africa)	Large square scales with follicle marks. Skins are long with a narrow tail.	Skins have a higher calcium content than Saltwater Crocs, making them less flexible and more difficult to work with.	Width 20cm-70cm Average length 4m-4.5m but can grow to 8m
America Alligator (Florida, Louisiana)	Medium to large belly scales without follicle markings giving smoother appearance. Wider tails than other species of a similar size.	Softer and easy to work with than crocodile.	Width 15cm-100cm Average length 2.4m-3m but can grow to 6m
Caiman (Central America mainly Columbia)	The heavily calcified scales give the skin a rigid, defined structural appearance. Usually available as a hornback cut favouring the scales. The belly cut is smooth and durable.	Caiman is difficult to work. The hornback is very tough making it hard to cut, machine or dye. The boney scales used as a design feature works well for small or medium size bags. Caiman is cheaper than crocodile or alligator. Note: Black Caiman is Appendix I and not legally available.	Width 15cm-45cm Average length 1.2m-1.8m but can grow to 2.4m
Snakes	There are a wide variety of snake skins available, including anaconda, whip snake and rattlesnake, but by far the largest proportion are Python. Virtually all commercially available Python skin is farm-reared but there is a thriving illegal trade. Snakeskins are sold either front or back cut. Back cut skins feature the belly scales of the snake, while front cut skins tend to favour the natural markings. Skins are either Grade 1 for unblemished or Grade 2 for those with defects. There are currently six species of python involved in the leather trade but the majority of skins come from three varieties.		
The Short Tail Python	Smallest variety of Python. Wide belly scales are a distinctive feature so skins are back cut. Skins are thicker than other pythons and has a more luxurious quality.	Skins are normally bleached during tanning and then dyed in a variety of colours.	Width 28cm tapering to 15cm Average length 1m
The Burmese Python	One of the largest snake species. Distinctive round scale pattern distinguishing it from the diamond pattern of other pythons.	Because the body tapers less than the Short Tail, it yields a large surface area, making it suitable for large panelled bags and luggage. Available in back or belly cuts, bleached or unbleached.	Width 28cm Average length 3.25m
The Diamond Python	Worlds largest snake. The body tapers more than the Burmese so it yields a smaller surface area. Distinctive diamond shaped scales.	The most commonly used snake skin, sold as back or belly cut, bleached or unbleached.	Average Length 3m but can grow to 7m
Lizards	There are many varieties of lizard, some of which fall under Cites I, but the leather trade is principally concerned with Monitor Lizards, Ring Lizards and the South American Tegu Lizard. Although these are all large species of lizard, they are still relatively small compared with the crocodylians. Lizard skin has small overlapping scales which give it a smooth polished look. Natural camouflage patterns in the scales make each skin unique. The leather tends to be thin but durable.		