

25

TOOL & MATERIALS TO GET STARTED IN SHOEMAKING

25 Tools & materials you need to get started in shoemaking

As the title says this is not a complete list of what you need to make shoes, but it will definitely can be enough to get started. This was my list as a beginner shoemaker and I added more tools and components to this list, but this is what you will need to get started making your shoes, so let's start from the top:

1. Cutting board- this is yours work area, and it comes in 3 sizes :

450x300x3;

620x450x3;

900x620x3

I personally use the 45cm (the first one) as this one is for personal use.



2. Adhesive tape - to make it easy on yourself, please pick up good and quality tape, that holds on the last. There are different widths, 2 cm, 5 cm, 14 cm. I don't like to mess up my workspace with unnecessary things so I use the 5 cm wide tape. Because it is good for attaching it on the last and I cut them when I need more narrow stripes. Check my tutorials I do that a lot, very useful trick.

3. Cardboard- I use it for pattern making, there are many types and most of them are good, but I use Duplex, it's 180-200 gram. It must be flexible but not too flexible.

4. Metal ruler - not less than 30 cm.

5. Flexible Measurement tape - There is a specific type for shoemaking, it doesn't have the iron piece at the end, like the one that tailor uses. If you can't find the shoemaker tape, you can cut off the metal piece but remember to always add 1 cm to your measurements.

6. Compasses - This one will save you a lot of time in pattern making and to be accurate in your work and to avoid mistakes, use it!



7. Utility knife - He can be your friend for awhile so pick a good one. First of all you will use it to cut your pattern, cardboard, tape and even leather. Beginners also can use it to skive the leather for absence of good skiving knife or skills.

8. Blades for utility knife- They are not less important than the knife itself. As there are many different knives, there are many types of blades as well, what you need to look for is blades with 30 degrees angle.

9. Shoe last- find the right last for the model that you wish to make. Although, there is last for each model, for beginners I will recommend to start working on last that is suitable for few types, like Pumps/Derby/Oxford. It will allow you to try different models.



10. Hammers:

A. Magnetic hammer- this is my favorite, and although is not a must to have but it does make my work much easier and fun.



B. Nickel hammer for folding



C. Big shoemakers hammer



12. Pincers - It comes with a hammer edge on one side, so it will be easier to place nails with it while lasting the upper. There are couple of types, narrow and wide. As a beginner, choose one and you won't be wrong.



13. Silver pen- it's a special pen for leather.



14. Rasp - If using the rasp, the best is the shoemaker rasp with 2 or 4 grains, but if you can't find the professional rasp you can use the rasp for wood, it is much more difficult to get to the right result with it but still works.



15. Dremel drill- It's optional, and you can use it instead of a rasp on your sole or to shape your heels.

16. Knives:

- English knife - 22x2.5cm . I use it for everything, from skiving to cutting.



- Skiving knife - 4 inch blade knife for skiving. It's a great for skiving a small pieces of leather and curved places that is hard to get to them.



17. Reinforcement tape:

* 3-4mm reinforcement tape for top line.



* 14 mm reinforcement tape for back seam. Optionally you can use fabric.



18. Tack puller



19. Contact cement glue for leather- after you apply this kind of cement you must wait 10-15 minutes before attaching it.

20. Texon Board- used to make midsole (you can use veg-tan leather)



21. Shank board - used to make midsole (you can use veg-tan leather)



22. Non woven chemical sheet (you can use veg-tan leather)

23. Steel shank - is placed in the arc area of the sole and it supports the weight of the entire body.



24. Cork board- used on the bottom of midsole, after lasting, to flatten the surface before attaching the sole.

25. Sewing Machine - There are many types on the market, but if you are a beginner I'll suggest to buy an old machine. You can actually try to use ordinary machine for fabrics, most of them will sew leather as well.

Now, what materials you use? Maybe I forgot a few items, feel free to leave a comment on the blog.

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