

# How to Stretch a Leather Bag

A professional leather repair shop should have no problem stretching your bag out. This is the safest way to make a leather bag bigger, but you will have to pay for the work to be done. If the bag isn't valuable and you don't feel like...

## Filling the Bag to Stretch it Out

1. **Find a pillow that is slightly larger than the inside of your bag.** Look around your home for a throw pillow, couch pillow, or some small cushion that is roughly 1–4 inches (2.5–10.2 cm) bigger than your bag on each side. If your bag is really big, you may be able to use a standard pillow for this. If you have multiple pillows that will work, use the stiffest pillow available.<sup>[1]</sup>
  1. You can line the bag with a shirt or towel and add the pillow after to make the interior of the bag a little smaller if you don't have a perfect pillow for this.

**Tip:** You can use newspaper instead if you can't find a pillow that fits correctly. The pillow is ideal for this though since it's the perfect size for bag stretching and will apply pressure evenly on each side of the bag.<sup>[2]</sup>

2. **Stuff the pillow inside the bag and zip it up if possible.** Open your bag up and remove anything inside of it. Compress the pillow in your hands and push it inside of your bag. Tuck the corners of the pillow into the corners of the bag and line it up so that the pillow is sitting evenly inside of the bag. If you have a zipper, push the pillow down a little and zip the bag if you can.<sup>[3]</sup>
  1. If the pillow is pushing on the bag so hard that you can't zip the bag, don't try to zip it shut. You're just going to break the bag if you close it when it's stuffed too full. Zipping the bag isn't mandatory for this to work anyway, so it's not worth risking it.
3. **Let the bag sit with the pillow inside for 1-3 days to stretch it out.** Set the bag in your closet or some other place where it won't get damaged or in your way. Let the pillow sit inside of the bag to stretch the leather out gently over time. The pillow will gently force the leather to expand and your bag may get a little bigger.<sup>[4]</sup>
  1. You may need to keep the pillow inside of the bag for much longer if you aren't seeing any results. Realistically, you can leave the pillow inside for as long as you want. Let the bag rest for 2-3 months if you don't need it right away and want to stretch it as wide as you can.

## Using a Stretching Spray

1. **Pick up a leather stretching spray designed for shoes.** Go online or stop by your local shoe store and pick up a bottle of leather stretching spray. This spray is typically designed for shoes, but there's no reason it won't work on a leather bag.<sup>[5]</sup>
  1. Expect to spend \$5-15 on a leather stretching spray.

2. You can use a leather conditioning spray instead if you simply want to soften the leather up. This may make your bag feel bigger without stretching the material too much.
2. **Stuff the bag with a pillow or newspaper to expand the leather.** You aren't going to stretch the leather out very much if you don't stuff the bag with something to keep the material spread out. Either tuck a pillow inside of the bag or ball up enough newspaper to fill the bag entirely. Zip the bag if you have a zipper.<sup>[6]</sup>

**Tip:** When you use a stretching spray to stretch shoes out, you have to wear them around after applying the spray. This is basically the same concept. The pillow or newspaper pushes on the sides of the leather and opens the material up for the spray to soak through.

3. **Shake the leather stretcher up and spray the surface of your bag.** Shake the stretching spray back and forth for 5-10 seconds to mix the ingredients up and activate the spray. Take the cap of the spray off and hold the nozzle 5–8 inches (13–20 cm) from the side of your bag. Spray your bag back and forth to cover the entire side of the bag.<sup>[7]</sup>
  1. You can spray and buff each side of the bag separately, or coat the bag entirely in the spray and wipe it down all at once. Do whatever is easier for you.
4. **Buff the surface of the leather out with a microfiber cloth.** Grab a dry, clean microfiber cloth and gently work the leather stretching spray into the surface of the leather. Use firm circular motions and back-and-forth strokes to work the spray into the leather. Continue wiping until there is no leather stretching spray visibly sitting on the surface of the bag.<sup>[8]</sup>
5. **Repeat this process on the rest of the bag and let the leather air dry.** Continue spritzing and buffing the surface of the bag until you've worked the spray into every portion of the bag. Let the leather air dry and keep the newspaper or pillow inside the bag for 1-3 hours. Remove the pillow or newspaper after you're done to finish stretching the bag.<sup>[9]</sup>
  1. You may need to repeat this process multiple times to see any results.

## Soaking the Bag in Alcohol and Water

1. **Fill a small bin with a 1:1 solution of rubbing alcohol and water.** Grab a bucket or storage bin that is big enough to submerge your bag entirely. Fill it up 1/3 of the way with rubbing alcohol. Then, fill another 1/3 of the container with regular tap water. Use a wooden spoon or mixing stick to mix the solution together.<sup>[10]</sup>
  1. This will work, but it may wash out any dyes or ink on your bag. If your bag is dyed or has some fancy interior fabric, this is probably not the best option for you.
  2. Depending on the size of your bag, you may need 1–2 gallons (3.8–7.6 L) of rubbing alcohol to do this. This process is much easier if you have a smaller purse or handbag.
2. **Soak the bag in the solution for 15-30 seconds.** Empty your bag out entirely and submerge the bag in the rubbing alcohol and water. Hold the bag by the tip of the handle and use your spoon or mixing stick to push the rest of the bag entirely under the surface. Keep the bag submerged for 15-30 seconds to give the solution time to soak through the bag entirely.<sup>[11]</sup>
  1. You typically wouldn't need to soak a leather shoe or belt in the alcohol and water for this long, but bags have plenty of creases and the fabric is typically much thicker than other leather objects.
3. **Lift the bag out and hang it by the straps with a heavy object inside.** Pull the bag up out of the solution and wait 5-10 seconds for the excess alcohol and water to drip off into the bucket. Then, hang the bag on a hook or tension rod over a sink, tub, or bucket. Set a 5–10 lb (2.3–4.5 kg) brick, weight, or other heavy object inside of the bag to weigh it down.<sup>[12]</sup>

**Tip:** Use your best judgement when weighing your bag down. Don't pick something so big that it will break the straps, but you do need to weigh it down to stretch the material out. Use the strength of your straps to guide how much weight you should put in the bag.

4. **Let the bag hang and air dry for 8-12 hours to stretch it out.** Wait for the heavy object to stretch the leather out after the alcohol has softened it up. Keep it on the hook or tension rod for half a day or so and let it drip dry into the bucket, sink, or tub underneath. After the bag has entirely dried out, take it down and enjoy your newly stretched out bag!<sup>[13]</sup>
  1. If the fabric lining is still a little damp, use a blow dryer to heat the inside of the bag and remove the excess moisture.

You finished reading the article "**How to Stretch a Leather Bag**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.