

# DOCTOR BAG - THE ALL-TIME DREAM BAG

crocodile doctor bag  
- ladies' handbag style



vintage doctor bags  
- RELIVING



2013 update  
hidden frame

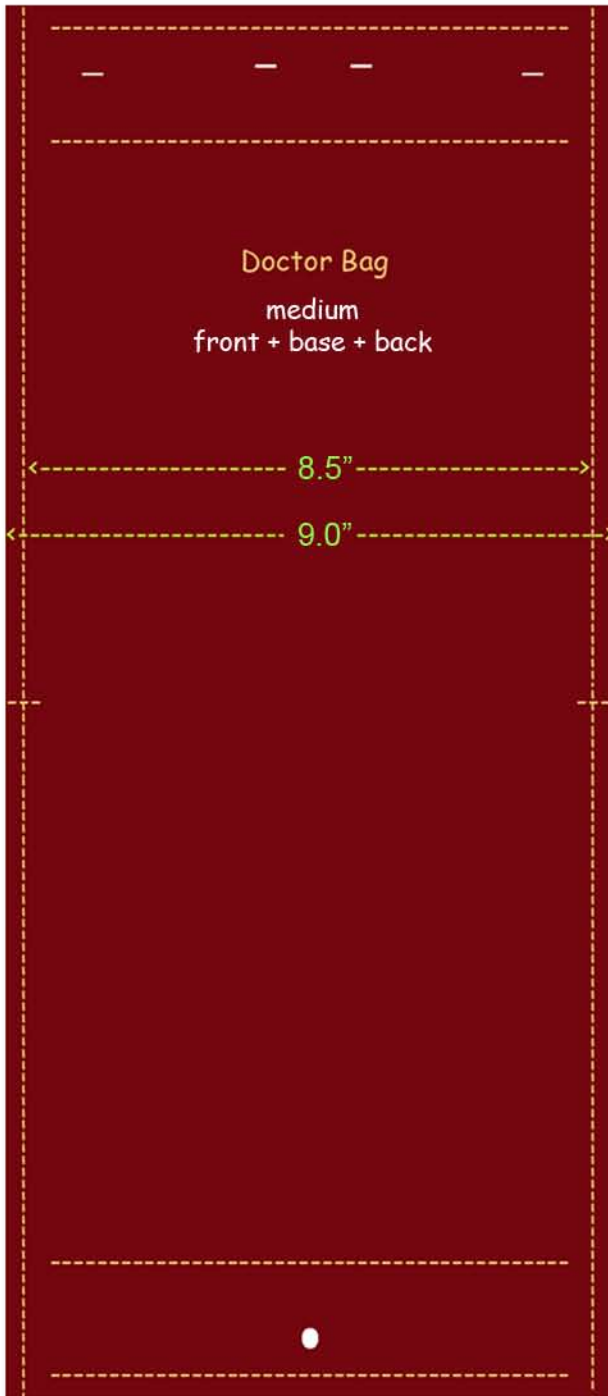


2014 update  
45cm screw-set  
retro frame

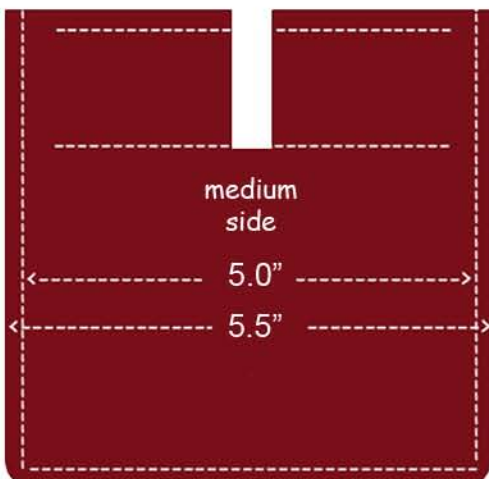


black  
argentina  
caiman  
crocodile  
mini  
doctor  
bag





flatten  
crooked  
parts for  
easier  
utilization



the base is made narrower  
due to the special shape of  
crocodile skin, in fact a  
slimmer base makes the  
whole bag rather elegant  
without compromising the  
doctor bag style



with the base being narrowed, the front-base-back piece, which is cut according to the standard pattern, is becoming longer than the sides, it is trimmed level for attaching the calfhide extension



there will be natural folds formed at corners, let them raise smoothly rather than suppress them for uneven flatness

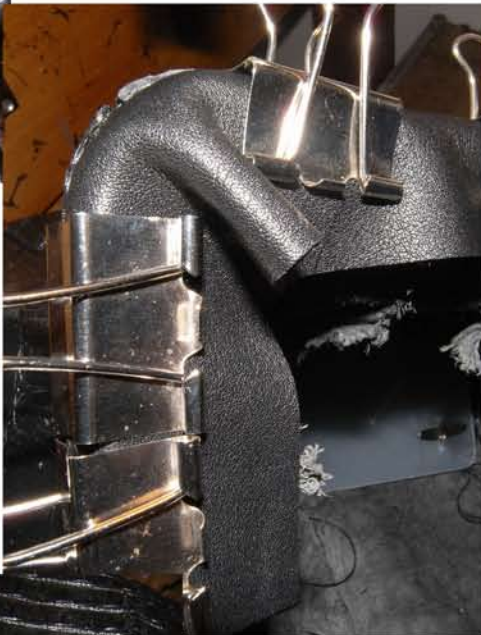


a strap of calf or soft cowhide extension is added, along the top edges of the crocodile skin bag, for enclosing the main skeleton of the frame set, it makes wrapping the metal bars more manageable and tight; extensive skin is also saved without the luxury profile spoiled

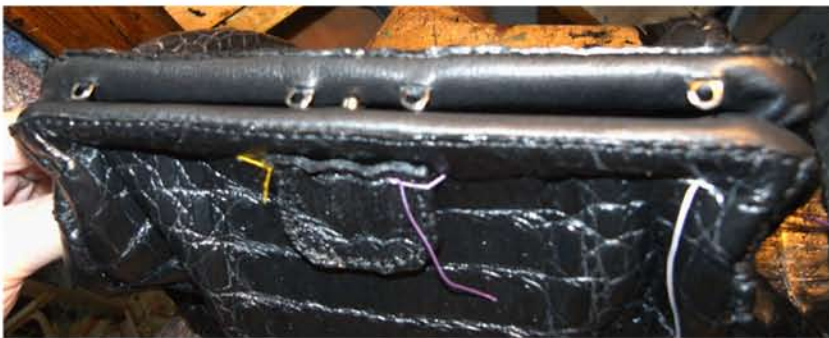




mark and obtain the positions  
for every raised part by actual  
wrapping, rather than measuring,  
it is direct and easy and the  
most accurate method



get the stitching lines  
by actual wrapping, not by  
measuring, then punch flat  
for corresponding holes for  
main stitching



remember to  
add hand pull  
and hard base





after frame wrapping, install the fabric lining bag which is in the exact same size of the croco skin outer, by using the core stitches as sewing support





**black caiman  
crocodile  
mini doctor bag**

frame width 8.5"  
base 8.5" x 5"  
height 8.5"







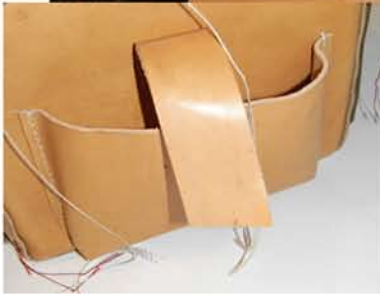
before: this one i bought  
from eBay is said to be used  
as a pigeon carrier



getting a vintage bag for its frame, make sure, other than an intact frame, all lock and hinge mechanisms must work smoothly, while faded or even lost paints and slight distortions are inevitable

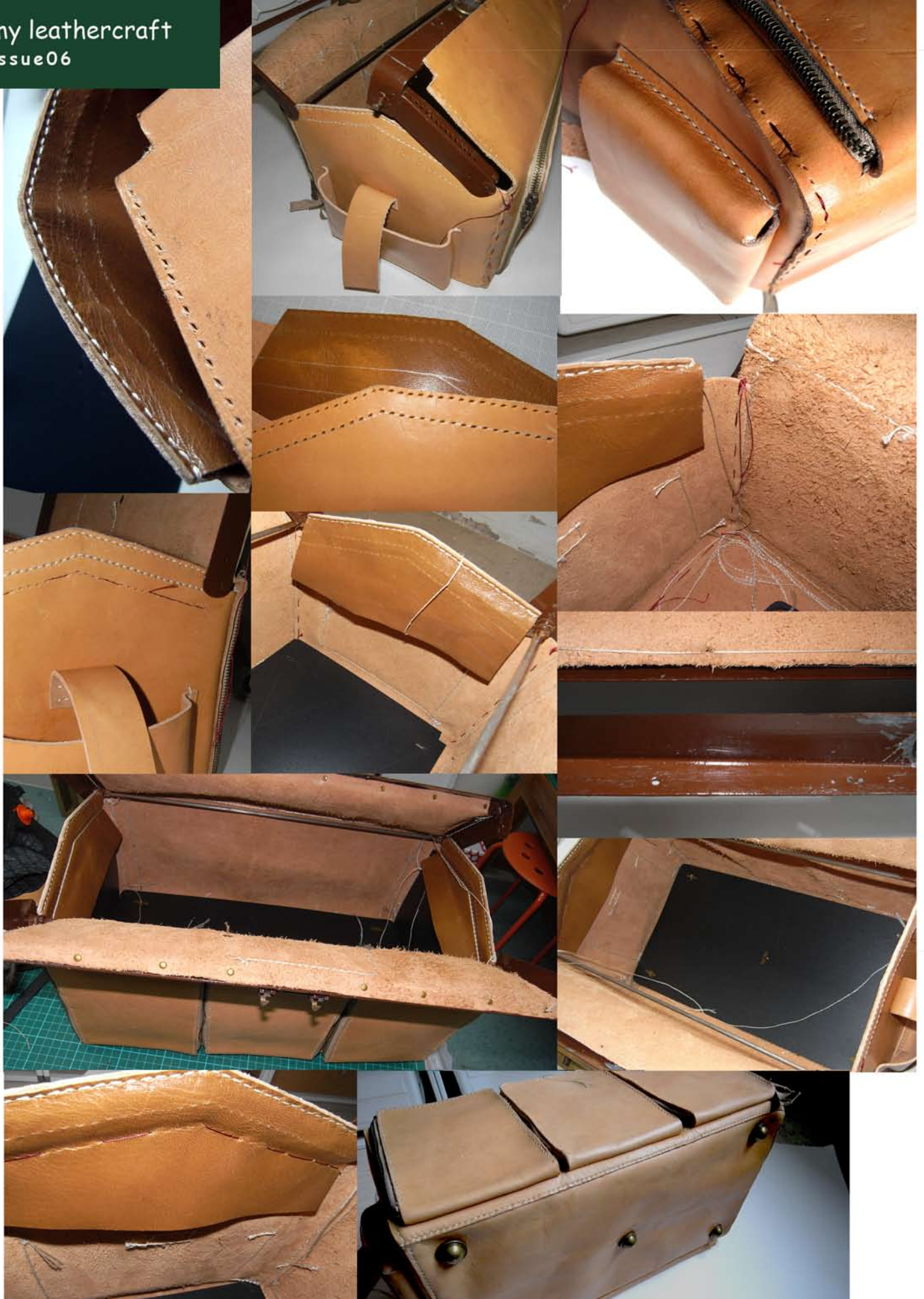


it takes strong quality cowhide to carry a real doctor bag frame, but not necessary to be hard or stiff, a thickness of 1.8-2mm is recommended, there are a wide range of choices in both colors and surface treatments in this category, used here is 2mm chinese vachette cowhide



bag size and structure can be copied directly from the original, while about size which can only made taller; outside pockets are always cool functional details





do thorough running stitches  
for trial installation, in order  
to check frame mechanism as  
well as bag form before actual construction



for big bag like this, a sturdy handle is necessary, by adding a metal or PP plastic layer to the ends of the handle simply ensure a reliable and lasting structure, the ones used here are shoes buckle holders, which already have holes for rivet setting



a good handle looks good, holds firmly and feels comfortable



old doctor bags are designed to be hand-carried, extra parts would be needed for shoulder strap holders



besides for the base, hard PP sheet is also used to support the shorter sides, for maintaining shape of the bag and as good backing for part installation

before



after





side pocket:  
a fun and  
practical detail



full lining to cover  
stitchings and nails,  
strong fabric like canva  
is recommended





previous remakes



the main frame of this vintage doctor bag is  
virtually the most general of the type, many  
nice choices available on the internet



before



after





soft but strong  
cowhide is used  
for this remaking,  
giving a unconventional  
casual smart appearance



an original hole (1) and an additional one on the frame are used to install shoulder strap holders



original brass fittings



original brass lock



original brass fittings

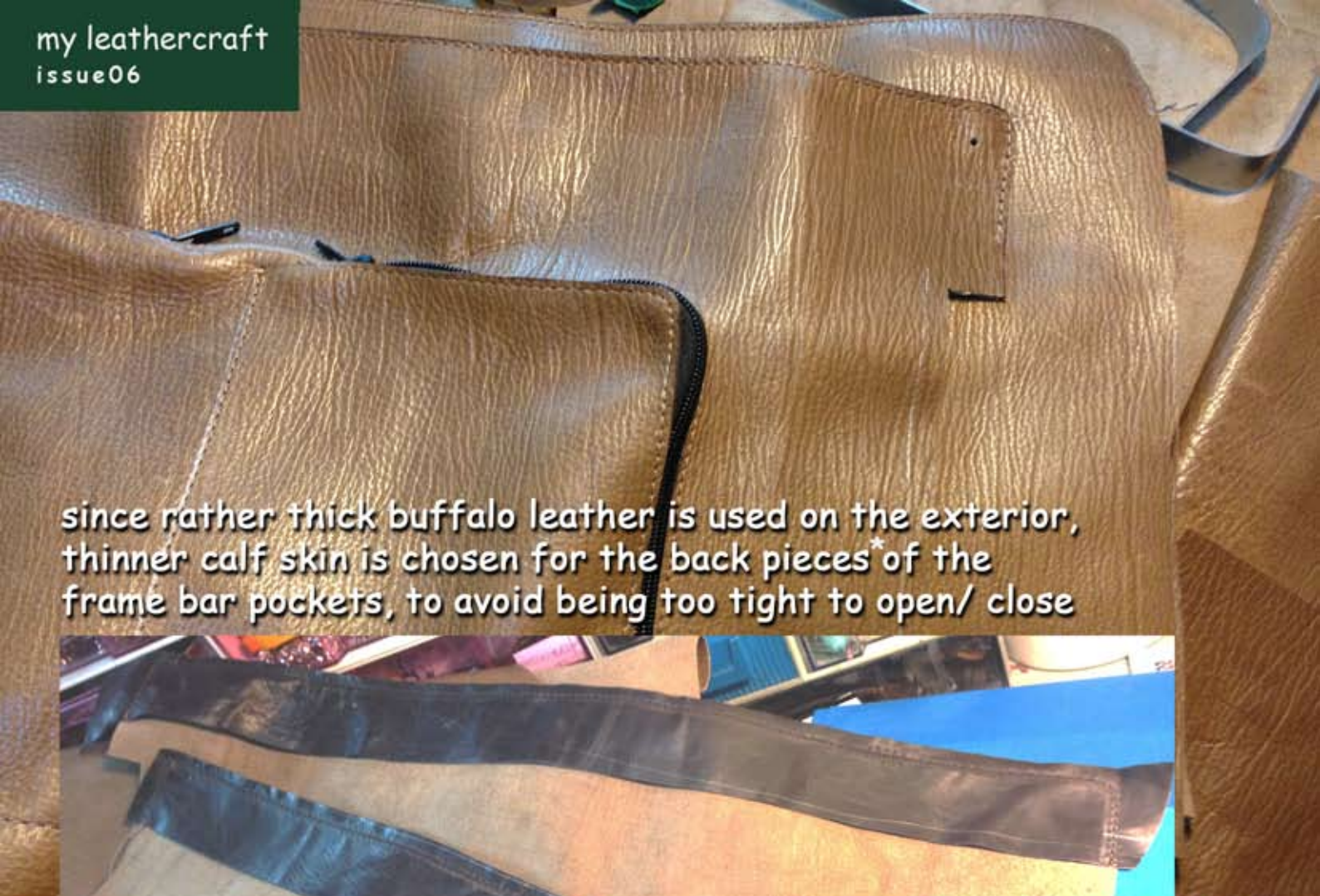




this most popular doctor bag style has the simplest frame structure, the set used here is of 40cm x 9cm, the widest for one centre lock design (with no side locks), any wider width should be of multiple locking mechanisms, especially for single handle design



use soft ruler to get accurate measurements



since rather thick buffalo leather is used on the exterior, thinner calf skin is chosen for the back pieces\* of the frame bar pockets, to avoid being too tight to open/ close



glue tight at top margins of the front and back pieces for edge trimming and hole punching, result would be more consistent than treating separately

\* if material is thin and flexible enough the back piece can be formed by folding down an extended front piece

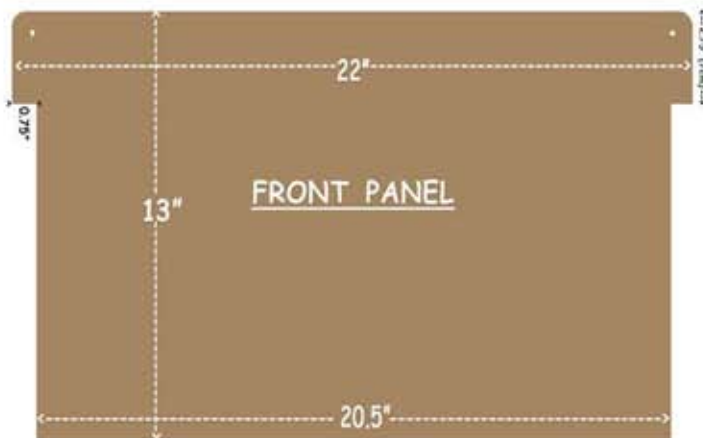
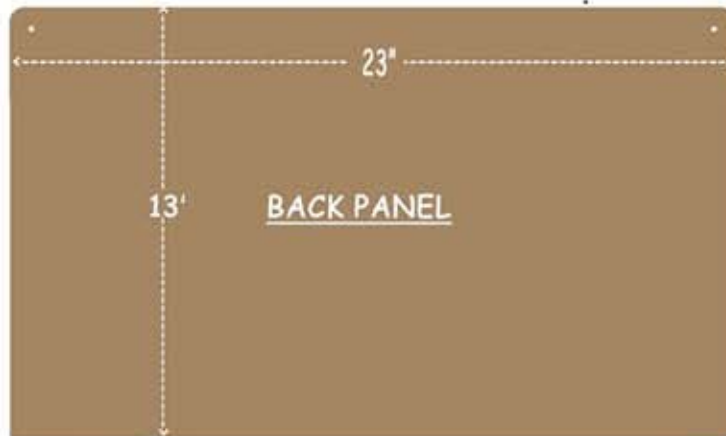


frame bars should be enclosed tightly,  
remember to install all top bar fixtures  
before stitching up



sew the lining bag along the  
frame bar pocket stitching  
lines

measurements  
here exclude those  
of the frame bar  
pocket back pieces



to achieve a nice looking and tight secure closure, the major locking mechanism should be installed with the support of the top frame bar (the snap button here)







use flat base, or single side, rivets to install top bar fixtures, any raised parts would cause unnecessary friction



remember to install hard base with studs before the lining bag





strap setting  
as backpack





fully open



joint  
exposed



joint  
hidden





the bag part of a traditional doctor bag is simply a rectangular box without a lid, have the frame laid open flat is the most direct approach to obtain the base shape and measurements, the length and depth

for this frame, virtually no special cuts along the top edges are needed to give way to locks or joints or any other features, therefore the last size data to consider would be the height of the bag

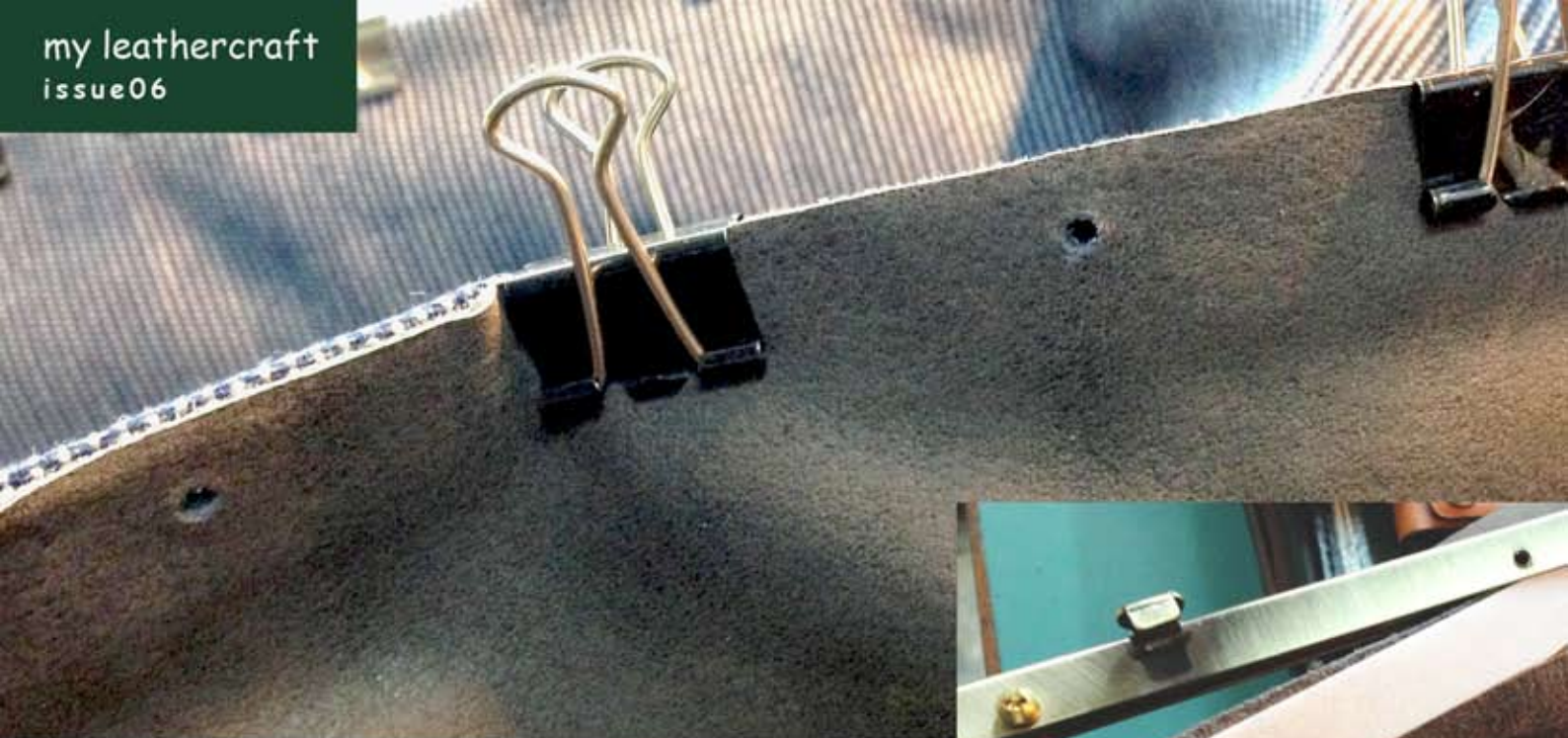
handle holders are screw-set, allowing handle to be made and then attached onto in a free condition before installation



centre lock and handle holders

side lock and shoulder strap holder





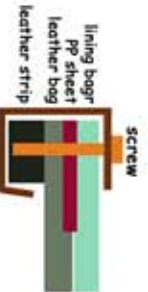
for soft leather, top edges must be strengthened before installation



this inward ridge gives additional grip of the bag by holding the leather strip sewn outside the bag layers between screw holes



strips of 1mm thick PP sheet are attached firmly between the top edges of the leather bag and the lining bag, forming a solid rim for punching screw holes (reinforcing strips should avoid frame corners and folding joints)



cross-section view of frame and bag



leather strip \*

leather bag \*

\* pp sheet strip

\* lining bag



glue firmly together all layers along the top edges, best compact as one single layer



insert the bag into the frame and set as tight and fit as possible



no special cuts are needed for the folding joints or frame corners, while minor adjustment might be needed for the centre lock



traditional doctor bags are like rigid cowhide boxes, to modernize soft but strong leather are recommended



for big bags install 5-6 legs in 3 rows to support sides as well as middle parts



incorporating features with the frame saves installation efforts while at the same time achieve clean results and display smart thinkings

when the circumference of the bag match the frame, it folds perfectly and form naturally a nice side look when closed

# <my leathercraft>

6 issues 2012

my leathercraft  
issue01\_A

**Apert Campus™**  
1. 4.5 x 3.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**Apert Campus™** 1. 4.5 x 3.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**Featured skills 專題技巧**

- working on leather 專工皮料
- edge finishing 專工邊
- padding base 專工底
- cutting leather 專工皮
- cutting angles 專工角
- seal corners 專工角

my leathercraft  
issue01\_A

**Water bag style watch**  
1. 1.5 x 0.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**Water bag style watch** 1. 1.5 x 0.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**Featured skills 專題技巧**

- #17 gluing 1.5 x 0.5
- #20 bag setting 1.5 x 0.5
- #30 pattern making 1.5 x 0.5

my leathercraft  
issue01\_A

**USA bag**  
1. 1.5 x 0.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**USA bag** 1. 1.5 x 0.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**USA bag** 1. 1.5 x 0.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**Featured skills 專題技巧**

- #18 handle blocks 1.5 x 0.5
- #19 bag structure 1.5 x 0.5
- #21 bag setting 1.5 x 0.5

my leathercraft  
issue04\_A

**Water bag style watch**  
1. 1.5 x 0.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**Water bag style watch** 1. 1.5 x 0.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**Water bag style watch** 1. 1.5 x 0.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**Featured skills 專題技巧**

- water setting 1.5 x 0.5
- hard base construction 1.5 x 0.5
- padding 1.5 x 0.5
- bag finishing 1.5 x 0.5

my leathercraft  
issue04\_A

**The most advanced crocodile skin CROCODILE**

**crocodile half strap hand bag**  
1. 1.5 x 0.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**crocodile half strap hand bag** 1. 1.5 x 0.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**crocodile half strap hand bag** 1. 1.5 x 0.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**Featured skills 專題技巧**

- bagging 1.5 x 0.5
- padding 1.5 x 0.5

my leathercraft  
issue04\_A

**DOCTOR BAG - THE ALL-TIME DREAM BAG**

**crocodile doctor bag - ladies' handbag style**

**crocodile doctor bag - ladies' handbag style** 1. 1.5 x 0.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**crocodile doctor bag - ladies' handbag style** 1. 1.5 x 0.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**2013 update hidden frame**

**2013 update hidden frame** 1. 1.5 x 0.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

**2014 update 45cm screw-set retro frame**

**2014 update 45cm screw-set retro frame** 1. 1.5 x 0.5  
2. 1.5 x 0.5  
3. 1.5 x 0.5  
4. 1.5 x 0.5  
5. 1.5 x 0.5  
6. 1.5 x 0.5  
7. 1.5 x 0.5  
8. 1.5 x 0.5  
9. 1.5 x 0.5  
10. 1.5 x 0.5

leathercraft by ava LAU  
100% original brain work  
100% heart-and-handmade  
100% one&only limited production

2011-2014

www.al-leathercraft.com