

# TIPS SHEET FOR CUTTING LEATHER

- Make and use oak-tag patterns to provide better cutting stability and to cut sharp clean edges:
  - get a piece of oak-tag or other thick, firm paper
  - fold the paper so that you have a double layer of paper
  - staple the free ends together
  - cut the doubled-over paper into the proper pattern shape.
- To help remember where you are in a cutting job, flip over each left/right pattern piece as soon as you've cut from it and set it aside.
- Make sure that you set the already used pattern piece with the still-to-be cut side facing up.
- When you've cut as much as you can from one skin, use the pattern pieces you've set aside to cut from the next skin.
- As you cut each pattern piece, keep in mind which sits next to which in the garment – this allows you to match grains and colours much better.
- Also note that the stretchy areas of the skin should not be placed at the stress points of the garment or anywhere visible.
- Remember that the vertical dimensions of the main sections of the garment should be cut from the lengthways dimension of the skin – this makes sure that the left-to-right dimension of your garment enjoys the stretchier, crossways grain of the animal.
- Smaller pieces can be laid either crossways or lengthways on the skin to produce the best yield.
- If you are cutting a printed or embossed skin, then you must cut it so that the design on each piece goes in the same direction.
- If using suede, cut all of the pattern pieces in the same direction.
- Never stretch a skin to produce a bigger yield – if you do the pieces will shrink back and not fit easily together.