

Design Resource

Leather Toys - Indore, Madhya Pradesh

Handicrafts of Leather

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral and Sandhya B.
NID, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/leather-toys-indore-madhya-pradesh>



1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details

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2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details

Introduction

Ujjain is one of the holy places of India, which is noted for conducting the most noted event Kumbh mela. It is held for every twelve years. The event is a mass gathering of people from various places. It is a major event in the life of the city Ujjain. Millions of people come and take a dip in the sacred river. With the sacred events that go on, the city is ancient and is the largest in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. The city is known for its tradition and culture. There are interesting activities that capture ones eye, handicrafts being one among those – stone crafts and leather goods are noted ones.

Leather tanning is said to be the oldest human activities. Earlier the skins obtained from hunting could be used for clothing or making tents, but they became stiff at temperatures and rotted cause of heat, to prevent from it animal fat was rubbed to make it stronger and flexible. Another process was smoking, which almost started like by an accident and became formaldehyde tanning. This is found in the vapors produced by burning green leaves and branches, after this was found how to stop the rotting of leather by the method of drying or dehydrating action of salt. Vegetable tanning was also known. There was advancement in the processing technique during 12th century. Oil tanning and finishing were carried to improvise on the malleability and appearance of the leather. Leather is a kind of material that is very durable and flexible. It is obtained by processing animal skin. The skins are processed and it undergoes many before putting it to use in making the leather products. There are many kinds of goods that are made out of leather in India. Few of them are trunks, suitcases, vanity cases, handbags, wallets, purses, passport holders, cardholders, diary covers, belts and caps. There are various kinds of leather available depending on the unique textures and rich colors. The pleasure of working with the leather is in the longevity of the products that last beyond the years of fabrics.

Leather toys of Ujjain are very much known to the world. The toys are exported mostly as there is more demand, trading and selling brings more revenue. Initially people involved in just trading got in to knowing of how the toys were made and began the manufacture unit of these leather toys. The manufacture of this leather toys have been running successful from years. The raw materials are obtained from Indore (one of the main supplies of leather).

Ujjain toys are most noted and they made of leather-coated sheets. Briefly the structure of the toy is made roughly from the wires. Paper roll is stuffed and tied. A mixture of paper pulp is applied to give the shape of the animals. It is allowed to dry and coated with leather sheets.

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Mr. Rajiv Ranjan, owner of leather handicrafts.



The work station of leather toy handicraft.

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1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details



Leather toys are made by using recycled materials.



Skilled artisan making the armature of the toy.

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1. **Introduction**
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details



Female artisan strengthening the toy by pasting cotton cloth.



Senior artisans engaged in packing the toy.



Horse toy made out of leather is sold mostly around the world.



Goat leather are used in making leather toy.

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Tools and Raw Materials

The tools that are required for the Leather Toys:

- **Glue** - Tamarind and atta gum paste.
- **Paper** - Paper is used to bring the volume to the toy.
- **Paper pulp** - Paper pulp is used to cover the paper stuff.
- **GI (galvanized steel wire) wires** - GI wires are used to get the basic shape of the animal.
- **Mold** - Mold is used to get the shape of the animal.
- **Scissors** - Scissors are used to cut the leather.
- **Cotton cloth** - Printed cotton cloth is used to cover the toy.
- **Leather sheet** - Processed leather sheets are used to cover the toy.
- **Watercolor** - Watercolors are used to give a coat of color to the leather toys.

1. Introduction

2. **Tools and Raw Materials**

3. Making Process

4. Products

5. Video

6. Contact Details



Waste plastic covers are used to make the armature of the toy.



Stencil mold is used to apply paper clay on the toy.

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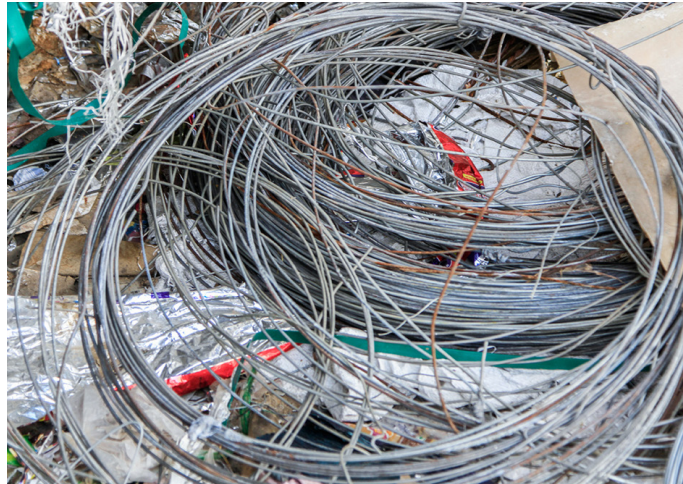
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Recycled binding wire is used to make the skeleton of the toy.



Adhesive is applied on toy to stick the leather or cloth.



Leather is of the main raw material to make toy.

1. Introduction
2. **Tools and Raw Materials**
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details

Design Resource

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<http://www.dsource.in/resource/leather-toys-indore-madhya-pradesh/tools-and-raw-materials>

1. Introduction
2. **Tools and Raw Materials**
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details



Scissor is used to cut the leather or cloth in required shape and size.



Tamarind seed powder is used to make adhesive.



Extra pieces of leather on toy is cut out using a blade.

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1. Introduction
2. **Tools and Raw Materials**
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details



New kind of finishing is made on toy by using cotton cloth.



Cotton thread is winded on plastic cover to attain required shape.



Using waste newspapers clay is prepared to make toys.

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Making Process

The armature for the required animal is made ready. The GI (galvanized steel wire) wire is bent according to the animal that is going to be made. Required amount of paper is rolled and tied to the armature. Mold of the animals that is pre-made is used. Paper pulp that is prepared like a fine clay paste is put on mold and then the idol is made ready. The mold is brushed with oil and paper pulp is spread over the mold and the casting of it is done. The edges are corrected and additional details like details facial features and curves for the body part are added to the toys. The paper pulp covered toys are left for drying in the sun for three or four days. Later it is covered with a sheet of processed leather, the leather sheet is neatly stuck with the help of the glue. Water colors are used to give a coat of color to the toys. The products are washed in watercolor and kept for drying. The eyes are attached and final touches are done to complete the toy making. The toys that keep the market running are the elephants, giraffe, horses, camel and tigers. The process remains same for any size of the toy varying in the duration of time taken to complete the making.

Leather - The leather is obtained from Hyderabad, Kanpur and Madras sometimes otherwise it is got mainly from Indore. Good flexible leather is used and a tone of color can be given to the toys by washing with watercolors.

Paper Pulp - Paper powder and tamarind seeds powder are soaked in water for two days and grinded well to make fine clay like paste. This paper pulp is used to mold and caste the animal toys. It is used to give correct features to the toys. It can be used just like the clay to shape the animal. The toys are dried in the sun otherwise it is difficult to carry on with the process. The making of toys during winter gets little hindered as they need the products to dry under sun.

Mold - The molds of camel and other animals are kept ready for the fast completion of toy making process. After stuffing the paper roll a coat of paper pulp is applied and placed in a mold with another layer of paper pulp in it. The molds when joined together complete the features of the animal and details like eyes, depth and body curves are hand done and finished.

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details

Design Resource

Leather Toys - Indore, Madhya Pradesh

Handicrafts of Leather

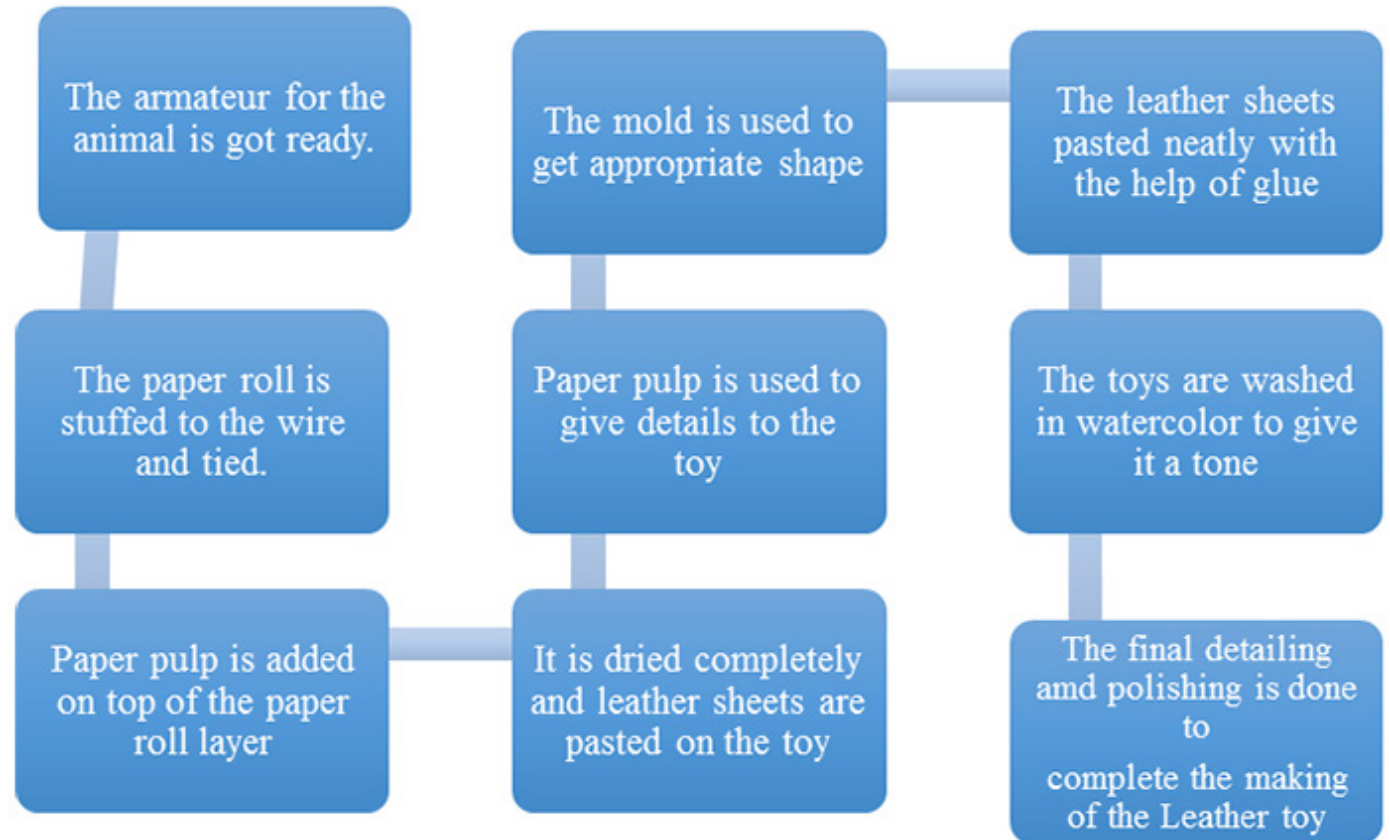
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<http://www.dsource.in/resource/leather-toys-indore-madhya-pradesh/making-process>

Flow Chart:



1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details

Design Resource

Leather Toys - Indore, Madhya Pradesh

Handicrafts of Leather

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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/leather-toys-indore-madhya-pradesh/making-process>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details



The skeleton of the toy is done using binding wire.



The paper clay is applied to the mold to make the toy.



Design Resource

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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/leather-toys-indore-madhya-pradesh/making-process>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details



The plastic covers are placed on the skeleton to make the anatomy of the toy.



The toy is kept under sun to dry.



The paper clay is applied on toy by placing armature between molds.

Design Resource

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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/leather-toys-indore-madhya-pradesh/making-process>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details



Face of the toy is made by placing molds near neck.

The strings are bent evenly to make leg.

Design Resource

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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/leather-toys-indore-madhya-pradesh/making-process>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details



Toy is strengthen near the bends by pasting cotton cloth.



Adhesive is applied all over the toy.



Leather is pasted on the toy.

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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/leather-toys-indore-madhya-pradesh/making-process>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details



The leather is cut according to the shape of the toy.



Toy is kept for drying after leather is pasted.



Leather is covered all over the toy.

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Using blade extra leather is cut out from the toy.

Leather color is applied on the toy.



Toys are kept for drying.

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details

Design Resource

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<http://www.dsource.in/resource/leather-toys-indore-madhya-pradesh/making-process>



Toy is designed by painting near required places using spray machine.

Cloth is also used instead of leather for a new finishing.

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Video
6. Contact Details



Eye and ear is pasted on the toy.

The toy is packed by senior artisan.

Design Resource

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Handicrafts of Leather

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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/leather-toys-indore-madhya-pradesh/products>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. **Products**
5. Video
6. Contact Details

Products

The toys that are manufactured and exported mainly are camel, elephants, horses, giraffes, tiger and zebra. They are the best-selling toys while gorilla, dinosaurs, kangaroo are only made on the order basis. The price varies according to the size of the toys. For a toy of seventy two inches the INR can go up to INR 20,000. There is more scope for export business and focus is maintained on keeping the quality of the toys and pool in some innovative ideas to uplift the leather craft.



Beautifully made jumping horse out of leather.



Size of the leather toy is available from 4 inches to live size.

Design Resource

Leather Toys - Indore, Madhya Pradesh

Handicrafts of Leather

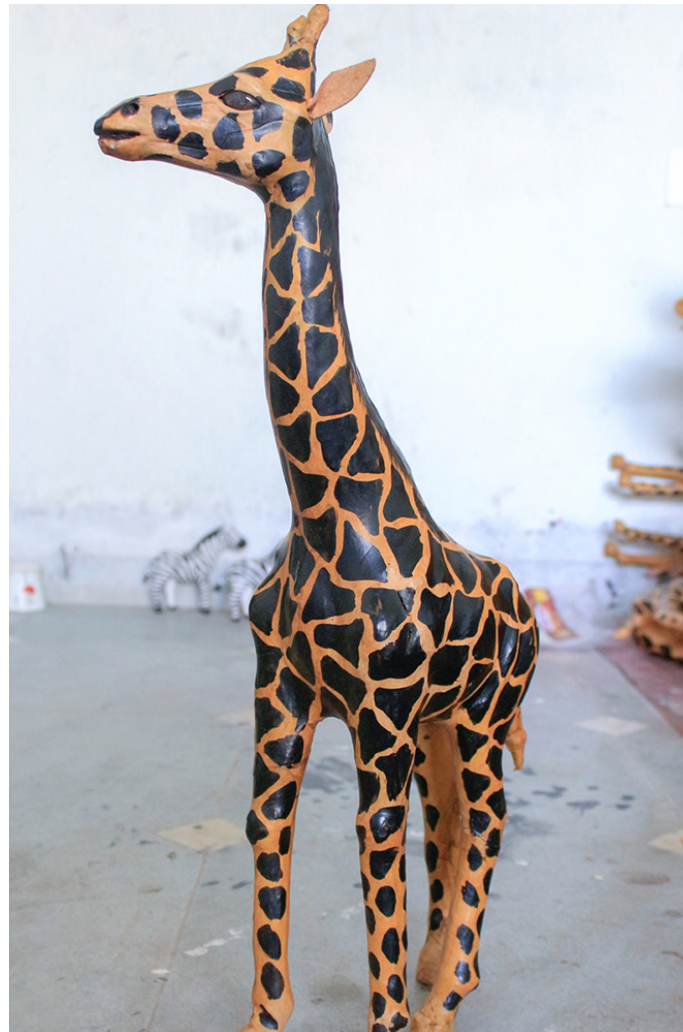
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1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. **Products**
5. Video
6. Contact Details



Price of a leather toy starts from INR.35.



Leather toy of an elephant attractively made in roaring position.



Leather toys for export market.

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1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. **Video**
6. Contact Details

Video



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Design Resource

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Contact Details

This documentation was done by **Professor Bibhudutta Baral** and Sandhya B. at **NID, Bengaluru**.

You can get in touch with Professor Bibhudutta Baral at [bibhudutta\[at\]nid.edu](mailto:bibhudutta[at]nid.edu).

You could write to the following address regarding suggestions and clarifications:

Key Contacts:

Shri Rajeev Tanjan, Proprietor and Artist
Leather Handicrafts
Indore
Madhya Pradesh
Landhone: - 0731-4032768

Helpdesk Details:

Co-ordinator
Project e-kalpa
R & D Campus
National Institute of Design
#12 HMT Link Road, Off Tumkur Road
Bengaluru 560 022
India.

Phone: +91 80 2357 9054

Fax: +91 80 23373086

Email: [dsource.in\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:dsource.in[at]gmail.com)

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Video
6. **Contact Details**