Leather Goods Sourcing & Test Checklist

One printable page: the type picker, the specs to lock for all 7 leather goods types, the tests to run before bulk, and the material rules. Compiled from over 500 production runs on the LantaoBags factory floor.

1 Match the type to the channel

TYPE	BEST CHANNEL	SPEC TO LOCK	FAILURE TO AVOID
Structured briefcase	Executive & heritage	Firm full-grain or top-grain; vegetable-tanned front panels	Panel sags more than 0.5 in in a 48-hour hang test
Soft-milled tote	Everyday retail & gifting	Chrome-tanned top-grain, 1.2–1.4 mm	Strap anchor tears through soft grain under load
Leather backpack	Premium daily carry	1.2 mm body, 2.0 mm base & strap zones	Undersized rivet pulls through within 500 cycles
Duffel / weekender	Travel & gifting	Firm top-grain or full-grain; solid brass hardware	Zinc-plated clip snaps around 35 lb
Wallets / small goods	Accessory & catalog sets	Top-grain; edges skived to ~0.4 mm	Thick edges crack the edge paint after 30 flexes
Cosmetic cases / pouches	Gift & line extension	Smooth stain-resistant shell; waterproof lining	Raw cotton lining wicks oils within 14 hours
Hybrid / specialty	Corporate & sport-adjacent	Top-grain on handles only; synthetic on heavy panels	Full-leather base adds weight and soaks up dew

2 Lock these specs for the 7 types

1 Structured briefcase

- ☐ Firm full-grain or top-grain; veg-tanned front panels
- ☐ Over-build the base, handle anchors and gusset depth
- ☐ Grade the front-panel hide; select heavier panels to stop warping

2 Soft-milled tote

- ☐ Chrome-tanned top-grain, 1.2–1.4 mm for visible panels
- ☐ Soft body, but reinforced base and strap anchors
- ☐ Control empty weight — it decides the purchase

3 Leather backpack

- ☐ 1.2 mm body panels, 2.0 mm base & strap zones
- ☐ #8 YKK zippers on the main compartment

4 Duffel / weekender

- ☐ Firm top-grain or full-grain; verify tear strength
- ☐ Solid brass clips and rings, never zinc alloy

- ☐ Rivet head 3x the leather thickness, minimum
- ☐ Wrap handles completely under the base

5 Wallets & card holders

- ☐ Top-grain for bulk control and repeatable card slots
- ☐ Skive edges to ~0.4 mm; burnish or edge-paint
- ☐ Low-profile linings for pocket stack tolerances

6 Cosmetic cases & pouches

- ☐ Stain-resistant smooth shell for daily hand contact
- ☐ Waterproof nylon twill lining, not raw cotton
- ☐ Wide opening and a smooth zipper curve

7 Hybrid / specialty

- ☐ Top-grain on handles for the luxury story
- ☐ Wipeable synthetic on heavy side panels and base
- ☐ Never use full leather where a technical fabric wins

3 Tests before bulk

- ☐ Hang test: a hide sagging more than 0.5 in over 48 hours fails
- ☐ Drop test: backpacks without stiffened panels failed the 20 lb strap-anchor drop
- ☐ Rivet rule: a head under 3x the leather thickness pulls through within 500 cycles
- ☐ Flex test (ISO 5402): over-thick edge cuts cracked the edge paint after 30 flexes
- ☐ Hardware: zinc clips snapped around 35 lb; solid brass survived 80 lb
- ☐ Lining: raw cotton ruined the shell within 14 hours; TPU-coated twill held

4 Material rules before you approve

- ☐ Structured bags: firm full-grain for wear, or top-grain for consistency; vegetable-tan for stiffness
- ☐ Soft bags: chrome-tanned top-grain 1.2–1.4 mm — never force stiff briefcase leather onto a tote
- ☐ Small goods: top-grain for bulk control and uniform photos
- ☐ Hardware: solid brass over zinc alloy; PVD coating stops scratches better than electroplating
- ☐ Edges: skive to ~0.4 mm — thick stacked edges warp the seam
- ☐ Full-grain keeps natural scars: lower cutting yield, less catalog consistency

5 Quote, sample & QC gates

- ☐ Confirm MOQ per style and per colour in writing
- ☐ Lock the tech pack before sampling; sign and retain the golden sample
- ☐ Approved PP sample, built with production tooling, before bulk
- ☐ In-line checks through the run; final pre-shipment audit at AQL 2.5 (ISO 2859-1)
- ☐ Verify certifications: ISO 9001 · BSCI · SEDEX · GRS · FSC
- ☐ Send target silhouette, leather type, thickness, finish, lining and hardware metal before quoting