SOFT FILLER INSTRUCTIONS
FOR REPAIRING LEATHER & VINYL

Cat claw punctures on real leather are more easily repaired using sandpaper and super glue. Use Soft Filler to repair more severe damage (think scratching post) or synthetics like vinyl.

Bonded leather is a synthetic that delaminates, so repair is generally not recommended. That said, Soft Filler can be used to repair isolated areas of damage.

IS A SUBPATCH NECESSARY?
If your leather or vinyl is torn such that you can see the substrate (batting or foam), insert a subpatch. This serves as the structural foundation of your repair. It prevents further damage by strengthening the material and allows your repair to move freely over the substrate.

SUBPATCH SUPPLIES
- iron-on patch or strong, thin mending fabric
- flexible glue (3M® Plastic Emblem & Trim Adhesive or LocTite® Vinyl, Fabric, Plastic Adhesive)
- scissors
- tweezers
- large needle or toothpicks
- piece of cardboard
- rags
- rubbing alcohol (in case of a glue mess)
- small board, book, or other flat weight

SUBPATCH INSTRUCTIONS
1. Trim any material that is stiff (often caused by a burn or other glue). The perimeter of the hole should be as pliable and soft as the original material.
2. Level the substrate, if necessary, by gluing or gently whip-stitching a similar piece of foam or strips of rags until the substrate is fairly smooth.
3. Cut a patch so it is a little larger than the hole. Use a thin, strong patch that won’t show a silhouette. Round the corners for easier insertion. If necessary, cut out little triangles along curves and corners so it won’t overlap and create bulk.
4. Insert the patch under the tear(s) with tweezers. If the patch has adhesive on one side, insert this side up so it will contact the back of the leather or vinyl. Ensure the patch completely covers the hole and sits smoothly between the substrate and leather/vinyl. Any wrinkles or folds will create a bulge that looks and feels uneven.
5. Apply a thin layer of flexible fabric glue between the patch and the leather. Contact the surfaces for a few seconds. If you can pull the patch and leather/vinyl apart again, blow a little air on the glue to help it tack (or apply more glue if necessary), and then contact again. Follow with a smooth, firm weight, and hold. Allow the glue to completely dry.

ABOUT SOFT FILLER
This water-based compound cures with ambient air temperature, so keep the container closed and refrigerated when not in use. Minimize the amount of Soft Filler on smooth, undamaged surfaces. It adheres best to the subpatch, any fabric substrate or suede. Soft Filler cures to a flexible repair and can be lightly sanded, though rubbing alcohol is better for correcting inconsistencies in the cured compound.

SUPPLIES NEEDED
- rubbing alcohol
- rags or old T-shirts
- paper towels
- Soft Filler
- palette knife (or plastic butter knife)
- smoothing card or glossy business cards
- sunshine or lamp with incandescent bulb
- assortment of 220, 320, 500 grit wet-or-dry sandpaper
- food handler's gloves or saran wrap
- Rub 'n Restore® Color of your choice
- Clear Prep+Finish™
- cellulose sponge or spray gun for applying color and clear
SOFT FILLER APPLICATION

1. **Clean the surface** with rubbing alcohol. Allow to dry completely. Moisture in the material can inhibit Soft Filler’s ability to cure.

2. **Trim** any fibers or flaps. You can glue flaps back into place so long as they are totally flush. This is especially the case for cat claw damage or sharp, cracked or curling edges on vinyl. A hair dryer can help relax stiff cracks in synthetics like vinyl.

3. **Apply Soft Filler.** *Many thin layers will dry faster and stronger than one thick layer.*

4. **Smooth the compound with a card,** drawing in a direction parallel to the tear. Gently feather and blend the perimeter of the Soft Filler with a fingertip. Clean your tools with alcohol.

5. **Allow to cure.** *Do not use a hair dryer.* Sunshine or an incandescent bulb can be used to speed cure time. Allow the bulb to heat up, and then position it over the repair so that it warms the surface but is not hot enough to burn the back of your hand. If Soft Filler gets too hot, it will bubble up and then shrink down and may require smoothing and re-repair. Soft Filler is cured when it appears translucent and does not feel squishy or displace when gently touched. Allow the surface to return to room temperature before proceeding.

6. **Optional: gently sand or use rubbing alcohol** and an old T-shirt to smooth uneven areas. *Sanding the perimeter of the repair where Soft Filler is thinly feathered may cause it to peel up. If peeling occurs, use rubbing alcohol, which will reactivate cured filler and blend inconsistencies.* Use a rag dampened with water to remove any dust and allow to dry.

7. **Repeat steps 3-6** until a level surface is achieved.

8. **Texturize** the surface by applying a thin layer of Soft Filler. Spread with your card, and emboss with a gloved hand or saran wrap. Allow to cure. Polish with 500 grit wet-or-dry sandpaper if necessary.

9. **Dab or stipple a thin coat of Rub ’n Restore® Color** on the repaired area using a damp sponge. Allow to dry, and repeat as needed, blending outward. Follow with the desired clear finish. Please refer to our application instructions for these products. *Do not use alcohol-based dyes on your repair.*

**REPAIRING SEAMS**
Avoid getting Soft Filler into seams, as it will obscure the stitching and create an obvious patched appearance. If necessary, use your needle to trace the stitching, and remove excess Soft Filler.

**REPAIRING PERFORATED LEATHER**
While the filler is still wet, use a needle to re-punch any holes. Allow to cure. If necessary, re-punch the hole once more after the filler has cured, and then apply color. The shadow created from the hole should create a black dot that appears uniform with the rest.

**RE-WORKING REPAIRS**
Remove the color and clear finish with rubbing alcohol. You don’t need to strip all the color; just remove what comes off easily. Remember, rubbing alcohol will gradually remove the cured compound. Allow to dry, and repeat steps 4-9 until you are pleased with the result.

**TROUBLESHOOTING**
Please visit our website for troubleshooting articles.

**SHELF-LIFE**
Soft Filler has a six month shelf-life. Minimize air exposure, and keep refrigerated to maximize shelf-life.