

COGNAC



INSTRUCTIONS

Materials:

Because of the vintage style of this briefcase I recommend using veg tan - it will look its best, and also I highly recommend burnishing all the edges (all of them). Some other leathers also can be burnished like veg re-tan, and some combination tanned, so keep this in mind.

Also, there will be many layers to sew through, this is why I recommend choosing the leather wisely, especially for the back parts. So, when I recommend 3-4 oz, you'd better use something thinner than that, rather than thicker stuff. Also, this would also increase the weight of the finished briefcase. Therefore, choose wisely, and if you have doubts, contact me.

I also recommend skiving the end parts of the straps a little bit (the buckle strap where the buckle is attached, and at the end where they are sewn onto the bag; the shoulder strap ends where they are attached to swivel hooks; and the top D-ring holders at both ends as well because the thickness at these spots will be kinda insane if you don't)

Main gussets: anything relatively soft, not too thick, but that depends on your preferences.

Body (all three panels) - 5.5-6.5 oz, firm temper.

Back outer pocket, zipper patch, front pockets - 3-4 oz, medium to firm temper

All straps (for closure, shoulder strap) and the top handle - 7-8 oz.

Flap - something beautiful and firm, I'd say 7-8 oz.

Zippered pocket backing - something thin like 3 oz.

Hardware:

2 x 1" swivel hooks (or you can attach the straps directly to D-rings if you want)

Rivets (you will need a couple of long ones, like 3/4" - those on the back) or chicago screws

2 x 1" D-rings

2 x 1" buckles

2 x 3/4" loops for top handle

1 x 9" zipper (9.5, with margins)

8 x button studs (size is up to you, something medium)

Tools:

Scissors, knife (paper knife or rotary cutter would also work).

Stitching irons: my pattern is made for 5mm stitching irons (5 stitches per inch).

Needles - according to your thread size, a pair of harness needles.

Mallet, hole punches, rivet setter, 1" and 3/4" bag punches (oblong).

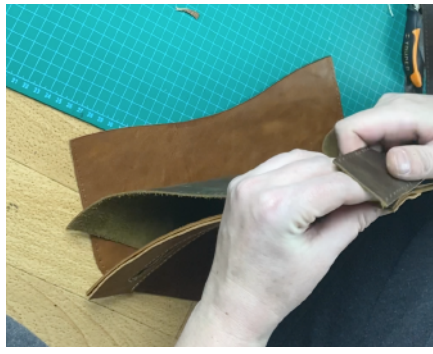
1" strap end punches, round and English.

Button hole punch would be nice.



Assemble the front pockets. Take the pocket front and corresponding gusset and stitch the gusset to the pocket with overlapping seam, the pocket front being on top. Then stitch the pockets to the front panel - in this case, the pocket seams on the front panel have 1 more hole on each end to secure the edges of the gussets.





After you pass the edge of the zippered pocket patch, pass one hole and add the back outer pocket (see the dashed lines on the pattern to check the pocket position).



You can burnish that edge now.

Instructions:

Print the pattern at actual size (100%). Use the reference on top of each page to make sure everything is printed correctly. Join the pages together. Cut the pieces.

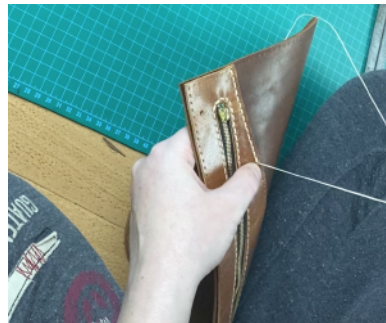
Burnish the hell out of all the edges except those that you will be sewing together (like gussets and body panels - those will be burnished together afterwards).

Mark the holes on the back outer pocket where the buckle straps will be attached.

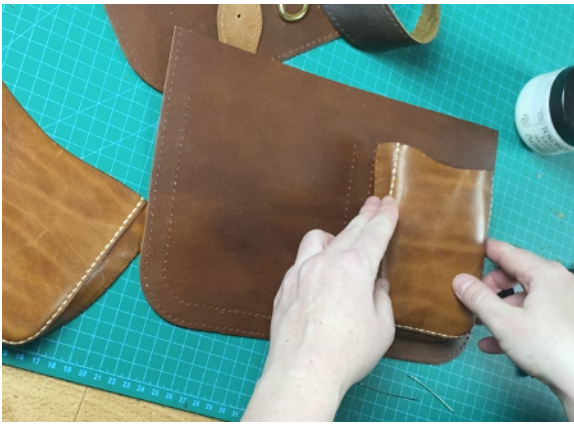
I'd start with the most boring part - make the strap keepers (make sure they're the right size for your straps, correct their length if they don't fit or are too loose. They should be pretty tight. Take 2 layers of your strap and wrap the keeper around to check that out).



Now, let's assemble the back panel with all those pockets. Take the zippered pocket patch and glue the zipper to the flesh side so it's ready for stitching. Take the back panel, put the patch with the zipper on it and stitch around the zipper, then stitch the bottom of the patch to the back panel.



We are now ready to assemble the whole back panel. Take the back panel itself with the zipper that you've just completed. Take the backing of the inner pocket and place it under the back panel (either flesh side up or grain side up - you decide). Take one of the main gussets, place it below the pocket backing and align it with the edge. There is equal amount of holes on all these parts so they are stitched all together.



Stitch both pockets on the front panel and put it aside.

Now, I would have done this on a later stage if I were you, because the less things are in the way - the better, but anyway I will tell you now how to attach the buckle straps. They are attached on the gusset side of the back panel, and you should have marked the position of them beforehand. If you didn't, dig that piece of the pattern out of the trash and mark them now.

Take the buckle straps, and align their stitching lines to the bottom of the assembled back panel on the gisset side (see pictures). You could had stitched them with the same seam when you were stitching around the whole back panel assembly but I don't recommend doing that, as it's not cool for maintenance - if some day you decide you need to replace the buckle straps, you would have to disassemble half of the bag. Yes, I've just made this up because I forgot to insert them but it's still legit.



You can stitch the front gusset (they're both the same by the way) to the front panel, however I would do that later cause it's more convenient to stitch the middle part to the back gusset first (with the front gusset) but that's question of preference.



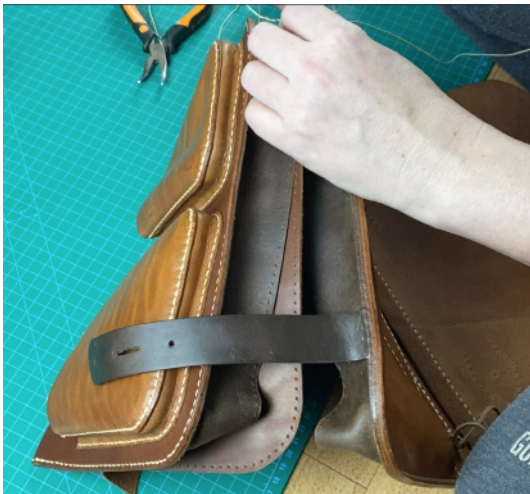
Take the back panel assembly and the flap. We have to stitch the flap on, this operation is straightforward, should be no complications :) Do not wrap the thread around the edges at the start and at the end - just an aesthetical suggestion.



Now we can finish assembling the body (again, more convenient here would be rivet the top D-ring holders to the top corners of the back panel - take the D-ring holders, insert D-rings, pass the ends through the slits on the flap from top to bottom, pass the rivet through them and through the back panel assembly from inside, and set the rivets. These rivets should be rather long, 1/2" is too short (I tried).



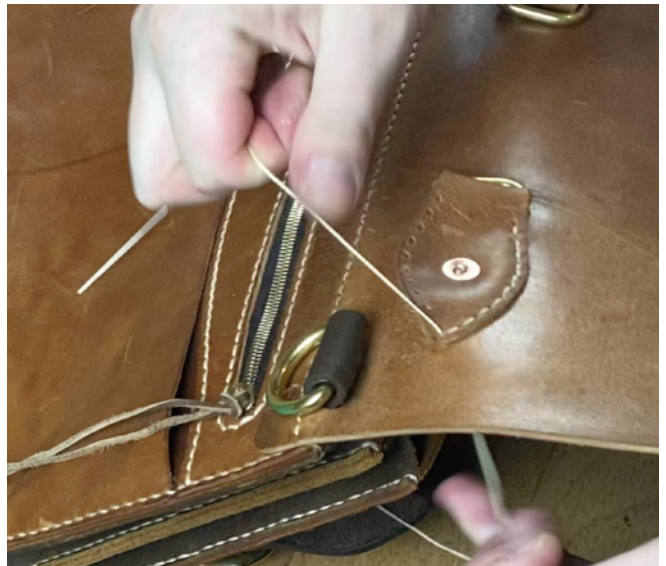
Now, take the middle panel and join the whole thing together sewing it in between two gussets.



Attach the buckles to the buckle straps. Insert the keeper between the buckle and the rivet:



Install the button studs on the flap. Buckle up your closure straps. Now let's take care of the flap - we have to attach the top handle holders. First, insert the loops, fold them in two, align the two holes and rivet them to the flap. Before setting the rivets, make sure that stitching holes are well aligned:



Make the handle - this is just one seam in the middle, then install the button studs, insert the ends into the loops and secure the handle on the bag.



I forgot to film the making of the strap but it's very straightforward.

First, on the swivel hook ends, secure a button stud on the flesh side. Pass the end with the button hole through the swivel hook, and secure the button. Place a keeper over the whole thing, below the button stud.

As for the adjustment studs, there are two of them, and they are 2 inches apart. Those, of course, are installed on the grain side, and there are keepers before and after these studs.



However, you can make any type of strap you want.

Done! I hope you love your new Cognac Briefcase and also had fun making it!

Any questions or comments, e-mail me: lissius@gmail.com.

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