

# REINDEER HIDE – USER'S GUIDE

**Manufacturer:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Contact details:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The air-dried reindeer hide** has been dried outdoors using traditional Finnish air-drying methods. The dried reindeer hide is a unique and natural product.

Tanned and industrially manufactured, **the processed reindeer hide** is the most common type of reindeer hide sold in shops. Tanning allows the reindeer hide to resist wear caused by time and use, as untreated skin spoils easily. It also makes the hide soft.

**The processed reindeer hide for outdoor use** has undergone the same treatments as processed reindeer hides, with the addition of a special treatment. The hide can be treated by a tannery or the reindeer owner.

## Purpose of use

The air-dried reindeer hide is suited to outdoor use, such as sledging, ice-fishing or sitting by a campfire, lean-to or patio. It makes for an excellent seat or sleeping pad. When it dries, the surface of the hide develops some resistance to water, which allows you to lay it down on damp surfaces like snow.

Because of its poor moisture resistance, the processed reindeer hide is suited to outdoor use only under dry conditions. It is best used as a decoration or an interior design element. As long as you are careful to keep it dry, it can also be used outdoors as a cushion.

The processed hide that has been treated for outdoor use is suited to all purposes mentioned above. This hide is very water-resistant, and it dries quickly. When tested for 24 hours, the hide did not absorb any moisture. The leather side dried completely in five hours, and the fur side stayed dry.

## Shape and size

Reindeer husbandry produces around 80,000 hides each year, 70% of which are calf hides. The sizes of the hides vary depending on the year's growing conditions and the reindeer's birth date. The seller of the hides may categorise them by size. The shape of the hide varies by skinning method and whether the hide includes the shanks.

## Treatment

Reindeer hide products always shed a small amount of hair. Reindeer hair is hollow, which means it insulates extremely well. This quality also makes the hair brittle. The hide should therefore not be treated roughly.

## Storage

It is recommended to store the hide spaciouly, without rolling it up or putting it in a bag, so that the hide has room to breathe. An air-dried hide should not be stored at a room temperature. It will dry excessively when its place of storage is too warm. The best place to store an air-dried hide is in a dry, clean and spacious outdoor storage that cannot be infested by pests or destructive insects. Destructive insects, such as fur

beetles, can be repelled with ethereal herbs, strongly scented plants or plant components (marsh tea, bay leaves, orange skins, etc.) as well as pesticide chemicals.

If the hide becomes wet, you must ensure that it dries. Give the hide space to dry out completely with its leather side up. If possible, hang the hide up to dry. The air-dried hide will only remain in good condition when sufficiently dry, otherwise the moisture it has absorbed will permit the growth of bacteria. The processed hide should also be dried if it gets wet.

#### Deterioration of the air-dried hide

If you cannot properly store or dry the hide at home, it will quickly begin to deteriorate. As the hide deteriorates, its hair follicles decompose, and the hide starts shedding tufts of hair. Smell is one way to detect the hide's deterioration: the hide will naturally always smell of reindeer, but a pungent or musty odour indicates microbial growth. The inside of the hide may darken with time, but if the colour quickly turns dark (mouldy), it has been stored in conditions that are too damp. A spoiled hide also attracts flies and other insects.

#### Cleaning

If you spill liquid on the hide, wipe the liquid off carefully. The hide can be cleaned by carefully vacuum-cleaning it using an upholstery nozzle. Careful brushing is also a suitable cleaning method. You can also clean the hide with snow. If necessary, the leather side of the air-dried hide can also be lightly wiped down with mild detergent.

#### Right of return

The right of return is decreed by the Consumer Protection Act (38/1978). Unless a return period is granted by the seller, the customer does not have the right to return store-bought hides that are free of defects. Online retail and door-to-door sales include a two week right of return. The customer pays the expenses caused by the return. Please ask the seller if you require further instructions.

#### Export

Reindeer is not an endangered species under the CITES. Exporting reindeer hides from Finland does not require any permits. Check with the authorities of the export destination to find out if the import requires a permit. If necessary, the Finnish authorities can provide you with an informal certification stating that reindeer is not a CITES species. In Finland, matters related to CITES permits are handled by the Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE).

#### Disposal

After the hide has reached the end of its life cycle, the hide can be disposed of as combustible waste, which means that it can be placed in the waste bin. If the hide is air-dried, you can use it as raw material for traditional sisna leather. Instructions for making sisna can be obtained from Finnish educational institutions and folk high schools.

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