



LOVR makes a leather alternative from hemp waste | Photo source [Crispin Jones on Unsplash](#)

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A COMPLETELY PLASTIC-FREE LEATHER ALTERNATIVE

 FASHION & BEAUTY

The 100 per cent plant-based material is made from agricultural residues

Spotted: Many consumers are turning their backs on leather – either for ethical or environmental reasons. And the quality of leather alternatives has come on leaps and bounds in recent years, with several [high-end designers](#) incorporating them into their work. All told, the synthetic leather market is expected to reach \$57 billion by 2028, with a healthy [annual growth rate of 7.8 per cent](#). But many faux-leather products are made from plastics, such as polyurethane and polyvinyl chloride (PVC), which themselves have a negative environmental impact.

Bio-based leathers have the potential to solve this problem. They are made from an eclectic range of materials, from apples and pineapples to cork. Now, German startup LOVR has added hemp to the list of unlikely leather alternatives. Agricultural residues from farms that grow the crop for CBD products form the basis of the LOVR material, which is billed as the world's first 100 per cent plant-based, and completely plastic-free leather alternative.

In addition to being free from fossil fuels and harmful chemicals, LOVR claims its faux leather is completely biodegradable. A limitation of many bio-leathers is that they are finished with non-biodegradable glues or foils. The company further states that the material is carbon neutral.

LOVR operates independently of global supply chains, creating a 'a transparent, regional, and sustainable circular economy'. The startup recently raised pre-seed funding according to business information platform Crunchbase.

Other leather alternatives spotted by Springwise include those made from [apple waste](#), [plastic waste](#), and [bacteria](#).

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Takeaway:

Fur has been banished by fashion giants such as Versace, Prada, Gucci, and Burberry for some time now. But even as consumers demand an end to animal cruelty and greater sustainability, the fashion industry has found it harder to wean itself off leather. There is uncertainty about whether plastic alternatives are, in fact, better for the environment when the whole product lifespan is taken into account. And bio-based leathers haven't, so far, been produced on a truly commercial scale. Faux leather also tends to be less durable than the real thing. Perhaps the biggest problem, however, is the fact that leather has become synonymous with quality in an industry defined by luxury. All this makes two of LOVR's claims particularly attention-grabbing. The company's website states that its leather alternative is long-lasting and, crucially, feels like the real thing.