Leather dressings were at one time thought to be useful in extending the life of leather bindings; however, its benefit is primarily cosmetic & **using leather dressing without professional expertise does more harm than good.**

1. Leather dressings can cause the leather to dry out over time.

2. Dressed leather may become stiff, and will be accompanied by darkening of the surface or staining.

3. If too much dressing is applied, or if it is applied too frequently, the surface of the leather may become sticky and attract dust.

4. Leather dressings can migrate through dry leather and stain the text pages of a book.

5. If a leather book has become stiffened through the use of leather dressing, proper handling techniques and support of the book structure will help to ameliorate the problem.

6. **VIP** Polyester (Dupont Mylar Type DÆ or ICI Mellinex 516Æ ) dust jackets help prevent dry rotted leather from offsetting on to adjacent books and protect the covers from further deterioration as well.

To select the professional best qualified to treat your object, contact The Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation (FAIC). They provide a list of conservators can help find appropriate conservation treatment.

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*Further Reading:*


McCready Ellen and Toby Raphael. / Leather Dressings: To Dress or not To Dress./ Conserv O Gram No. 9/1. September 1987. Available from the National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, D. C. 20013-7127, USA