

Looking after your air leather suite

Care guide

Glyde-X Recliners · Johannesburg, South Africa · WhatsApp 083 378 7864 · glydex.co.za
Keep this with your invoice. Following it is a condition of your warranty.

Air leather is easy to live with. It asks less of you than hide does — there is nothing to feed, nothing to condition, no schedule to keep. Almost everything below is about what *not* to do to it.

We would rather tell you this properly once than have you find it out on a panel that cannot be put back.

The short version

- Clean it with warm water and a cloth. Water does almost all of it.
- No cleaning sprays, no baby wipes, no polish, no solvents.
- If you want soap, use a mild bar soap — and test it on a hidden panel first.
- Blot spills straight away. Never rub them.
- Keep it out of direct sunlight and at least a metre from any heater.
- Nobody sits on the arms, the back rail or the open footrest.
- Never move the suite with a recliner open.
- One person per seat.
- If you are not sure about something, send us a photograph before you try anything on it.

What air leather actually is

Air leather is a man-made upholstery: a polyurethane surface on a fabric backing. It is not hide, it has never been near an animal, and we say so on every product page.

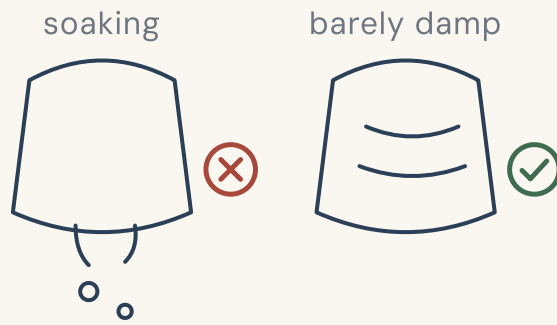
That one fact explains all of the advice on this page. What you touch is a surface layer, and the whole material depends on that layer staying intact and staying flexible. Hide is a material all the way through, which is why a hide suite can often be cleaned back, re-coloured or restored by a specialist. A coated surface cannot be re-finished. Once it is damaged, it is damaged.

So the honest position is this: air leather is genuinely low-maintenance, and it is genuinely unforgiving of the few things that harm it. Get those few things right and it will look after itself.

Everyday cleaning

The method

- 1 Get the loose dirt off first. Crumbs, grit and pet hair are abrasive, and wiping them around does more harm than leaving them. Use a vacuum on low suction with the soft brush attachment, and the crevice tool down the sides of the seats and along the seams.
- 2 Warm water in a bowl. Nothing in it.
- 3 A clean, soft cloth — microfibre or an old cotton T-shirt. Wring it out until it is barely damp, not wet.
- 4 Wipe one panel at a time with light pressure. Do not scrub, and do not work at one mark over and over.
- 5 Dry it off immediately with a second dry cloth. Do not let water sit on the surface or soak into the stitching.



Damp, not wet

Wring the cloth out until it barely feels wet, and dry the panel off straight after.

Every week or two is plenty. Do it even when the suite looks clean — the thing that dulls a surface over the years is the invisible film of skin oil, hand cream and hair product that builds up where people actually touch it.

Why water first, and why not detergent

A coating stays soft and flexible because of the softeners built into it. Detergents are designed to lift oils, and they cannot tell the difference between the oil from a packet of chips and the softeners holding your suite together. Strip those out and the surface goes hard first, then dull, then it crazes into a network of fine cracks. That process is slow, it is invisible until it is finished, and it cannot be reversed.

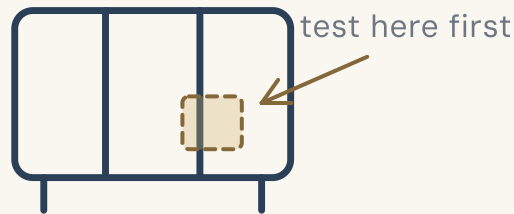
This is why “just a drop of dishwashing liquid” is bad advice. Dishwashing liquid is built to strip grease — that is the whole point of it. It does not damage the panel today. It damages it in year three.

If you want to use soap

Water lifts most of what a household lounge throws at a suite, so start there. If a mark will not come off with water and you would rather try something than call us, use the mildest thing in the house and use it carefully.

We suggest a **plain bar of Dove**. It is about as gentle as soap gets, it is not a degreaser, and it is what we would reach for ourselves. Not dishwashing liquid, not an all-purpose spray, not anything sold as a leather cleaner.

Test it first, every single time — and this goes for anything anyone ever recommends to you, not only soap.



back of the suite

Test somewhere hidden

A palm-sized patch on the back panel. Let it dry a full hour, then look at it in daylight.

- 1 Pick somewhere hidden. The back panel of the three-seater, or the outside of the single chair where it faces the wall. Somewhere nobody looks.
- 2 Work a small amount of lather up on a damp cloth, not on the suite itself. You want a barely soapy cloth, not a wet one.
- 3 Do a patch about the size of your palm. Light pressure.
- 4 Wipe the soap off with a second cloth and clean water, then dry it.
- 5 **Let it dry completely** — give it an hour, not five minutes.
- 6 Look at it in daylight. Is the colour the same? Is it still soft to the touch, not tacky and not stiff? Has the sheen changed?

If it looks and feels exactly as it did, carry on and clean the mark the same way. If anything at all has changed, stop and send us a photograph.

Whatever you use, rinse it off with a clean damp cloth and dry the panel afterwards. Soap left sitting on a surface attracts dirt and holds moisture, which undoes the point of cleaning it.

Never use any of these on your suite:

- Dishwashing liquid, washing powder, or any all-purpose cleaner
- Bleach or any bleach-based cleaner
- Ammonia-based cleaners — the general-purpose kitchen and bathroom sprays
- Disinfectant, surgical spirits, methylated spirits or hand sanitiser
- **Baby wipes.** Worth singling out, because they feel harmless. They are not water on a cloth — most contain alcohol, fragrance and surfactants, and they tend to get used on the headrest, which is the panel already working hardest.
- Furniture polish, silicone spray or aerosol shine products
- Saddle soap, dubbin, leather food or leather conditioner. Air leather is not hide. There is nothing in it to feed, and conditioners leave a film that attracts dirt.
- Solvents, thinners, turpentine, acetone or nail polish remover
- Melamine “magic eraser” sponges, scouring pads or any abrasive
- Steam cleaners. Heat and moisture together can lift a coating away from its backing, and a steam cleaner delivers both under pressure.
- Insect repellents containing DEET, which attacks plastics and coated surfaces. Spray yourself away from the suite, not on it.

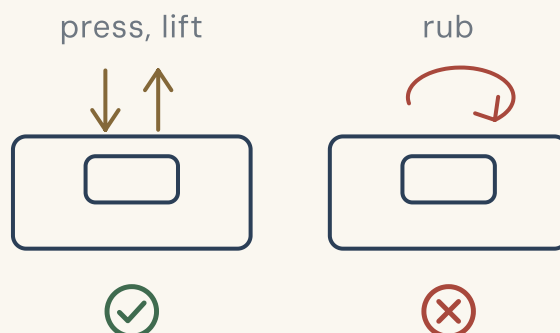
Damage from detergents and solvents is not covered by the warranty, and this is the reason why. It is not a technicality. A suite can be ruined by somebody trying hard to look after it, with the best intentions in the world.

And if a mark will not come off with water, and a tested patch of mild soap has not shifted it either, stop there. Send us a photograph on WhatsApp and we will tell you what we would do next. That message is free. A ruined panel is not.

Spills

Speed matters far more than technique.

- 1 Blot immediately with a clean dry cloth. Press and lift. Do not rub — rubbing pushes liquid through the stitching and spreads the mark outward.
- 2 Work from the outside of the spill inwards, so you are not making it bigger.
- 3 Then a barely damp cloth, water only, and dry it off.



Blot, don't rub

Press and lift. Rubbing pushes the spill through the stitching and spreads the mark.

A few specific ones:

- **Tea, coffee, cooldrink, juice** — blot, damp cloth, dry. Straight away and they normally leave nothing.
- **Milk, ice cream, yoghurt** — deal with it now even if it looks like nothing. Dairy that gets into a seam will sour and start smelling in a day or two, and by then it is in the stitching rather than on the surface.
- **Oily food, butter, gravy, chip fat** — lift as much as you can with a dry cloth first. Do not add water to grease immediately; you will spread it. Blot, blot again, then damp cloth.
- **Red wine** — blot hard and fast. Most of it comes off a coated surface if you get there in the first minute.
- **Chocolate** — let it harden, lift the solid part off, then damp cloth.
- **Candle wax** — let it set completely, then lift the edge gently. Never pick at soft wax and never use heat to melt it off.
- **Chewing gum** — a bag of ice in a plastic bag on top until it is hard, then lift it. Pull slowly. If it will not come, stop and call us.
- **Blood** — cold water only. Warm water sets it.

- **Ballpoint, marker, ink, nail polish, shoe polish, hair dye** — do nothing at all and call us. Every household remedy for ink is a solvent, and a solvent will take the finish off with the ink and leave a worse mark than the one you started with.

We will tell you honestly when something is not coming out. Ink and dye are the two that usually do not.

Dark dye and light-coloured suites

Worth knowing if you have chosen a light colour, and it has nothing to do with cleaning.

Dye can move out of dark fabric and into a coated surface over time. Brand new dark denim is the usual one, and dark throws, scatter cushions and handbags left lying on a seat for weeks can do the same. It is not a stain sitting on top that you can wipe away — it works into the coating slowly.

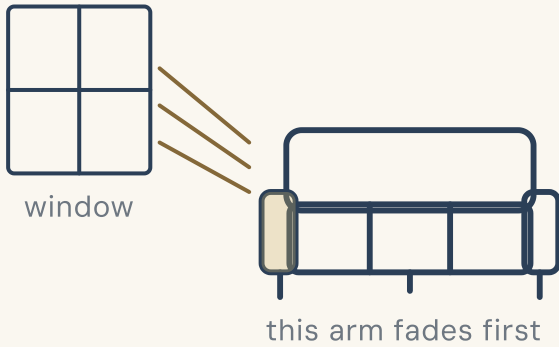
It is easy to avoid, and none of it is a problem you are likely to meet:

- Give new dark jeans a wash or two before they meet a light suite
- Don't leave a dark throw, cushion or bag sitting in the same spot for weeks
- If you ever see a faint shadow starting, tell us early rather than late. Caught quickly it can often be lifted.

Sunlight and heat

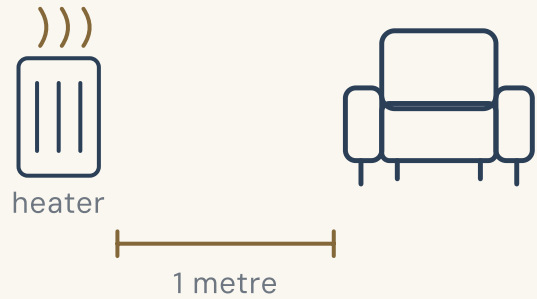
If you only take one thing from this page, take this one. Sunlight ages air leather faster than anything else, including use.

Ultraviolet light breaks down a polyurethane surface, and heat drives the softeners out of it. The result is a panel that fades, then hardens, then cracks — and because it only happens to the side facing the window, it happens unevenly, which is what makes it obvious. A suite that is otherwise perfect can look ten years old on one arm.



Out of the sun

Direct sun fades and hardens one panel at a time, which is exactly what makes it obvious.



A metre from heat

Heaters, gas heaters and fireplaces dry the surface out, and it does not come back.

Highveld sun through a lounge window is severe, and it is doing this quietly every day whether anyone is sitting on the suite or not.

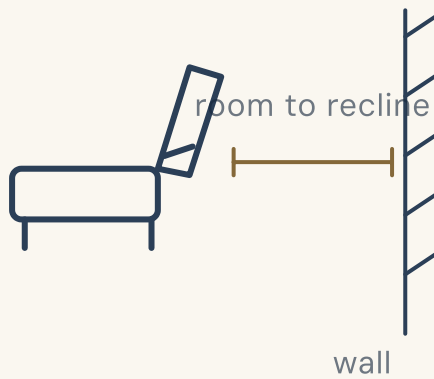
What to do:

- Don't place the suite where direct sun falls on it, especially not in front of a west-facing window or a glass sliding door
- If that is the only place it can go, hang a sheer curtain or blind and close it in the afternoon, or fit UV film on the glass
- Keep it at least a metre from heaters, gas heaters, fireplaces and heated towel rails
- If one part of the room is brighter than the rest, swap the pieces around every few months so no single panel takes all of it
- Don't push it up against a window pane, where glass magnifies the heat

Fading, drying and cracking caused by direct sunlight or a heater is not covered by the warranty. This is why we are spending this much space on it.

Air, damp and the room

Air leather does not breathe the way hide does, so it can feel warmer against bare skin in summer. That is the material, not a fault.



Room behind it

Leave a gap so the back is not pressing the wall as it goes, and so air can move behind it.

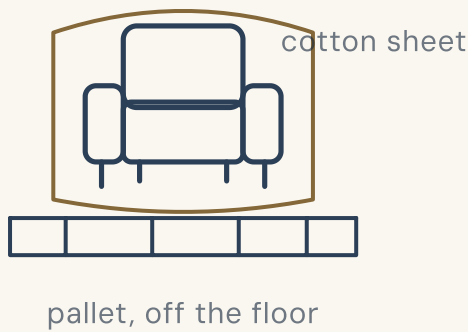
- Leave a gap between the back of the suite and the wall. Air needs to move behind it, and a cold outside wall in winter will hold condensation against anything pressed flat to it. You need the gap for the recliners anyway.
- In a very humid or coastal home, wipe and dry rather than wipe and leave. Never leave a damp cloth lying on the suite.
- Don't dry washing over it or near it.

Storing your suite

If the suite is going into storage, or you are moving house and it will sit for a while, this is the part that matters most. More suites are damaged in storage than in use.

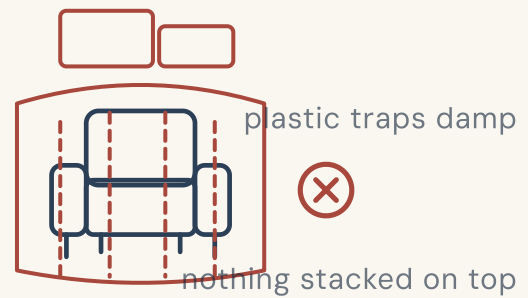
Before it goes away

- Close every recliner fully. A mechanism left open takes load in a direction it was not designed for, and it is the first thing to bend if anything is stacked nearby.
- Clean it properly and let it dry completely. Anything left on the surface — a food mark, a spill, hand cream — will set permanently over months, and anything left damp will grow mould on the fabric backing.



Upright and covered

On its feet, on a pallet, under a breathable cover. Concrete floors sweat.



Never plastic, never stacked

Plastic holds moisture against the surface and can stick to it in heat. Weight on the arms leaves a permanent crease.

How to wrap it

- **Never wrap it in plastic.** Plastic traps moisture against the surface, and in heat a plastic sheet can stick to a polyurethane finish and mark it permanently when it is pulled off. This is the single most expensive storage mistake.
- Use old cotton sheets, blankets or proper breathable furniture covers. The point is to keep dust off while letting air move.

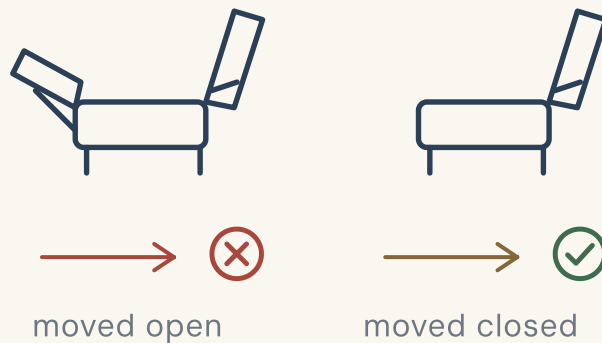
Where to put it

- Off the floor, on a pallet or timber battens. Concrete floors sweat, and a suite standing directly on one will draw moisture up into the feet and the base of the frame.
- Upright on its feet, the way it stands in a lounge. Not on its side, not on its back, not on end. The frame and the mechanism are built to carry load in one direction.
- Nothing stacked on top of it. Not boxes, not another chair, not a mattress. The arms and the seat edges will take a permanent crease and the frame can rack.
- Not in a closed tin-roofed garage or a shipping container if you can avoid it. A closed garage in a Johannesburg summer gets far hotter than any room in the house, and heat is what dries this material out.
- Away from cars, paint, thinners, fuel and cleaning chemicals. Fumes in a closed space settle on everything in it.
- Somewhere dry. A leaking roof or a damp corner will find it.

When it comes out

- Air it for a day and wipe it down. It may smell of wherever it has been.
- Check the recliners work smoothly before you load the room around it.

Moving it



Move it closed

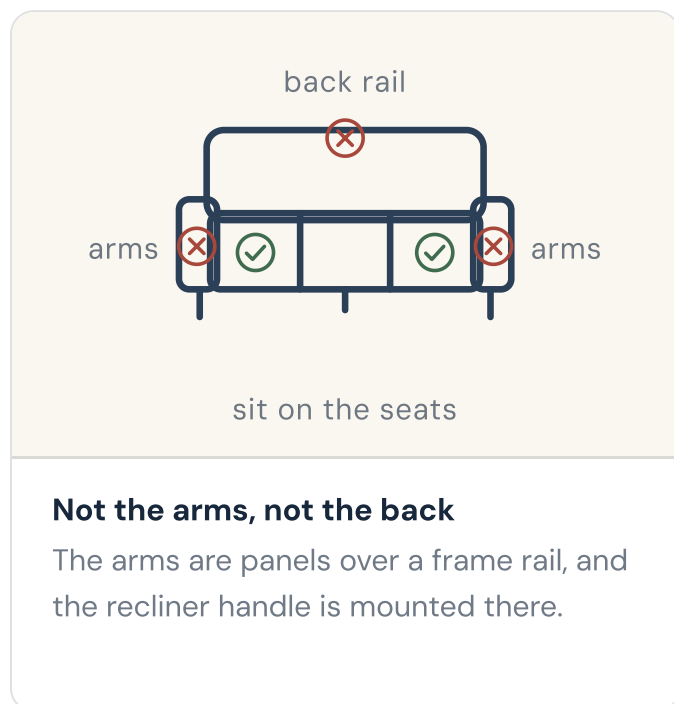
Moving a suite with a footrest open is the most common cause of mechanism damage we see.

- Recliners closed. Always. Moving a suite with a footrest open is the most common cause of mechanism damage we see, and it is not covered.
- Lift by the frame, underneath. Never drag or lift by the arms, the back rail or the footrest.
- Two people per piece, and don't drag it across a floor — you will break a foot or rack a joint.
- Take the doors off their hinges rather than forcing the suite through a frame. Forcing it damages the upholstery on the corners first.

Sitting on the arms

This one gets its own section, because of everything on this page it is the habit most likely to cost you a repair.

The arms are not seats. They are upholstered panels over a frame rail. Every seat on the suite is rated to 130kg — the arms are not seats and carry no such rating.



Here is what actually happens. An arm rail takes a downward and sideways load it was never designed for. The joint where it meets the frame works loose slowly. First you get a creak. Then a little movement when you lean on it. Then the rail cracks, and because the recliner handle is mounted on the arm, a loose arm quickly becomes a mechanism that does not sit square and does not latch properly. What started as somebody perching on an arm during a braai ends up as a recliner that will not hold position.

The upholstery suffers too. Sitting on the edge of an arm puts the whole load onto a narrow fold in the covering, and a crease made that way does not come back out.

The same applies to:

- **The back rail.** Children leaning over the back of a sofa, or an adult sitting up on the back to talk to the room, puts leverage on the tallest and weakest part of the frame.
- **The open footrest.** It is a lever on a scissor mechanism, not a step and not a stool. Do not sit on it, do not stand on it, do not let a child use it as a step to reach something, and do not close it with your foot. Close it by hand, with the handle.

None of this is covered by the warranty, and the warranty page says so. We are not being difficult about it — this kind of damage is entirely avoidable, and it is avoided in the moment, by nobody sitting there in the first place.

Using the recliners

Your Cordoba is hand-operated. There is no motor, no transformer and no cable, which is one less thing to fail and it works in a power cut.

The 3-2-1 suite has six seats and five of them recline: **the centre seat of the three-seater is fixed.** That is by design, not a fault, so don't go looking for a handle there.

- Open and close it with the handle. Don't force the backrest with your body weight to make it go further.
- Let it close under control rather than letting it slam shut.
- Leave clearance behind the suite so the back is not pressing against a wall as it goes back.
- Check underneath the footrest before you close it — remotes, toys, feet and pets all end up under there.
- One person per seat. Each seat has its own mechanism underneath it, built for one person to sit in and recline.
- Nobody rides it, rocks it or uses it as a see-saw. Children find this very hard to resist and it is worth saying out loud to them once.

Weight

Two habits are worth breaking, and neither is about how much anyone weighs. Dropping into a seat from standing puts a sudden load through the frame that is a good deal higher than the person doing it. So does kneeling on the front edge of a seat. And nobody should stand on the seats to hang a curtain or change a globe — use a step ladder.

Pets

Claws are the problem. A coating can be punctured, and a puncture cannot be re-finished or filled — it is a permanent mark.

- Keep nails trimmed if pets are allowed on the suite
 - A washable throw over the seat they favour is the simplest answer
 - Clean saliva, and any accident, immediately and dry the area. Left on, both will mark.
-

Small things that mark it

These are the ones people do not think of:

- Belt buckles, jean rivets, watch clasps, rings worn on the back of the hand
- Keys, phones and coins in back pockets
- Scissors, box cutters, knitting needles and craft knives on the seat
- Hair oil, gel, sunscreen, mosquito repellent, fake tan, hand cream and essential oils. These all end up on the headrest, and it is the panel that shows wear first. If somebody in the house uses hair product daily, put a washable throw over the headrest of their seat. It is the cheapest insurance on this page.

Keeping it looking right

- The back cushions are polyester fibre fill. They need plumping — that is how a fibre back behaves, not a fault. Give them a shake and a punch back into shape every week or so.
- Foam softens with use. Every suite does this, and the seat that gets sat in every evening will soften before the others. If you have a favourite seat, use the others sometimes.
- Vacuum the seams. Crumbs are abrasive and they work into the stitching.

What air leather will not do

Two honest limits, so nothing surprises you later:

- **It will never develop a patina.** Hide gets better looking with use. A man-made surface does not — it stays as it is, and then it wears.
 - **It cannot be re-finished.** A hide suite can often be cleaned back and re-coloured by a specialist years later. A polyurethane surface cannot. That is why this page is about prevention rather than repair.
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If something goes wrong

WhatsApp us on [083 378 7864](tel:0833787864) with your order number. Send a photograph, and a short video if it is a mechanism problem. We aim to answer within one working day, and most mechanism issues are sorted out in your lounge without the suite going anywhere.

Ask before you try anything on it. If a mark will not come off with water, a message with a photo costs you nothing and takes a minute. We would far rather talk you out of a cleaning product than look at the panel afterwards.

Air leather suites carry a **1 year factory warranty** from the date of delivery. The full terms, including what is and is not covered, are on the [warranty page](#).

Quick reference

DO	DON'T
Wipe with warm water on a barely damp cloth	Use detergent, cleaning spray or baby wipes
Test any soap on a hidden panel first	Try anything new straight onto a seat
Dry it off straight after wiping	Leave it wet or let water sit in the seams
Blot spills immediately	Rub a spill
Keep it out of direct sun	Put it in front of a sunny window unshaded
Keep it a metre from heaters	Dry washing on it or near a heater
Sit on the seats	Sit on the arms, the back rail or the footrest
Close the recliners before moving it	Move or drag it with a footrest open
Sit down on a seat, one person at a time	Drop into a seat or stand on it
Vacuum crumbs out of the seams	Use a steam cleaner or a scouring pad
Store it upright, off the floor, under a cotton sheet	Wrap it in plastic or stack things on it
Send us a photo if you are unsure	Try a solvent on ink

We build these suites in Johannesburg, South Africa, so if something does go wrong you are dealing with the people who made it.

Glyde-X Recliners — built in Johannesburg, South Africa.

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