

VELO ORANGE

Handlebar Covers Installation Instructions

Please read these instructions to the end before starting the installation, since anticipating the next step will make things easier.

Prior to installing the covers, be sure your brake levers are in the desired position. If covering old bars, remove the tape, but not the brake levers. If using new bars, install the levers and go for a ride to check their position. Once you are happy with the placement of the levers, securely tape the metal clamping band to the bar. If using aero levers or brifters, also tape the cable housings to the bar. Remove the brake levers, but not the metal band.

Leather is a natural material so you may find the occasional scratch or nick; it's simply the nature of the beast. You may also find that there is an occasional "wave" or nick in the edge. Even though the covers are cut using a special laser cut die, the material is so stretchy and flexible that it can stretch or shift in the die. Don't worry, when sewn and pulled together these irregularities disappear.

The thickness and elasticity can also vary; elk hide is not as uniform as cowhide. So you might want to place the thicker end on top, if that is your normal hand position.

The cover is sewn on using a cross-stitch. This stitch is similar to the more common baseball stitch (which you could use instead) in that it also uses two needles. Most people find the cross-stitch more attractive. It's also easier to pull the leather tight with this stitch. There is a diagram of the sewing sequence on the last page of these instructions.

1. Since leather covers can shift in use, we've added a strip of strong two-sided tape to secure them. Remember to peel the white backing paper back only an inch or two at a time as you sew. If tape sticks to itself it makes a big mess.
2. Tie a knot in the middle of a length of the waxed thread. Make sure the knot is fat, or it will pull through the holes. Thread a needle onto each end and pull some thread through each needle's eye. You'll be sewing with and single strand of very long thread in each needle.
3. Starting at the stem end, pass each needle through the leather from back to front, so the knot will be under the leather. Then loop the thread over the leather and pass the needles through both holes and out the hole across from the entry hole. Pull tight. The seam should be under the bar if viewed from the saddle.



4. With one needle, pull the thread diagonally over the seam and into the top of the next hole, then under the leather and out the hole directly across from the entry hole. Do the same with the other needle, crossing over the first thread. Continue sewing so the thread passes diagonally over the leather and straight across under it. Pull the thread tight after each stitch. Again, please see the diagram on the last page.
5. Sew until you reach the brake-lever clamping band. Using a pair of small pointy scissors or a razor knife, cut an opening just big enough for the brake lever bolt boss. Fit the cover over the band and bolt and continue sewing. Start to “twist” the cover so the seam stays under or inside the bend in the bars. In other words, your palms should not rest on the seam when riding the drops. The seam will twist 90-degrees to the inside.



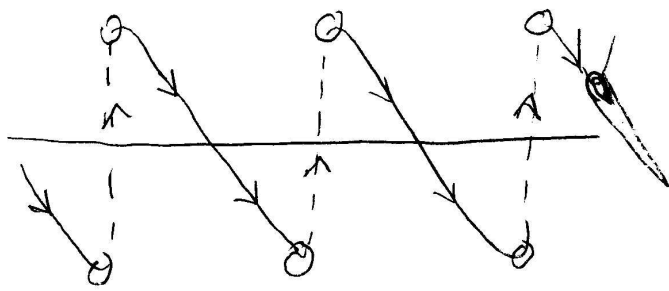
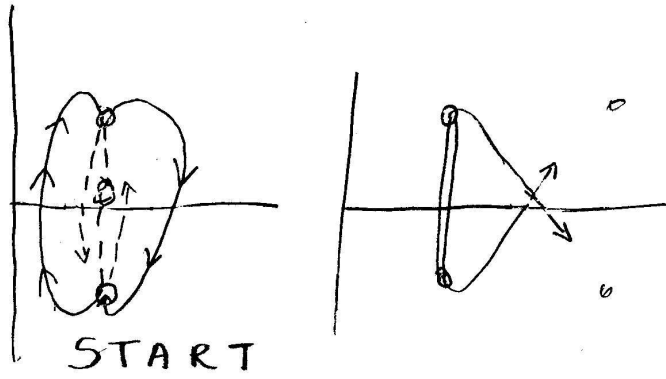
6. When you reach the end, loop the thread over the leather, straight across, as you did at the start. The needles should exit under the leather and to the side. Tie both threads together with an overhand knot. Push the knot under the leather and carefully cut off the excess leather and thread.
7. As with all leather, apply some Proof hide, Neatsfoot oil, or other leather treatment. Our limited tests favored pure Neatsfoot oil, which is sold at many stores that carry leather goods. The elk hide will absorb a surprising amount of oil. The covers may feel oily for a day or two, but soon all the oil will be absorbed or evaporate.

8. The mounting bolt on some brake levers is long enough so the brake levers can be installed over the covers. But many levers will require that you trim the leather so the brake lever body sits against the handlebar. If in doubt, trim the leather. Brake levers falling off can ruin a nice ride.

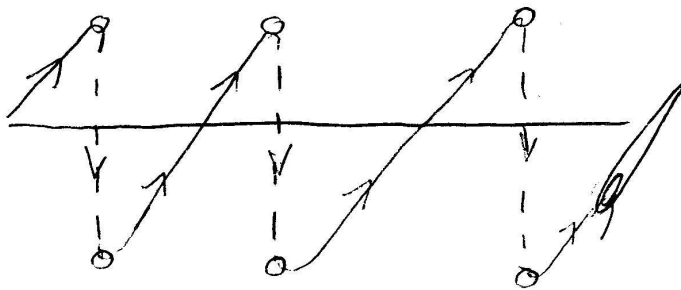


Please turn the page for a drawing of the sewing sequence.

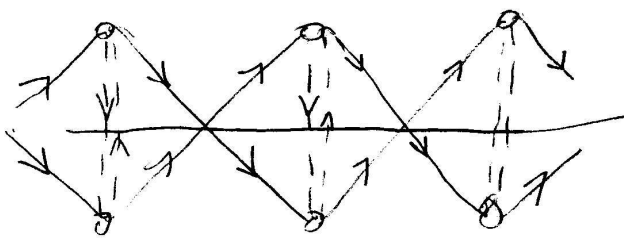
If you need any additional help or have comments, please don't hesitate to e-mail chris@velo-orange.com .



NEEDLE #1



NEEDLE #2



BOTH NEEDLES