FASHION LIFESTYLE

How to Ensure Authenticity of Your Hermès Bag

By EAT LOVE SAVOR Luxury Lifestyle Magazine

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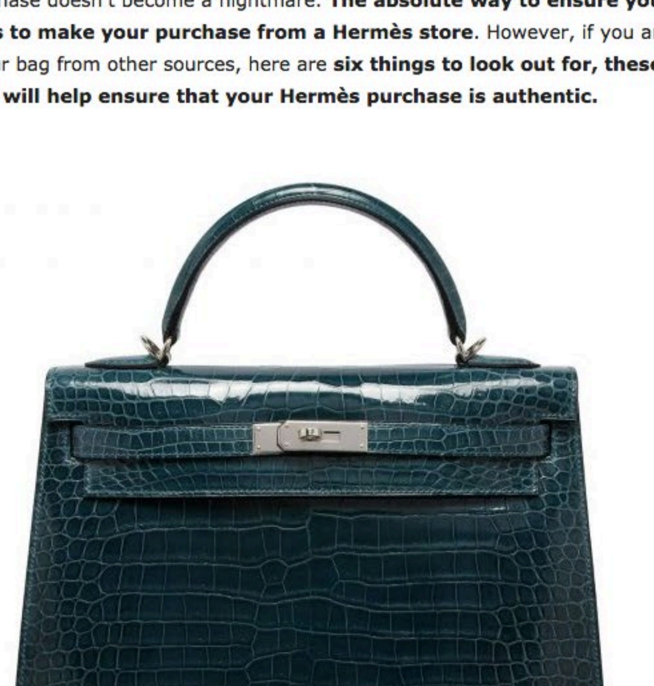
When thoughts gravitate to luxury bags, 'Hermès' leaps to mind. As an ultimate symbol of luxury, owning your own Hermès bag is something many aspire to and the difficulty in sourcing one makes them even more desirable.

The popularity of this bag is only matched by their scarcity prompting people to go to great lengths to obtain their very own Hermès piece. However, this demand has seen bags such as the Hermès Birkin become one of the most counterfeited bags on the planet. The production of fake Hermès bags is rife and becoming ever more sophisticated, so it is essential that you do not find yourself parting with huge sums of money and not getting one that is genuine. Not only are you getting an imitation of the world's most extraordinary handbag, buying fake Hermès' in the secondary marketplace causes genuine pieces to increase in their price and its purchase could also be funding organised crime. **Knowledge and buying from reputed companies is essential** so that your dream purchase doesn't become a nightmare. **The absolute way to ensure your bag is genuine, is to make your purchase from a Hermès store**. However, if you are seeking your bag from other sources, here are **six things to look out for, these guidelines will help ensure that your Hermès purchase is authentic.**



1 – Packaging

The **first** step to take when ensuring that your Hermès bag is authentic is to **inspect the contents that accompany your bag in their signature orange box**. Firstly, **if your Hermès bag comes with an authenticity card/tag in the packaging, this is a clear-cut indicator that the bag is fake**. Hermès bags never come with an accompanying Hermès authenticity card, yet it is a clever trick fraudsters may use to convince you that the Hermès is in fact real. The only slight **exception** is **when Hermès bags are made from exotic skins** and will subsequently come with a CITES paper certificate. **Secondly**, Hermès products, without fail, **all with come with an accompanying dust bag**. Traditionally they were orange in colour, however they have since changed to a herringbone beige colour with a dark brown Hermès logo on it. The **logo should have a double circle encasing the image of the man and the horse** while there should also be a **double line under the horse**. Ensure that the image is finely detailed and not blurred at all. Additionally, the drawstring to this bag must be brown and made out of 100% cotton.

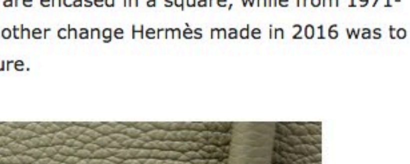
2 – Only the Finest Leather

Hermès **only uses the finest leather**, selected from specific destinations from across the world, so you should always pay close attention to the quality of your bag's leather. The bag should be able to **stand freely on its four feet and importantly hold its shape**. At **the base of the bag, the four feet should be positioned evenly apart and the leather should never be puffy**, spilling over the edge of the bag – another clear indication of cheaper leather that is not genuine Hermès. In addition, you must also survey the **interior** of the bag as it is as finely crafted as the rest of the piece. **Most bags are lined with chèvre leather made from goatskin.**

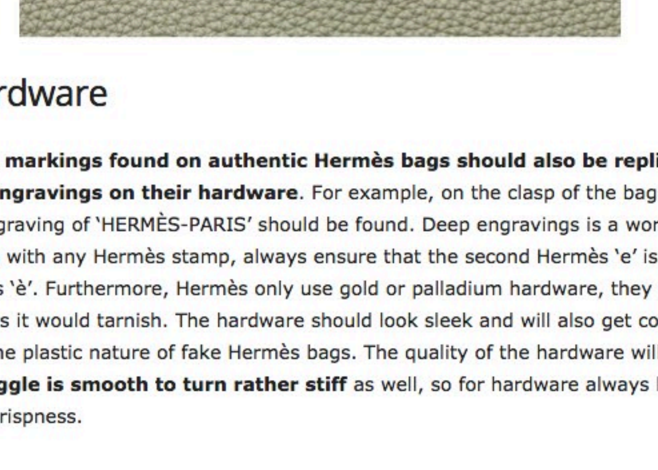
3 – Stitching

Whilst you are examining the interior of the Hermès bag, **ensure that the zipper in the inside pocket lies perfectly horizontally against the zip line**. These subtle differences are a marker of the care taken to create an authentic Hermès bag, therefore zippers should never lay in a perpendicular fashion against the zipline. With **the average Hermès bag taking over 48 hours to be made by hand by an expert artisan**, you should always **ensure that the bag looks like it has been handstitched**. While precise care has been taken in the curation of the bag, not all stitches will be perfectly even and there is a slight slant to the stitches (always going in the same direction). If the stitching is flat and perfectly even, that is a sign of a machine manufactured and ultimately fake Hermès bag.

4 – Marking

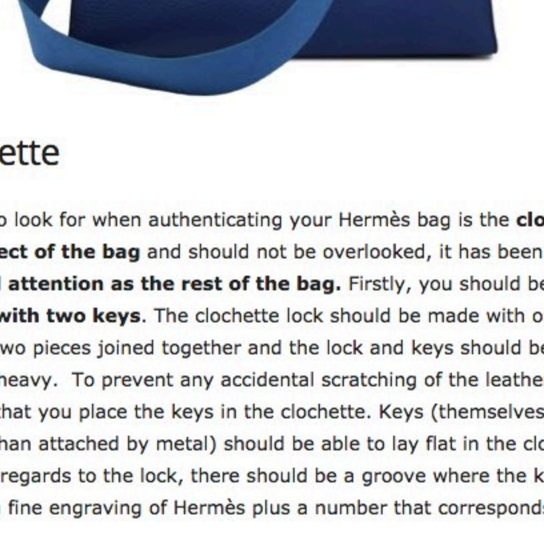


One of the most important indicators of an authentic Hermès bag are the markings on the bag. A good place to start is to look for the 'Hermès Paris Made in France' stamp which is found on the **front face under the flap**, close to the stitching. The stamp will always be the same colour as the hardware and should be embossed in a neat and clear font that shows no signs of wear or irregularity. Another significant Hermès marking is the **'blind stamp' that is located on the reverse of the right closure strap**. It is an identification code that identifies the artisan who made the bag, and the year the bag was created. For example, the year 2014 is signalled by the letter 'R' while 2013 is represented by the letter 'Q'. Interestingly in 2016, the stamp jumped from 'T' to 'X' and the letters are now found inside the bag, generally at the back left. Any Hermès bags that are prior to 1970 do not feature any shape at all, while from 1997 to 2015 they are encased in a square, while from 1971-1996 the letter was encased by a circle. Another change Hermès made in 2016 was to remove the shapes around the year signature.



5 – Hardware

The **subtle markings found on authentic Hermès bags should also be replicated with the engravings on their hardware**. For example, on the clasp of the bag a delicate engraving of 'HERMÈS-PARIS' should be found. Deep engravings is a worrying sign and as with any Hermès stamp, always ensure that the second Hermès 'e' is accented as 'è'. Furthermore, Hermès only use gold or palladium hardware, they do not use silver as it would tarnish. The hardware should look sleek and will also get cold which contrasts the plastic nature of fake Hermès bags. The quality of the hardware will ensure that the **toggle is smooth to turn rather stiff** as well, so for hardware always look for clean and crispness.



6 – Clochette

The final area to look for when authenticating your Hermès bag is the **clochette**. It is **a signature aspect of the bag** and should not be overlooked, it has been **given just as much detailed attention as the rest of the bag.** Firstly, you should be provided with a clochette **lock with two keys**. The clochette lock should be made with one piece of leather, never two pieces joined together and the lock and keys should be tall and wide, feeling slightly heavy. To prevent any accidental scratching of the leather, it is recommended that you place the keys in the clochette. Keys (themselves wrapped in leather rather than attached by metal) should be able to lay flat in the clochette with no puffiness. With regards to the lock, there should be a groove where the key goes into the lock and have a fine engraving of Hermès plus a number that corresponds to a number on the keys.

In Conclusion

When deciding whether to buy a particular Hermès bag, it is **important to remember that all bags are expertly crafted by skilled artisans** and **therefore any sign of error or defect will result in the bag not leaving the store**. Therefore, you should never accept a bag that you are not 100% happy or convinced by. Furthermore, if you find a bag that seems too good to be true, particularly when it comes to its price, it normally is so don't end up with an expensive fake. Subsequently, in the secondary marketplace for Hermès bags, it is recommended that you **buy from registered companies**. In the case of Bags of Luxury, they even have a central London showroom bags can be viewed prior to purchase as well as online. Nothing will make you happier than knowing you're finally getting your Hermès that is genuine.

Guide courtesy of Bags of Luxury www.bagsofluxury.com.

Bags of Luxury is an internationally well reputed and trusted re-seller of Hermès bags.

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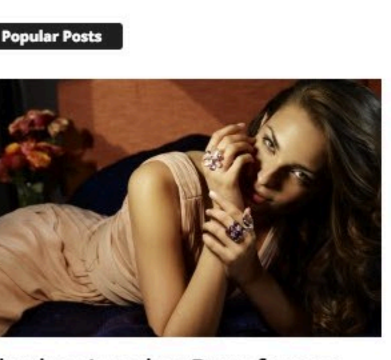

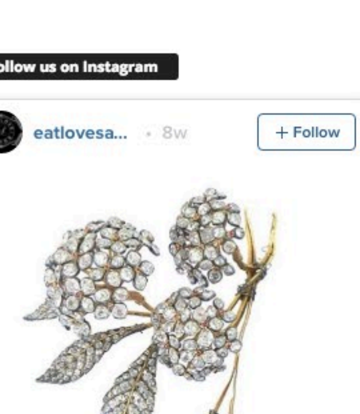

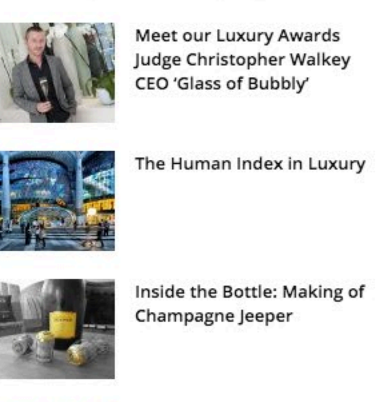

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