

10 Questions to Ask Your Glove Supplier



Private Label Sourcing Checklist

Do you know what questions to ask when sizing up sourcing options?
Here's a checklist to help you cover the important bases.



Ahead of The Curve

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PRIVATE LABEL SOURCING CHECKLIST

In business, the key to making a good decision is gathering complete information and knowing the right questions to ask.

Here are ten questions to ask prospective suppliers, to help you evaluate your glove sourcing options:



1. What retail channels/brands do you make gloves for?

A glove maker who makes lower end product might not have the relationships and experience to manufacture a luxe product, and vice versa. Each glove niche requires specific expertise.

Look for someone who has experience in the channel where you sell.



2. Do you own your own factory? Can I visit your factory?

Agents move factory to factory, and might not have the long-term relationships that you need. Factories can appear and disappear overnight.

By comparison, a company that owns their own factory controls and manages the process from design all the way through shipments.



3. Are you well financed?

Leather and other technical glove components are expensive. Does your prospective partner have the financial resources to fund this investment?



4. What is your capacity?

As for any seasonal business, ensure that your supplier has the capacity to produce inventory for peak demand, and the financial strength to acquire the raw materials needed for peak production.



5. **What types of products do you make?**

Can your prospective manufacturing partner demonstrate that they have the capability to work with the latest trending glove materials and techniques?

Making gloves is not like mass-producing t-shirts. Cutting leather is a different skill set than cutting synthetics. Fabrics can react differently from cutting room to actual field environments. Styles change quickly.

Make sure that the prospective supplier has experience with the specific glove raw materials and techniques you need.



6. **Who are your industry partners?**

Is your prospective partner approved by leading technical component partners, like W.L. Gore, 3M, Pittards, or Primaloft?

Do they have long-term relationships with a wide network of materials vendors to meet your technical requirements, which you can leverage for materials development?



7. **What manufacturing methods do you use? How do you handle quality assurance?**

Glove manufacturing methods vary. For instance, not all glove manufacturers use dies, but use of metal dies creates more consistent sizing than using paper patterns.

Also, what quality management system is being used? How will incoming raw materials be inspected and graded before moving to the cutting or assembly process?

Experienced inspectors guarantee that you get what you've paid for, and don't end up with excess waste on the cutting floor. Especially with expensive components like leather, the right inspection process, and inspectors, are key.



**8. Can you help me with an emergency order?
Is your supplier willing to maintain “on the shelf” raw materials? What are your lead times?**

If sell through is good, will you be out of stock? How can they help you expedite product?

Is your supplier willing to maintain “on the shelf” inventory for quick turnaround? Will they ship direct to your retail locations? Print your UPC and price tickets? Ship partial shipments? Air goods in?

While 90-120 days might be a “typical” lead time, when your supplier controls the factory, they can shift priorities to push up production.

Look for a supplier who will work closely with you on shipping dates and has the means to be responsive to your delivery needs.



9. Can you help me with design, pricing, and merchandising strategy?

The broader a prospective partner’s design and merchandising experience is with a range of glove materials and types, the better they will be able to meet your price point, deliver a glove that looks great, and performs the way it should.

Do they have the product engineering experience to give you a wide range of price options? Do they have a design and merchandising staff to guide you on product mix, color/size assortment, materials and more? How long does it take to get sales samples??



10. Can you help with minimums?

Does your supplier have the manufacturing flexibility to waive minimums, and a diversified library of core raw materials to help you to manage MOQ issues?

Your prospective vendor should be protective of proprietary materials, but let you leverage a basic stable of ongoing raw materials by updating with trends, hardware and stitching details.



The Most Important Question of All ...

If you're like us, you may have learned the hard way that when buying anything, there are more important considerations than price.

It's often the unexpected challenges that distinguish a good supplier from a great one.

Perhaps the most important question is "What product problems have you had, and how have you solved them?"

Thanks for downloading our checklist.

We hope our checklist provides you with a framework for your gloves sourcing research.

Truth is, we could have kept going ...there are many more questions that will certainly come up ... but this is a good place to start.

How do you transform these ideas into action?

If you have a current business that isn't performing optimally, or you're planning a new product line and need some help, schedule a consultation.

If you have questions, we have answers. Call us -- one of our glove experts can help you figure it out.

Roger Heumann

President, Olympia Gloves

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About Olympia Gloves:

Olympia Gloves was established in 1941.

We are a highly experienced glove supplier for the luxury and technical glove markets.

We're based in Elmsford, NY and have a company owned factory in Shanghai and a Design & Development office in Gloversville, NY.

- A respected glove brand in motor sports as well as a private label maker for a distinctive list of business partners, for almost 75 years.
- Gloves specialists: we make the best gloves at a competitive price with better performance, better fit, and better feel.
- We're not an agent. We provide a complete package of turnkey services from innovation, design, and merchandising, to manufacturing and sell-through support.

If our glove experts can be of assistance, we hope you'll get in touch.

To Contact Us:

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P.S. Check out our "Glove Makers" blog, and connect with us online, for more glove sourcing strategies for retail and wholesale brands.

