

I'll dig into this properly — both the shoe's construction and the halacha. Let me verify with real sources.

Let me verify who makes this shoe via that RN number and confirm the FTC labeling meaning.

I have what I need on the halacha and the labeling framework. One more check on the FTC leather-disclosure rule so the material claim is airtight.

Shalom — happy to put my two hats on for this one. Here's my professional read as someone who works the shoe floor and keeps halacha.

Bottom line up front

Yes — by the mainstream halacha, he can wear this shoe on Tisha B'Av, because it contains no leather. There's one nuance (the leather-*look* brown trim) worth knowing, and as always he should follow his own rav's practice. Details below.

Step 1: What is this shoe actually made of?

The stamped label is the authoritative answer, and it reads:

9M · MADE IN CHINA · TEXTILE/MANMADE UPPER · MANMADE SOLE · RN#58665

This matters because footwear labeling isn't marketing — it's federally regulated. Under the FTC's Guides for Select Leather and Imitation Leather Products, if any part of a shoe is made of non-leather material that *looks* like leather, the fact that it isn't leather must be disclosed — e.g., "imitation leather," "simulated leather," "vinyl," or "plastic." For footwear specifically, it's enough to disclose the presence of non-leather materials in the upper, lining/sock, or outsole, according to which material predominates — so a shoe that *did* contain leather would read something like "Upper of manmade materials and leather."

This label says "**TEXTILE/MANMADE UPPER**" with **no leather called out anywhere**. Translation from the shoe world: the navy knit is textile, and those brown heel patches and the trim that read as leather to the eye are **synthetic (PU/faux) leather**. If they were real hide, the law would require the word "leather" on that stamp. It isn't there.

Step 2: The halacha

One of the five afflictions of Tisha B'Av is not wearing shoes — and the normative definition of a prohibited "shoe" is a **leather** one. The five prohibitions don't actually specify "leather"; they proscribe "shoes," which normative halacha defines as leather shoes. The Shulchan Aruch (OC 554:16) rules that only shoes made of or covered in leather are prohibited, though many poskim advise being stringent. The Alter Rebbe explains the logic: other materials are soft enough that the foot still feels the ground, so

it's still a form of affliction; and the prohibited item is a “minal” (leather shoe), whereas a non-leather shoe is a “malbush” (garment).

On synthetic sneakers exactly like this: since the Rishonim and Acharonim discuss only leather and never a prohibition on other materials, one may wear non-leather sneakers on Tisha B'Av — this is the ruling of Chazon Ovadia (R' Ovadia Yosef). The consensus across communities: in practice, the accepted ruling is that non-leather footwear is permissible. Cloth, rubber, and plastic shoes are fine; even a shoe made partially of leather is prohibited, but shoes of cloth, rubber, or plastic are permitted.

Step 3: The one thing to flag — *marit ayin*

Here's where my shoe eye and my halacha overlap. Those brown heel patches genuinely *look* like leather. Some poskim were stringent specifically about synthetic shoes that resemble real leather: even according to the lenient opinion, one should avoid shoes made of synthetic leather that look like the real thing, because of *marit ayin* (appearing to do something forbidden). R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach permitted non-leather shoes but held that non-leather shoes which look like leather should be avoided for *marit ayin*.

The counterweight, and where most contemporary poskim land: more recent poskim write that today, since such shoes are so common, people will assume they are not real leather. Practically, the OU puts it plainly: the prohibition applies only to leather shoes; all other shoes may be worn — though one shouldn't wear leather-looking synthetic shoes unnecessarily, since onlookers may assume they're leather.

Because this shoe is mostly navy knit with only modest brown accents, it doesn't scream “dress leather shoe” — the *marit ayin* concern is on the milder end. But if he wants to sidestep it entirely, a plainer canvas or all-mesh sneaker is cleaner.

Step 4: The “extra-machmir” view (optional, not the baseline)

A separate stringency isn't about leather at all — it's about comfort. The Mishnah Berurah (614:5) notes that one who can easily manage with slippers or thin-soled canvas shoes that don't fully protect the foot should be stringent. This is why some avoid very cushioned shoes; famously, R' Elyashiv held that since Crocs are worn as everyday shoes year-round, one shouldn't wear them on Tisha B'Av. This is a praiseworthy stringency for a *baal nefesh*, not the letter of the law — and it's a personal-comfort question, not a kashrus-of-the-shoe question.

My recommendation to the customer

He can wear it. It's a textile/synthetic shoe with zero disclosed leather, which is squarely permitted by the accepted psak. The brown trim is faux leather, so the only live issue is a mild *marit ayin* one that

most contemporary poskim are lenient about today. If he's the type who likes to be machmir — or if his kehilla is careful about leather-look shoes — a plain canvas sneaker is the “no-questions” pick. And as I'd tell anyone: **CYLOR** (consult your own rav), since minhag and comfort-level stringencies vary.

Sources

- Shulchan Aruch HaRav, Leather Shoes on Tisha B'Av (OC 614): <https://shulchanaruchharav.com/article/3-leather-shoes-on-tisha-bav>
- Peninei Halakha, “Wearing Shoes” (Laws of Tisha B'Av 8): <https://ph.yhb.org.il/en/05-10-08/>
- OU, Hilchos Tisha B'Av: https://www.ou.org/holidays/hilchos_tisha-bav/
- OU Torah (Tzarich Iyun), “Leather and Fasting on Yom Kippur”: <https://outorah.org/p/5676/>
- Halacha Yomit (R' Ovadia Yosef / Chazon Ovadia), Wearing Leather Shoes on Tisha B'Av: <https://halachayomit.co.il/en/Default.aspx?HalachaID=5363>
- Collive, “Faux Leather Shoes on Tisha B'Av”: <https://collive.com/faux-leather-shoes-on-tisha-bav/>
- Ohr Somayach, The Laws of Tisha B'Av: <https://ohr.edu/1098>
- Aish, Laws of Shoes and Chairs: <https://aish.com/48964551/>
- FTC leather-labeling law, 16 CFR §24.2 (Deception as to composition): <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-16/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-24/section-24.2>
- FTC RN Database (to confirm the maker behind RN 58665): <https://rn.ftc.gov/rns>

One note on RN#58665: the FTC's public RN lookup is an interactive search that I can't scrape a static result from, but you can plug **58665** into the database above to confirm the responsible company on the label. It won't change the halachic answer — the material disclosure on the stamp is what governs — but it's there if the customer wants the brand of record.