

How to Build a Paperback Book

The “printies” attached to this newsletter provide you with covers to make some paperbacks to scatter around your contemporary doll-house: two diet books for your kitchen (isn't everybody dieting???), a dictionary, writer's guide and thesaurus for your office or student's dorm room, and three delicious mysteries for your bedroom! The following instructions allow you to assemble them in the same way that real paperbacks are assembled.

- Book binding requires little in the form of specialized tools. A pair of precise scissors, a sharp craft knife, a small steel ruler, and a variety of clamps is all that is required, with one exception. You can construct your own book binding press from two small pieces of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch plywood. Cut two pieces of wood 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ inch wide and 4 inches long. Add a 1 inch wide Binder Clip (as illustrated and available at any office supply store) and you are all set! This handles books up to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick. When was the last time you read a 6" book?

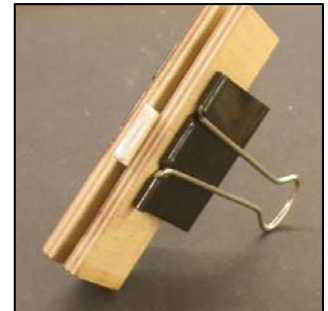
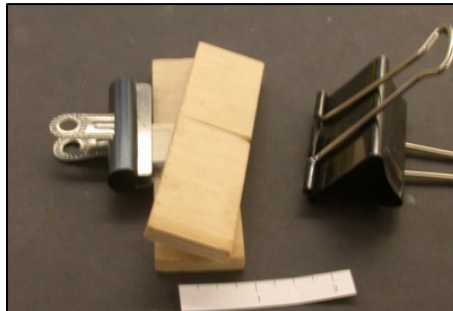


- You can scan the covers and spines of any book you want to reproduce. The set of eight covers attached show how the front, back and spine should be assembled for printing. Cut the covers from the sheet with sharp craft scissors. Using a steel ruler and a sharp craft knife, **lightly** score the covers on both sides of the spine. Fold covers along the score lines. On dark colored covers, you may see a white line where the score line was, where the interior color of the paper shows through. You may wish to color this white line with a matching or contrasting color felt pen, depending on how you want your final book to look. In most cases, these white lines are unobtrusive and even decorative.

- On a piece of paper, draw squares that are $\frac{11}{16}$ inch on each side. You should get more than 300 pages from a single sheet, more than enough to do bunches of books. Make sure that the cutting lines are cut off each page or you will have dark borders on alternate pages. Fold each page in half (always in the same direction) and arrange the pages in a row, with all the folded sides on the same side. Make sure you don't get any pages inside another folded page.



- Assemble the book by placing the pages in a stack, making sure that the folded side of each sheet is to the same side. Level the edges by tapping gently on a hard surface. Place a clamp on the open edge of the pages, with the folded side sticking out of the clamp, and test fit the pages against the spine of the book, as illustrated to the left below. You may need to add a few pages in order for the pages to fit the spine area tightly. It is important that this be done in a clamp to compress the pages. If there is a good fit, using a second clamp, clamp together the folded “spine-side” of the pages. Remove the clamp from the open side of the pages. Then, insert the open side of the pages into the book binding press, as illustrated in the centre illustration.



- Clamp tightly with the large Binder Clip, and remove the smaller clip. You are now ready to apply the glue. Sparingly apply a flexible craft glue to the folded ends of the pages, which will become the spine of the book. Run a craft knife (or your thumbnail) along each side of the spine to remove any excess glue. Let dry for a minute, then center the spine of the cover over the folded ends of the pages, making sure that the front of the cover is aligned with the front of the printed pages. Press down, and remove any glue that oozes out the ends. Let dry completely before removing from the clamp.
- Remove the book from the clamp once it is dry, and close the book. Gently press on the edges of the spine to slightly round the spine. You're done!
- NOTE ABOUT GLUE: Any good craft glue used for paper is suitable for book binding, as long as it dries into a **flexible** bond, so the spine won't crack on opening the book. Aleene's Tacky Glue or Sobo Premium Craft and Fabric Glue by Delta both work well.