

# Down and Dirty Basics of Bookbinding

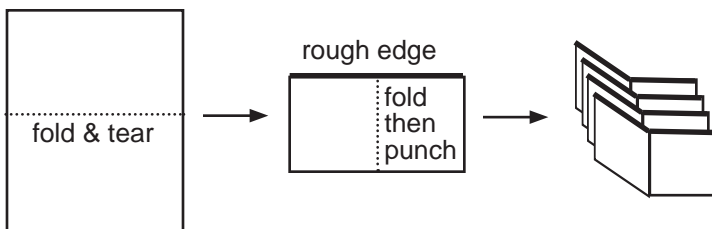
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## Need:

- acid free paper/parchment/papyrus
- bookbinding awl (using polymer clay punch for class)
- bone folder (using plastic folder for class)
- leather (using fabric for class)
- wood board
- ruler (using pre-measured guide for class)
- linen thread (using cotton thread for class)
- beeswax (to coat linen thread)
- needle
- cutting blade (if want to cut paper and not tear)

1. Fold and cut the paper to size\*
2. Fold the paper and punch stitching holes in paper
3. Collate paper sheets
4. Cut cover to size
5. Punch holes in cover for stitching
6. Stitch in quires to cover
7. Attach wrapping strap
8. Enjoy book

*(\*If wanting to print or include writing or illumination in book it needs to be done first and then begin with step 1 above.)*



## Prepping the Paper

1. Take a 8.5"x11" sheet of paper and fold in half to 8.5"x5.5". Use the folder and press down along the edge of the fold to break the grains in the paper so it will tear easier. Either use the folder or simply tear freehand and tear the paper into two 8.5"x5.5" halves.
2. Rotate the halves so the rough edge is on the same side.
3. Continue doing this until you have enough sheets to make your book.
4. The number of sheets needed depends on how many quires you want in your book and how many sheets per quire. For this class we are doing eight quires of 4 sheets each or 16 pages each for a total of 128 pages. You may do more or less if you choose.
5. Take each half sheet and fold them in half one at a time to be 5.5"x4.25". Again use the folder to break the grain of the paper so it will lay flat when stitched into the book. It is important to not fold them in stacks because it will then change the location on the center fold depending on where in the stack they are and will alter the look of your book.
6. Take each folded piece and flatten them out again. Take the guide and using the wood board below the paper, punch

in the six stitch holes along the fold of each page. You may do them one at a time or in stack of four (the quire) together so the holes line up.

7. Take the punched paper and make quires in groups of four.

8. Take the cover material and then place the wrong side up on the table. Take all the quires in a stack and place in the far left corner with the fold on the right. Then slowly holding the quires together roll the quires along the material measuring how much material is needed to cover the quires. Once you have rolled over all four sides add extra material inches at the end for a flap and mark off the edges by scrapping with your awl or a piece of chalk works too.

9. Cut out the cover material and a strip of material to use as a strap.

10. Place the quires back on the wrong side of the cover and mark where the folded section hits the cover.

11. Turn the cover material over, place the wood board under the cover and where the fold area begins move in about .25 inches and begin putting the stitching holes in the cover using the awl.

12. Follow instructions for stitching in the quires on the next page.

## Samples of a 4 Sheet Quire

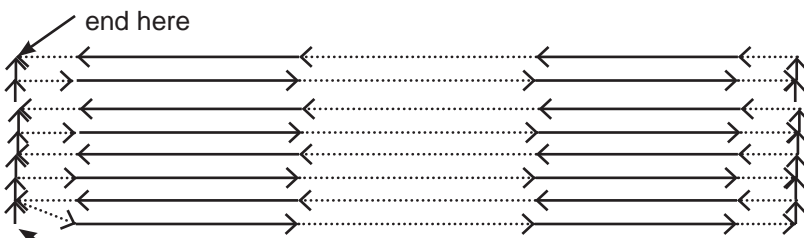
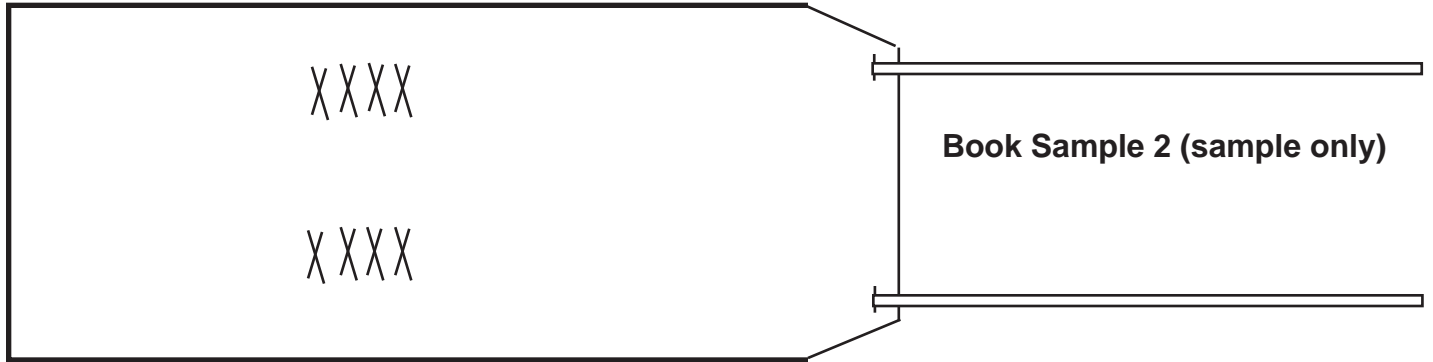
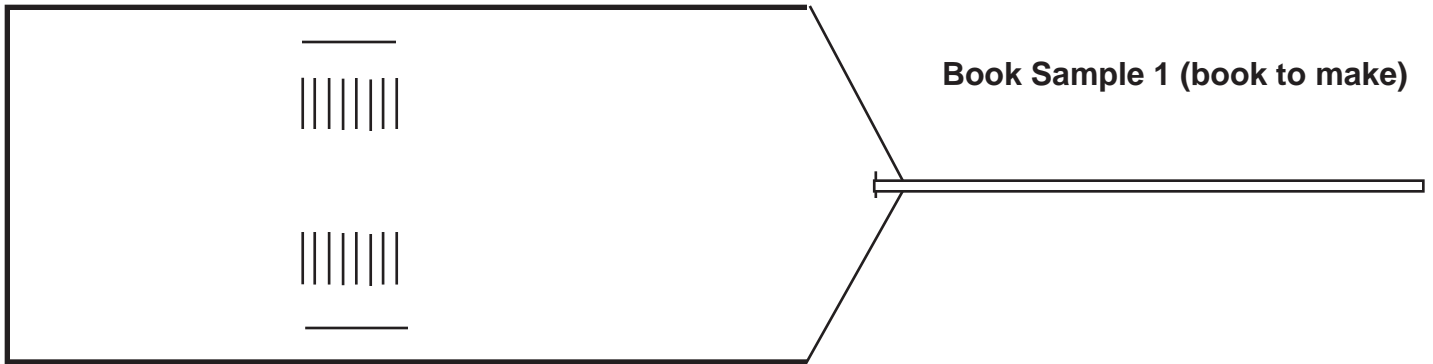
(left) and a

## 8 Sheet Quire

**Layout** for use in pre-printing or pre-decorating pages.

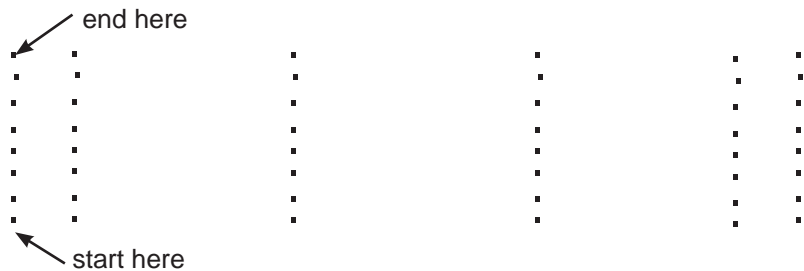
Each rectangle represents a two-page spread on one side of a sheet of paper. The first spread is the front of the sheet, the second is the back. Alternating back and forth to the end. The bottom most spread is called the center spread and the most prized location in any book besides the cover

32	1		
2	31		
30	3		
4	29		
28	5		
6	27		
26	7		
8	25		
16	1	24	9
2	15	10	23
14	3	22	11
4	13	12	21
12	5	20	13
6	11	14	19
10	7	18	15
8	9	16	17



**Book Sample 1 - Stitching Path**

← thread shows outside of cover  
 ←····· thread shows inside between the paper pages



**Book Sample 1 - Hole Punch**

Use guide provided to punch holes. Make rows of holes about .125 - .25 inches apart so there is room for the paper queries to lay flat inside book.

**Stitching Instructions**

1. Thread the needle, place a knot in the end of the thread.
2. Starting from the inside (wrong side of the fabric/leather) bring the needle to the front, leaving the knot on the inside.
3. Go to the next hole above and bring needle to wrong side of fabric.
4. Bring needle to the outside using the hole to the right of the starting hole.
5. Bring the needle to the inside using the hole to the immediate right.
6. Bring the needle to the outside using the hole to the immediate right.
7. Bring the needle to the inside using the hole to the immediate right.
8. Bring the needle to the outside using the hole to the immediate right.
9. Bring the needle to the inside using the hole above.
10. Repeat as above going to the left.
11. When you come out of the hole at the very end, before going to the next hole above loop the thread under the stitch below to give support to the ends.
12. Repeat stitching to the right as before.
13. When you get the hole to the furthest right before going to the hole above loop under the stitch below it as you did on the left hand side.
14. Repeat back and forth stitching and looping under the previous stitch at the ends until you get to the end point indicated above.
15. Bring needle to the inside in the last hole and tie off inside around the previous stitch inside so it does not become loose or pull out. Cut of excess thread.

## **Bookbinding Links**

Directions for making a soft-covered Coptic Book by Meisterin Katarina Helene von Schönborn, OL  
[http://meisterin.katarina.home.comcast.net/~meisterin.katarina/coptic\\_book.html](http://meisterin.katarina.home.comcast.net/~meisterin.katarina/coptic_book.html)

How to Assemble Your Book then Bind it with Coptic Stitch  
<http://www.altered-book.com/coptic-stitch.html>

[www.cute-evil-bunny.com](http://www.cute-evil-bunny.com) – Bookbinding  
<http://www.cuteevilbunny.com/angusbook052309/angusvigil.html>

A Limp Binding with Reinforced Spine - Lyle H. Gray  
<http://members.verizon.net/~vze3wwx7/LimpBinding/LimpBinding.html>

## **Supply Links**

Dick Blick Art Supplies – papyrus paper  
<http://www.dickblick.com>

John Neal Bookseller – Pergamena, linen thread, calligraphy/illumination supplies  
<http://www.johnnealbooks.com/>

Xpedx – acid free and multi color, texture, style paper in reams or cases  
<http://www.xpedx.com>

## **Suggested Reading**

The Archaeology of Medieval Bookbinding – J.A. Szirman

Bookbinding Its Background and Technique (Two volumes bound as one) – Edith Diehl

Hand Bookbinding: A Manual of Instruction – Aldren A. Watson

The Complete Book of Bookbinding – Josep Cambrass