

The process of guillotining is the most difficult part of binding books. I fondly imagined that when a pile of paper or a book block was put under the clamp, the blade was lowered and that was all there was to it. No one ever told me that once sheets of paper are put on top of each other, they appear to undergo a mysterious transformation into a liquid and suffer from something called 'draw'.

For some reason, the rear guide and top clamp of most lever guillotines have projecting cast iron ribs which can damage book blocks and soft covers. To avoid this, glue a piece of stiff card along both surfaces about 3mm (0.125") thick and 50mm (2") wide. Leave 12mm (0.5") clear at either end of the top clamp if a book spine is not to be squashed. Sandpaper all the edges of the top card before fitting to avoid pressure marks.

Inevitably, the addition of a rear card protector will throw out the ruler markings at the side. However, as this decreases the distance between the rear guide and the blade, it is only necessary to stick a piece of card on top of the finger pointer to align with the correct mark.

I think I have spoiled more books through bad guillotining than I ever have in the printing and binding processes, so I have developed the following technique. Always glue soft covers to the book block so that the bottom edges of each are level and never try to cut to finished size the first time round. Make sure any glue is dry before trimming and remember to turn the spine against the sideways movement of the blade, or a soft cover will tear out rather than cut.

Place the spine of the book block against the rear guide with the bottom against the adjoining guide. Trim the fore edge of the book at least 3mm oversize. Then put the spine of the book against the sideways thrust of the cut and press the fore edge against the adjoining guide. Trim the top edge and do the same for the remaining copies, working from a pencilled header mark on the end paper of the cover or book block rather than relying on the rear guide, as the

Guillotining

Your thumb nails and fold over; repeat for the last side. Lift the plate glass, slide the completed cover underneath, using waxed paper to prevent sticking as more covers are added.

The book is assembled by pasting the inside of both boards, but not the spine. Turn the cover so that the spine runs cross-wise in front of you; check the head of book and cover are both in the same direction. Place the spine of the book over the spine of the cover, so that there is an equal distance on either side; hold the book upright and raise the cover furthest away from you so s-l-o-o-w-l-y.

Stop every so often to make sure there is an equal distance between the end paper and the top and bottom of the cover; if not, lower the cover and move the book block one way or the other and try again. When satisfied with what is known as the 'square', close the cover; turn everything round and do the same on the other side.

Use a bone folder or a rounded piece of plastic such as the cap of a ball point pen and run it along the French Groove on either side of the spine. Open each cover a little way; smooth any bumps round the edge; insert a piece of waxed paper and put under a heavy weight, such as a brick, until dry.

The French Groove is made by compressing the narrow portion of the book cloth on either side of the spine card to make a flexible hinge between the boards and the spine. This allows the book to open flat and prevents the endpaper joint from tearing apart.

If you want a rounded spine, take a completed cover and brush the inside of the spine with a little water. Leave for a few minutes and then gently curve the spine round a piece of half inch dowel or water pipe. Hang over the edge of the bench to dry and then assemble as before. It is possible to round the spine of the book, but this must be done whilst the glue is still warm from the thermal binder and a proper book press is needed to provide the necessary pressure to compress the cloth into the French Groove.

cut after printing both sides

Covering and Guillotining

A TINYHELP
for Self-Printing Books

4

Compiled by
David Byram-Wigfield

TinyHelp 4 describes the process of making soft and hard covers. Soft card covers printed on colour inkjets can be made waterproof when covered with an adhesive transparent film and the book and cover are trimmed to size simultaneously after gluing together. Hard covers should be made to a specific size and the book trimmed to fit the cover, rather than trying to size the cover to fit the book, which is much more difficult.

Cappella Archive

Book on Demand Limited Editions

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TURN THE PAPER HERE BEFORE PRINTING THE REVERSE



to one side; glue the side, tucking in each little corner overhang with the area where you pasted last; glue the top edge and fold over; rotate the bottom edge and fold over; turn the cover round, avoiding the point of the card. Put the cover back over the pasting magazine; Cut across each corner at 45 degrees about 3mm (0.125") away from (0.5") overhang.

Remove the template and cut a piece of thin box card as wide as the spine, with the flexible grain running from top to bottom. Glue the white side and place it between the two covers, so that there is an equal distance of book cloth showing on either side. Move to a piece of plate glass or hardboard and trim all four sides to leave a 12mm

level. A glossy magazine such as 'Hello' makes a very good gluing area, as the card is less prone to stick to shiny paper and you may even find some distractions to pass the time. Turn over to a clean page for each gluing operation.

In my experience, always glue the boards and not the bookcloth, which otherwise becomes soggy and unmanageable. So, place the book cloth face down on a flat surface, and position a glued board on the right of the template and the other on the left, keeping the tops level. The boards are 6mm (0.25") longer than the trimmed pages of the book, but 6mm (0.25") narrower. I use Dutch gray card for the covers and something called box card for the spine. This is much thinner than the boards, with a white surface on one side and it is flexible in one direction but not in the other. It is sometimes used for

packing men's shirts. The spine template is cut from card and should be the width of the spine plus 12mm (0.5") and the same length as the card boards. Use masking tape at top and bottom to fix it to the reverse of the bookcloth, holding the printed front up to the light to get it in the right place. The boards are 6mm (0.25") longer than the trimmed pages of the book, but 6mm (0.25") narrower. I use Dutch gray card for the covers and something called box card for the spine. This is much thinner than the boards, with a white surface on one side and it is flexible in one direction but not in the other. It is sometimes used for

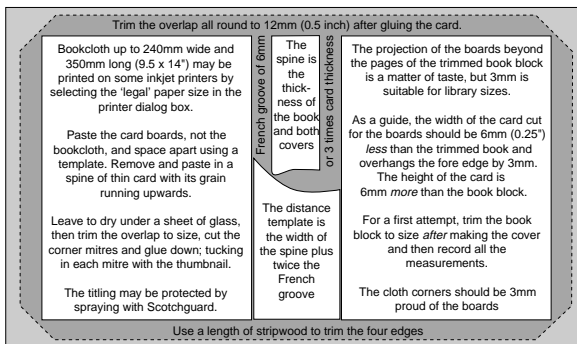
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Making Covers

Card covers are made by printing a suitable coloured design on an inkjet. The card should be cut about 25mm (1") longer than the book paper; printed; scored either side of the spine titling; folded; laminated with a protective transparent adhesive film; folded along the creases again; then glued to the book and both trimmed when dry.

Like paper, card too has a grain, and this should run cross-wise so that it runs parallel with the spine of the book when folded. Try to find some parchment card. This is not as soft as ordinary card, takes coloured inks without spreading, and is less prone to curling. Two pairs of tiny lines printed at the head and tail of the spine are useful as a ruling guide for scoring similar covers.



Hard covers are made by placing two glued rectangles of card either side of a spine template on a piece of bookcloth. The bookcloth should be cut about 40mm (1.5") longer and wider than the distance round the closed book. Bookcloth up to 14 inches long and 9.5 inches wide may be printed on an inkjet by choosing a landscaped 'legal' paper from the Print Dialog. Obviously, this must be at your own risk, as it is possible some kinds of bookcloth may damage the print heads.

If you calculate the width to height ratios of the traditional book sizes below, they usually work out at about 1 to 1.5. In other words, the US letter size of paper is much more suitable for laser printing books than the European A4. Classical margins tend to increase in proportion from inner (1), to header (1.5); to outer (2); to footer (3), and such ratios are more pleasing, at least to my eye.

The proportions of a trimmed book should not depend on the size of paper being used, but must relate to the dimensions of the text block and carefully chosen margins on the page. There is a regrettable tendency to make paperback page margins too narrow and the text block too wide. The resulting over-long line length is then compensated for by increasing the size of the typeface to reduce the line word count. To further emphasize a latter more book for you unpleasant to handle and read.

Book Proportions

The starch-filled is to be preferred, as the lighter colours can be printed on an inkjet, and it folds nicely when glued, without stretching. The darker colours may be tiled using a hot foil printer, but that subject needs a TinyHelp all to itself.

There seem to be three kinds of bookcloth, which are obtainable in various weights. One is a dyed cloth, which is white on the reverse, but it tends to discolour if it gets wet, or is inadvertently touched by the glue brush. A second kind, sometimes known as library cloth, has a shiny surface and is rather stiff and difficult to manipulate without practice. A third variety, known as 'starch-filled', has a woven linen surface with a slight glaze on the reverse.

Bookcloth

Reverse in the guillotine, with the book the other way down, or up, and trim all the tails to the same measurement. Then trim round the book once more, trimming the three edges to their finished sizes.

untimed book lengths may vary. This will prevent spine titling being at different levels on succeeding copies.

Traditional book sizes in the United Kingdom

Hard cover sizes:	mm	inches
Collins Gem	117 x 79	4.60 x 3.12
Foolscap octavo	170 x 110	6.75 x 4.25
Crown octavo	190 x 125	7.50 x 5.00
Large crown octavo	205 x 135	8.00 x 5.25
Small demy octavo	215 x 145	8.50 x 5.75
Demy octavo	220 x 145	8.67 x 5.75
Medium octavo	230 x 145	9.00 x 5.75
Small royal octavo	235 x 155	9.25 x 6.12
Royal octavo	255 x 160	10.00 x 6.25
<i>Cox & Wyman paperback sizes:</i>		
Special small	137 x 85	5.37 x 3.37
Special medium	148 x 106	5.75 x 4.25
Narrow A1	178 x 108	7.00 x 4.25
Narrow A2	178 x 111	7.00 x 4.37
Normal B1	186 x 123	7.37 x 4.75
Normal B2	198 x 130	7.75 x 5.12

The following addresses may be helpful.

- Five Seasons book—white recycled paper
- John Purcell Paper, 15 Rumsey Road, London, SW9 0TR. 0171 737 5199
- Bookcloth
- Evans Textiles Ltd., 4 Thorncross Close, Manchester, M15 4LZ. 0161 832 4137
- Bookbinders' glues, tools, leather, and materials.
- Hewitt & Sons, 28 Metro Centre, Park Royal, London, NW10 7PR. 0181 965 5377
- Bookbinder's Warehouse Inc. 31 Division St., Keyport, NJ. USA. (732) 264 0306
- TALAS, 568 Broadway Suite 107, New York, NY., USA. (212) 219 0735
- RELMA, 3 rue des Poitevins, 75006 Paris, France. 01 43 25 40 52

References to other suppliers would be welcome.