

# My 12 Favorite Bookbinding Books

Ali Manning, Vintage Page Designs



## BEST BOOKS FOR BEGINNERS

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[Making Handmade Books, 100+ Bindings, Structures & Forms](#) - Alisa Golden

This book is now over ten years old but it's still the most comprehensive book available for those interested in craft bindings. The 100+ projects cover an array of book structures: folded, scrolls, moveable books, sewn bindings, cover techniques, boxes etc. While it's perfect for beginners, I reference it all the time. [If you're only going to buy one book, get this one!](#)

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[Little Book of Book Making](#) - Charlotte Rivers

If you're just starting out on your book making journey, I would pair this book with Alisa Golden's book. While Golden's instructions are more detailed, the examples in Charlotte Rivers' book are fresher and more modern. The first two thirds contains many inspiring book samples that will have you itching to get started on your own books. It also has directions for some surface design ideas that combine well with bookbinding projects.

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[Making Books, A Guide to Creating Handcrafted Books](#) - London Centre for Book Arts

I wish this book had been published when I first started making books because it is well designed and the directions and photographs are so so easy to follow. It is less overwhelming than the Alisa Golden book but with six types of clearly explained book

projects, including concertinas, stab bindings, slim case bindings and exposed spine bindings. There is a US version which has imperial measurements.

## **THREE FOR BOOK ARTISTS & JOURNALERS**

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[The Art of the Fold](#) - Hedi Kyle & Ulla Warchol

If you want to make artist books to showcase your artwork, pick up a copy of The Art of the Fold. It contains a breathtaking selection of no-sew folded book structures and albums. There are 10 different types of accordion books alone! While directions for Hedi Kyle's signature structures (Blizzard book, Crown book and Fishbone fold), can be seen floating around the internet, it's great to go to the source. Accuracy with these structures is important and some folks, me included, find the folding a little tricky, but the results are worth the effort.

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[Cover to Cover](#) - Shereen LaPlantz

If you want to create unique personalized journals, Cover to Cover provides a lot of inspiration. While you'll find most of the binding techniques in other books, it's LaPlantz' earthy, textured style that makes this book a good addition to your bookmaking library.

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[Re-Bound: Creating Handmade Books from Recycled and Repurposed Materials](#) - Jeannine Stein

Once you read this book by Jeannine Stein, you won't look at items in your home the same way again. Ms Stein shows you how to turn everyday items and even those destined for the trash into beautiful, functional works of art, from hot water bottles to

bathmats, food packaging to window screens. It includes a wide variety of well illustrated bindings, such as sewn bindings, ones that include simple hardware and woven bindings. This is a joyful book that is a pleasure to read.

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[Bound](#) - Erica Ekrem

If your taste leans towards vintage, then *Bound* by Erica Ekrem will be your cup of tea. This book focuses on sewn bindings with recycled covers and is in three sections: vintage, nature and leather. The nature section is especially fun because it features books from shells, leaves and driftwood. Ms Ekrem also illustrates a variety of book closures. This is real eye candy for your bookshelf.

## THREE TRADITIONAL BINDING BOOKS

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[Introduction to Bookbinding & Custom Cases](#) - Tom & Cindy Hollander

This is an excellent book for learning to make traditional books and cases. It's easier to read than Kathy Abbott's book with clear directions and photographs. I particularly like the initial section on basic materials, tools and supplies. Each project has a useful cutting formula so that you can vary the size of your project.

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[Bookbinding, A Step-by-Step Guide](#) - Kathy Abbott

This book contains nine traditional binding projects, such as full cloth case binding, photo album and quarter leather binding. It has a lot of photos and a detailed and comprehensive text for each binding. If you're interested in learning to make book "properly", this is the book for you.

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[Japanese Book Binding - Instructions from a Master Craftsman - Kojiro Ikegami](#)

This book, which focuses on traditional Japanese tools and bindings plus those from China and Korea, is the bible of Eastern book structures. You won't just find stab binding; it also includes several accordion structures, ledgers and multi section books. Plus, a section on book cases. The black and white illustrations and photographs are excellent. While the measurements are offered in metric and imperial, they are really geared towards metric users. I like how this book teaches the "rules" of traditional binding and once you know the rules, you can break them!

## **KEITH SMITH**

Mr Smith is in a category of his own and you will either love or hate his books. For me, they are hands down my two favorite books on bookbinding. Before you invest and add them to your bookshelf, order them from the library to make sure you like them.

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[Non-Adhesive Binding Volume 1 - Keith Smith](#)

This book contains all sewn bindings without a drop of glue in sight. It covers Contains stab bindings, long stitch variations, coptic binding, buttonhole, piano hinge etc. There is also an excellent section on covers and supports. There are very few photographs but lots of black and white illustrations of the stitching methods. This book is great for those who like written directions.

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[Non-Adhesive Binding Volume II: 1-2- & 3 Section Sewing](#) - Keith Smith

If you love books with decorative spines, this is the one to buy. The written directions and diagrams are not super user friendly, I would recommend starting with volume I to get used to his style. It's a great reference book to have on hand and would be a great year long project to make every binding in the book!

## **BONUS**

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[The Art of Making Paste Papers](#) - Diane Maurer-Mathison

I only know of one book about making paste papers and luckily it's a good one. The first chapter of The Art of Making Paste Papers provides a comprehensive breakdown of the equipment you'll need plus four great paste recipes. Maurer-Mathison then guides you through many different techniques and designs so that you'll be creating your own unique papers in no time. Careful, you'll be addicted in no time!