

LIFELONG LEARNING

PERSONAL ENRICHMENT CLASSES FOR INQUISITIVE ADULTS

Bookbinding Supply List

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Two matching hard book covers:

You can find interesting looking old books at thrift stores or Sam Weller's basement

Paper:

Vital to the process, different papers have different roles. There are a lot of beautiful papers out there from cotton-rag based to decorative Asian pattern paper. Spend some time at art supply stores and paper retailers to get to know your paper. Touching the paper is the best way to understand its role: a starchy rigid watercolor paper will clearly feel too rigid to fold into a book, while a finer paper like glassine or rice paper won't provide a sturdy enough work surface.

A variety of paper is needed for any bookbinding project, below are the basics we will use in this class:

Cover paper: 1 or 2 sheets. This will be used for those projects whose covers are not made of rigid board. This paper can be of any kind as long as it is of heavy body, is difficult to tear and can be fairly load bearing. Ensure that your cover paper is not so thick that it cannot be folded (bristol board for example is not a good cover paper as it is prone to breaking when creased.) A few good examples of cover paper are bark paper, papyrus, heavy weight printmaking paper, Thai banana papers, etc. These are available at Reuele's and Utrecht.

Signature paper: Signatures refer to the groups of paper assembled to make the pages of the book. For our projects you will need roughly 10-15 sheets of signature paper. Because folding the signatures is a labor intensive process you want a paper with a medium body; 60 – 90 lb drawing paper is a great weight. Some good and inexpensive brands are Strathmore, Canson or Utrecht.

Decorative end papers 1 or 2 sheets: these papers are purely for ornament. Traditionally they hide the overlaps of the cover paper on the cover board. They can be any kind, shape or texture. Reuel's and Utrecht have large selections of decorative papers. Of course, tissue paper, wrapping paper, plain brown paper or cloth can also be used. Be creative.

Neutral pH Adhesive: Usually "Lineco" brand. You will find this glue in the bookbinding section of craft and art stores. This is fairly inexpensive glue but look for the smaller bottle: a little goes a long way.

Bookbinding thread/linen thread/embroidery floss, should be cotton thread #10-12, crochet or embroidery silk or polyester): The weight of this thread determines the strength of the book's stitches, so ensure your thread isn't too fine. Embroidery thread works well but is fairly thick at the correct strength. Yarn is not a good idea as its tensile strength and threading-ability tend to be problematic.

Needles: You'll want a packet that contains a thick tapestry needle and a curved darning needle, these are available at art stores, craft stores or even groceries. The curved needle is probably the most important.

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UHU glue stick: get this at Utrecht or Emanuele's. It's an amazing, cheap adhesive, archival and keeps for a long time without getting dried up in its tube.

Exacto knife

Metal ruler

Synthetic flat brush, 1" wide

One small tube of acrylic paint - this will be used to tint a methyl cellulose paste for making paste papers- buy a cheap tube! The quality of the paint isn't as important as its color so find one you love, any color. The best for this project are the sponge paint acrylics sold in little squeeze top tubes at Michael's or Wal-Mart

Bone folder: the oldest and most traditional bookbinding tool of all. It is used for scoring and creating sharp folds. They come in all sizes and shapes but they're all made to do the same job

An awl: Awls are puncturing tools used to pierce the paper and the covers before sewing. A woodworking awl is typically larger and clumsier than a bookbinding awl, but bookbinding awls can be expensive. An alternative is to simply use a fine, sharp nail attached to a piece of wood, a dissection tool with a needle tip (available at the U of U bookstore) or a heavy duty thumb tack with a long needle, available at art stores.