

# Blank Books

## Project 4

### Supplies and Tools

binder clips	cutting board (wood is better)
box cutter	finishing nail (small) and a
brads	hammer
large needle	hole punches (have as many as
markers	possible on hand)
paintbrushes	scissors (straight-edge and
paper cutter (optional)	scrapbooking)
pen	small cups
pencils	Styrofoam trays
rulers	tape
	tissues or makeup sponges
	white glue

### Materials

binding rings	paint (watercolor or
card and paper stock	acrylic)
cardboard (thick enough to act as	paper scrap
book covers; various textures	ribbon
are nice)	rubber stamps and
decorative papers (wallpaper,	ink pads
wrapping paper, origami paper,	stencils and stencil
etc.)	paint
embroidery floss	twine

### Step 1: Planning and Selecting Materials

Have the participants read the instructions and decide on a plan for their book. They may want to think about how they will use their book and then decide on the size, type of binding, and materials they will need.

Once they have a design in mind, they can go to the materials table to pick out their book covers, paper or card stock, and decorating supplies.

### Step 2: Designing the Covers

This is the chance to be creative and make the book individual to yourself and the book's planned use. You can really do anything you want with the cover. Make it as simple or as complex as you'd like. We'll go over a few basics, but remember that you can mix and match these ideas or even do something else entirely.

#### DRAWING OR PAINTING

You can draw or trace a picture onto the cover and paint with watercolor or acrylic paint. Or you can use stencils to create a design. Layer your designs if you'd like, mak-

ing sure to let the paint dry between layers. Also, make sure your covers are completely dry before you go on to binding.

#### DECOUPAGING

You can overlay the book cover with words or pictures cut from magazines, books, newspapers, or comics. You can even use less traditional paper scrap, such as wallpaper scraps, wrapping paper, or origami paper. Again, layering can create a nice effect. Let the decoupage medium dry completely before binding.

#### STAMPING, USING MARKERS, AND MORE

You can create designs with rubber stamps and stamping ink or markers or both. You can also add interest by using cardboard with different textures. Try combining some of these techniques to create even more detailed designs. Don't forget to decorate the inside of the cover as well!

You can also embellish the pages. Try using scrapbooking scissors to cut different types of edges, or rip the edges. Sponge ink onto the pages or use stencils and rubber stamps to add designs.

### Step 3: Binding

#### BINDING 1: RING BOUND

Ring binding is the most basic binding short of stapling your book together at the corners. It can be used to good effect, though, depending on how you plan to use the book and where you place the rings.

Decide which edge is going to be the back or bound edge of your covers and your paper stock. Using a ruler, mark the placement of the holes. For consistency and ease of hole punching, do the covers first. Measure in from the edge at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch but no more than 1 inch (unless you're making a really huge book) and mark this spot. Do this at the top, middle, and bottom of the cover. Draw a line through all three marks. Next, measure along this line to place the marks where the holes should be punched.

Punch the holes in the first cover, and then use it as a guide to mark the other cover and the paper stock.

Remember that the binding is a part of your design, so you should try to add interest with it. For example, rather than doing a standard three-ring bind at even intervals, measure and mark holes for six rings. Or place holes so you'll have two rings close together at the top, one in the middle, and two more close together at the bottom. Also, keep in mind that your book does not have to open left to right. Your binding can be at the top or bottom or even on the right edge.

Once all the pages and the covers are punched, insert the rings and close them. The size of the rings you use will depend on the thickness of your book. Binding rings are the obvious choice, but you don't have to use them. You can also tie through the holes with ribbon or twine, or you can even use shower curtain rings.

#### BINDING 2: SEWN

Once you have your covers and pages designed and you know which edge you are going to bind, stack them in the order you want them to be bound and clip them together tightly with binder clips at the top and bottom. The pages and covers need to be held securely together.

Measure and mark where to put the holes.

With the cutting board underneath the book, use the hammer and finishing nail to make the holes. The holes need to be big enough for the string you plan to use to pass through. This technique works best if you plan to have just a few spots of lacing at the back.

When all the holes have been made, thread a large-eye needle with string and lace through the holes, making sure your lacing is secure. Be sure to leave a tail at the beginning so you can tie it off. Your goal is to go into the first hole, then go through all the others in whatever pattern you prefer, and make it back to the first hole, leaving another tail to tie.

#### BINDING 3: GLUED IN

For a glued-in binding, you bind your pages first and then glue them into the covers with an endpaper. This should be the most familiar example. If you are using this binding method, you can skip the step of decorating the interior of the covers. The endpapers will be your interiors.

Start with your interior pages. Stack them and clip them together with binder clips at the top and bottom. Measure  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch in from the edge to be bound and draw a line down the top page. Next, make marks on the line at 1-inch intervals. Then, with the cutting board under your pages, use the hammer and nail to make holes at your marks.

When all the holes have been made, sew the pages together with embroidery floss.

When the pages are sewn together, prepare your endpapers. To get the dimensions, measure across the front page and add that to the measurement across the front cover. The height will be the same as the height of your interior pages. You'll need two endpapers.

When you have your endpapers cut, fold them in half. Glue one half to the top interior page and the other half to the inside cover. Do this for both covers. Now you should have what looks like a book with no spine.

To add a spine to the book, you can use either a scrap of fabric, a piece of wide ribbon, or even paper scrap. Cut the spine piece to overlap the covers by at least 1 inch. Once you have it cut, glue it in place with decoupage medium or white glue.

If you want to cheat the spine, you can use duct tape.

#### BINDING 4: ACCORDION

Accordion binding works best with small, square books (4 by 4 inches to 6 by 6 inches). The hardest part of this binding technique is making sure you have a piece of paper long enough to make several pages. Large pads of watercolor or other art paper will work well. If you want a lot of pages, you can cut the paper into strips of

## Blank Books

the appropriate width and glue them together end to end.

The pages of this book are part of the binding, so we will go over the instructions here.

The pages should be  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch smaller than the covers. For this example we will be making a 4-by-4-inch book, with pages that will be  $3\frac{1}{2}$  by  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The pages are also one long strip.

To start, take a long strip of paper that is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide. Mark and fold this strip at  $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch intervals. Snip off any excess paper.

If you want to add more pages, cut another strip of  $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-wide paper and fold it in the same way, again snipping off any excess. When you have your two little accordions, match the last fold on one with the first fold

on the other. Glue these two “pages” together. This will give you one long strip of paper with  $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch folds all the way across.

Glue the first page onto the inside of the front cover and the last page onto the inside of the back cover.

If you don’t like the way the pages look on the inside covers, you can decorate them however you’d like.

Now use the same hammer-and-nail technique from the sewn and glued bindings to add holes to the back edge of the *covers only*. Thread the holes with string or ribbon, and tie.

If you want a little closure for the book, add another set of holes at the front of the book covers and attach a ribbon on each cover to tie the book closed.