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Jill's Wraparound Notebook



I've called this Jill's Wraparound Notebook as it was taught to me by Jill Sellars, a brilliant marbler. It's a very simple but versatile structure that introduces a number of basic book binding techniques and principles. In theory, this book could be any size you like but, in practice, it is limited by the size of the covering paper. The one we're going to make here is made up of a decorative paper cover and a series of folded plain paper pages.

You'll need:

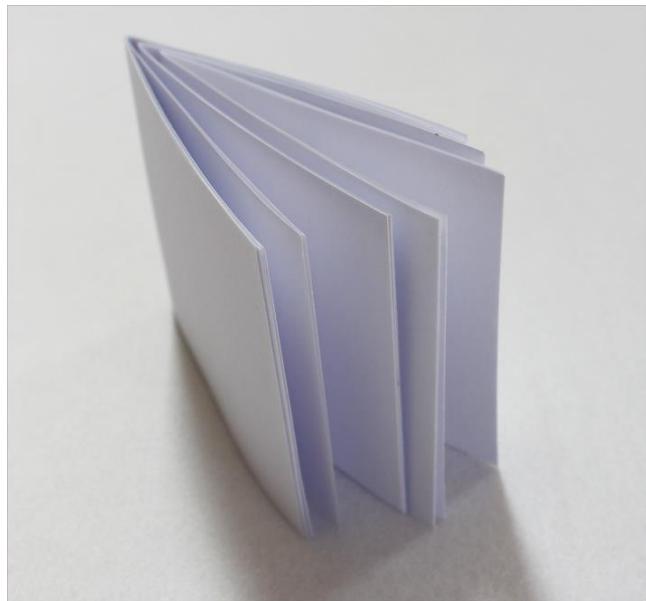
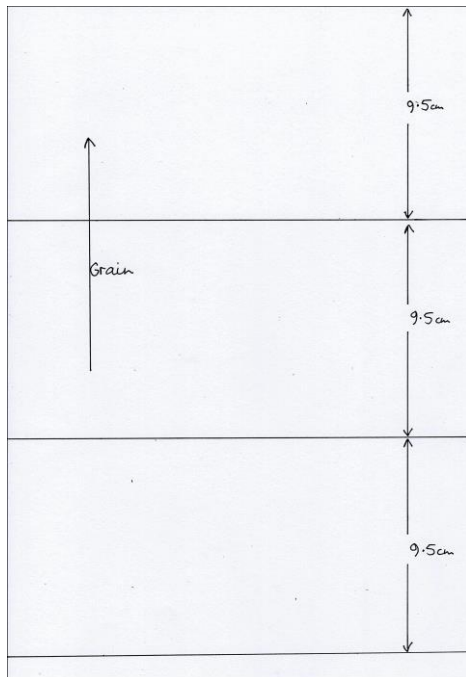
- 4 A4 sheets of fairly light paper eg 80g cartridge (typing) paper
- A strip of decorated/decorative paper for the cover five times as long as the folded pages are wide – see below for details of how this works.
- Decorative thread eg linen bookbinding thread or silk embroidery floss twice as long as the folded pages are tall.
- A piece of heavy paper/thin card to make the template for the stitching holes.
- Standard bookbinding tools – ruler, awl/needle, cutting mat, craft knife, bone folder

Instructions:

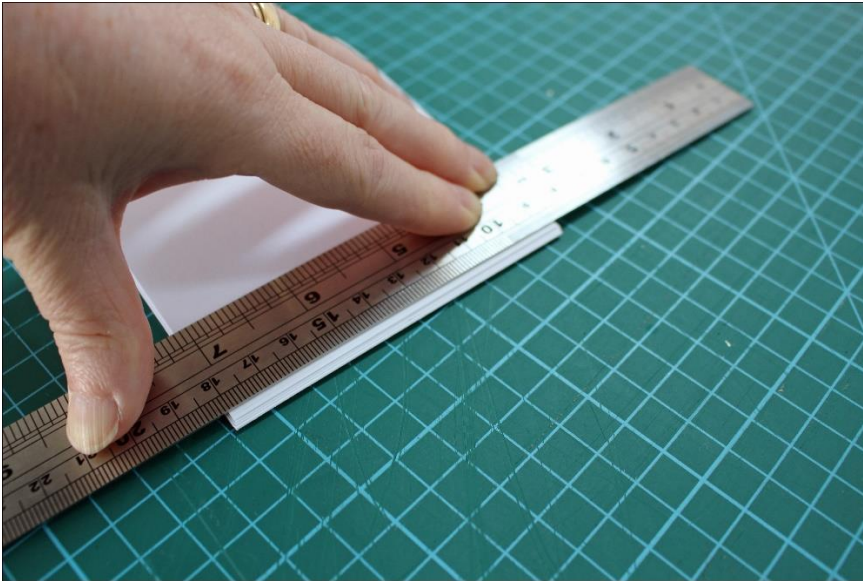
Firstly, we're going to cut and fold the pages.

Take the 3 sheets of A4 paper provided and cut three pieces 9.5cm tall from each piece.

Take each one and fold carefully in half, using the bone folder to make a nice sharp crease. Nest all the folded sheets together to make a single section.



- You'll notice that the signature doesn't have a flat fore-edge. So, to tidy it up, place your ruler along the edge of the outside (shortest) page and, holding the ruler firmly, draw the craft knife towards you gently, several times, until all the pages are trimmed.



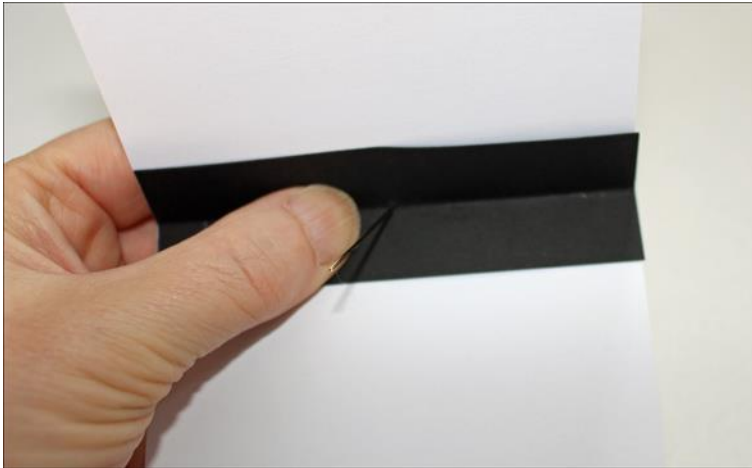
Next, we need to make a template for the holes

- Make a template with the thin card, as a guide, so that you can pierce holes for stitching, in each page, that all line up together. Cut the card to the height of the folded pages, then fold and crease the template lengthwise. For this size of book a hole 1cm from the top of the book and another 1cm from the bottom of the book with a third half way between the two would be about right. You can 'eyeball' this or measure as you wish.



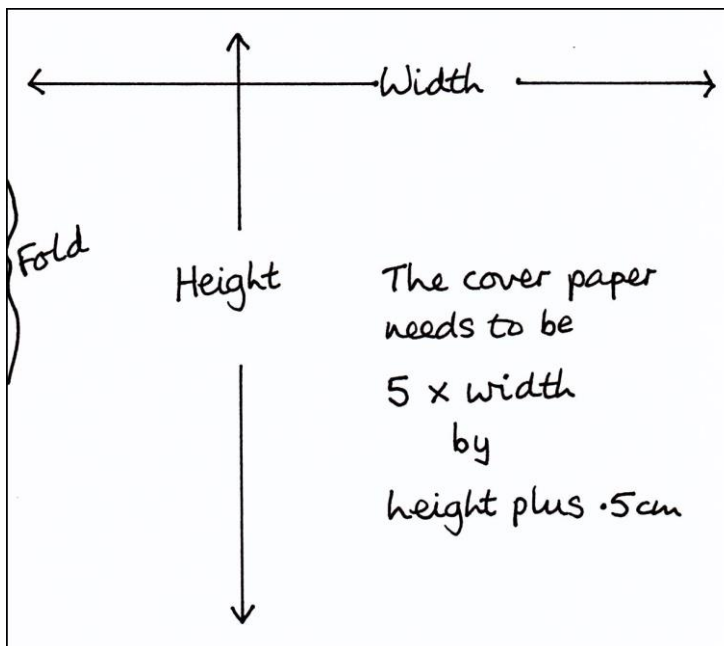
- Put three folded sheets of paper inside each other and place the template snugly in the fold. Using an awl or a large needle, punch holes through the fold. Repeat for the remaining folded sheets. Make sure you keep all the sheets you've pierced in the same orientation as when you pierced them.

If you are using thicker paper, you would pierce fewer sheets in one go. For very heavy paper you might only do one sheet at a time.



Next, we make the cover

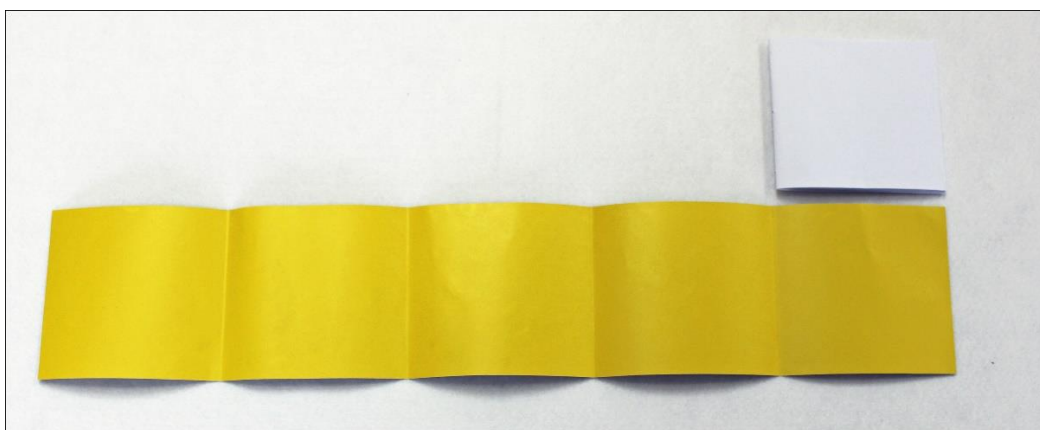
- Cut a piece of the covering paper a little more than the height of the book and five times the width.



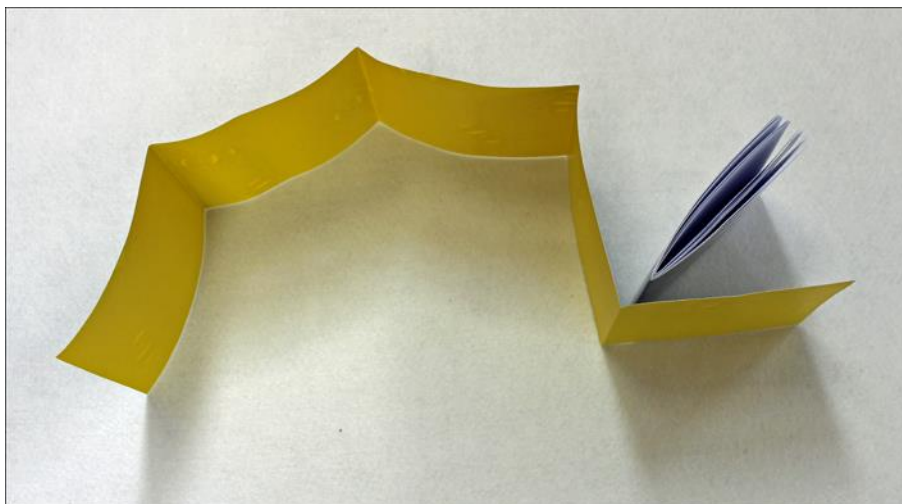
Roll your section up in the length of the cover. Crease lightly with your fingers to mark where the main creases need to be.



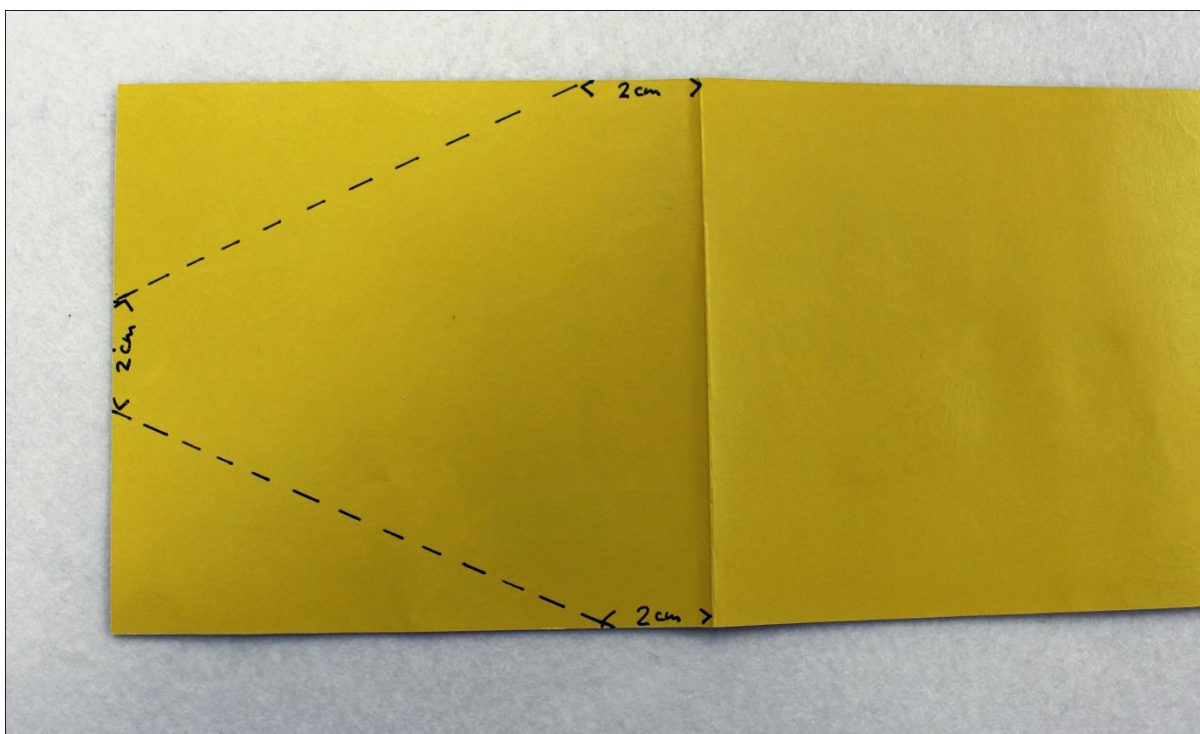
Unroll the signature.



Reverse the first fold on the right, this is where we'll sew the signature into the cover. Set all the creases with the bone folder. If the cover paper has a surface that might be damaged by rubbing, then put a sheet of scrap paper on top and crease with your bone folder on top of that.



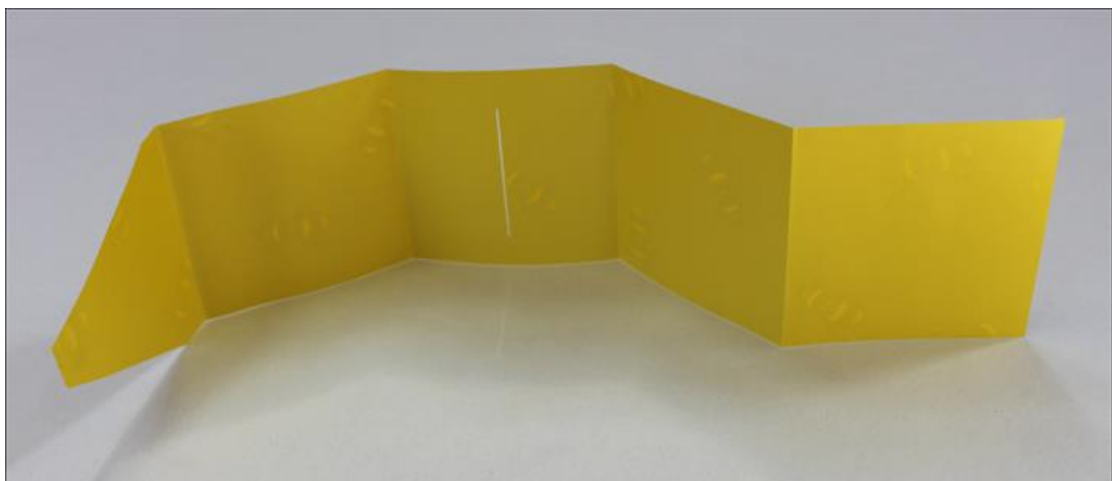
On the left-hand panel, mark and cut a shape for the 'tongue' that will hold the cover in place. The shape and proportions don't need to be precise – it just needs to have enough length to tuck in.



Wrap the signature back up in the cover and mark with a pencil where the slot needs to be.

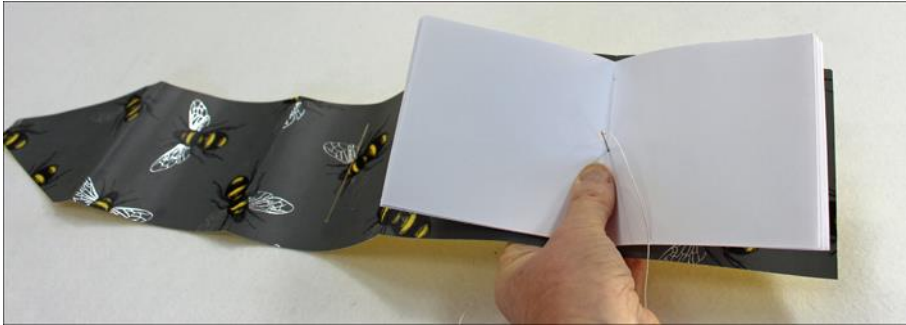


Unwrap the signature and cut the slot where you've marked it. It should now look something like this.

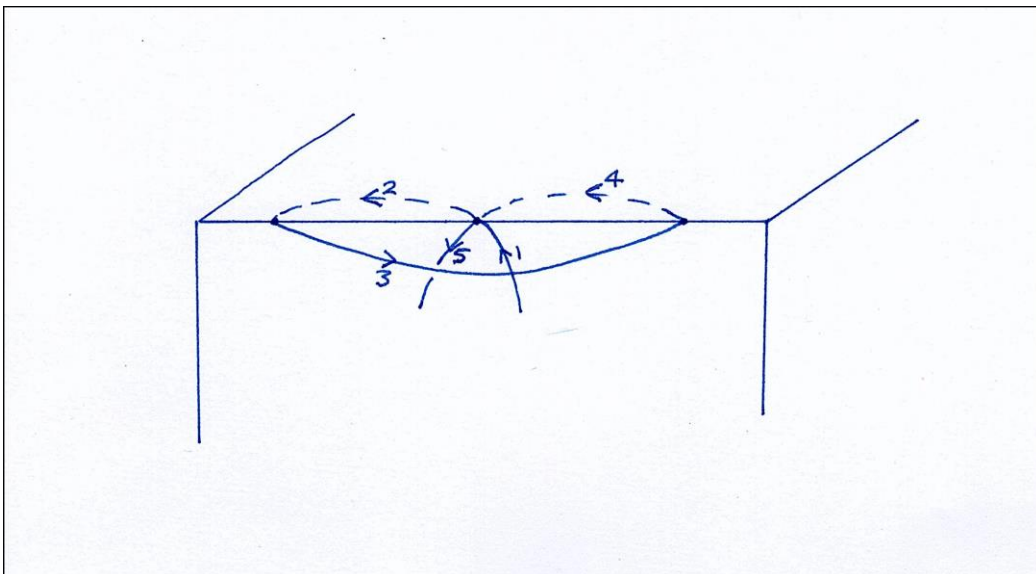


Finally, we stitch the pages into the cover

- Nest the section into the crease on the right-hand side.



- Take a piece of thread double the height of the book and thread the needle. Starting on the inside of the signature take the needle through the middle hole to the back and through the cover. Take the needle from the outside to the inside of the top sewing station and across the centre to the station at the bottom of the book and take the needle from the inside to the outside.



- Finally take the needle from the outside to the inside of the central hole, making sure you come out on the opposite side of the central thread you started with.



- Pull the thread taut and tie a reef knot. Trim the thread.



- Wrap the rest of the cover round the book and poke the tongue inside the slot to secure.



Place the book under a board and weight overnight to set all the creases.

Variations:

- Vary the size and shape of the 'tongue'.
- Tear the edges of the paper and/or the cover
- Vary the covering material – perhaps try book cloth or two types of paper glued together.
- Vary the proportions or size of the book, just bearing in mind the length of covering material you will need.
- Stitch on the pages and/or the cover
- Add screen printed, stencilled or stamped motifs.
- Anything else you can think of ...

For a second book:

- Take the piece of heavier cream hand-made paper and tear five strips, 6 cm wide, against a ruler. Tear both ends of the five strips so each strip is 18cm long.
- Fold each strip in two and crease with a bone folder.
- Nest the five strips inside each other to make a single signature.
- Make a template for the stitch holes, as you did for the first book, and poke the holes in each page. I would suggest no more than two sheets at a time for this paper. For heavier paper you might need to do each page separately.
- Wrap the cover round the signature and crease where the folds should be. Continue as you did for the first book. Again, weight the book under a board or heavy book to set the creases.