

**A free project, compliments of...**

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# Easy-to-Make Hardcover Books

Create your own library of hardcover books using pre-made text blocks!

**by Sue Bleiweiss**

It's easy to make your own hardcover books using pre-made text blocks. You can buy pre-made text block inserts in a wide variety of sizes, shapes and some even come with lined or printed pages.



Although there are a lot of steps to this tutorial, you'll find that once you make one of these books the process is very quick and easy. I strongly recommend that before you start cutting any pieces of book board and paper that you read through the entire tutorial first!

To start you need to cut a front and back cover and a spine piece from book board to the correct sizes. To calculate the sizes you need you'll need to first measure your text block. The text block I am using for this tutorial measures 4 3/4" tall x 6 1/2" wide x 3/4" thick so I will cut the following pieces from book board:

One spine piece: 6 3/4" x 3/4"

Two pieces: 6 3/4" x 4 3/4" (front & back)

## Supplies & Resources:

Pre-made (flat back, not rounded) text block inserts - available from [www.hollanders.com](http://www.hollanders.com) or [www.paperstudio.com](http://www.paperstudio.com)

Book board - available from [www.hollanders.com](http://www.hollanders.com)

Glue - PVA or a glue stick (see tip on page 2 about choosing which glue to use)

Decorative paper

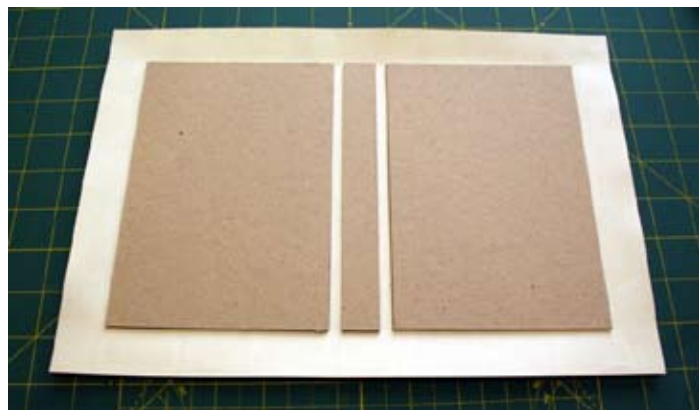
Ribbon (optional)

If you are using a different sized text block, use the following directions to determine what sizes to cut your book board pieces:

## TIP

For the spine: the book board is cut the same width as the spine of the text block by the height of the text block plus  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". So if your text block measures 8" tall x 6" wide x 1" thick then your spine piece will be cut 1" x 8  $\frac{1}{4}$ ".

For the front and back covers: the book board is cut the same width as the text block by the height of the text block plus  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". So if your text block measures 8" tall x 6" wide x 1" thick then your front and back cover pieces will be cut 6" x 8  $\frac{1}{4}$ ".



Glue the pieces onto the paper so that there is a 1" border all the way around. If there is any excess then just trim it away once the pieces have been glued to the paper.

Glue the corners down securely:



and then turn in and glue down the sides and the top and bottom edges:



If you want your book to have a ribbon bookmark, now is the time to glue one in:

When you cut book board use a very sharp sturdy utility knife and a metal edge ruler.



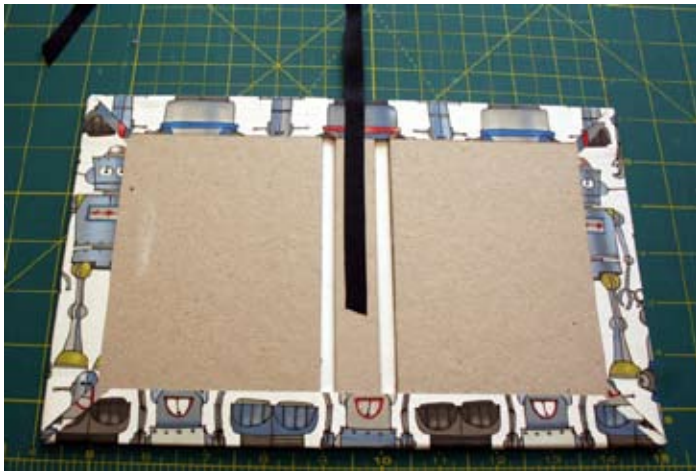
Don't try to cut through the book board in one pass. Make several passes using a moderate amount of pressure until you've cut all the way through.

Now that you have your book board pieces cut you'll need a piece of paper for the outside of your book that measures 13" x 9".

Glue your book board pieces to the wrong side of the paper with a gap of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " between pieces.

## TIP

You can use either PVA white liquid glue or a glue stick when gluing your book board in place. If the paper I am working with is highly textured or thick then I will use a PVA glue. If it's a thinner paper with a smooth surface then I use a glue stick.



Now carefully slip a piece of scrap paper under the first page of the text block. This protects the rest of the text block from getting any glue on it.



Now it's time to glue in the text block. Place the text block in the book cover and close the book:



Without moving the text block apply a layer of glue to the top page of the text block. Make sure that the glue goes all the way to the edge. Do not put any glue on the spine of the text block.

Carefully remove the scrap paper from the text block and then close the book pressing down on the cover to make sure that the text block comes in contact with the inside of the cover.

Adjust the text block so that it is flush against the spine piece and it is centered within the book cover. Now very CAREFULLY place it down on the worktable and open the cover:



Now turn the book over so that the cover is against the work surface and carefully open the book just enough so that you can slip a bone folder in and press the text block page securely against the inside cover:





Now repeat this process for the other side of the text block to secure the back of the text block to the back of the book cover.



When you're finished gluing the text block in place leave it to dry thoroughly before using it.



Now your new book is ready for writing in or wrapping up and giving as a gift!