

Selecting paper and tools for making books

Size of paper: We recommend ordering A3 paper if you're making a folded book (zine); A5 size paper if you're making a stitched pamphlet (which will allow you to make an A6-sized-book); and A6 size concertina paper (see links below for ordering prefolded concertina paper). You can also buy A4 paper (standard printer paper size) and cut accordingly to produce A5 paper (A5 is half the size of A4 paper) or A6 (A6 is half the size of A5 paper).

Thickness of paper: You can use printer paper (of any colour) which is around 70-100 gsm for the pages of your book. Use something thicker (card paper) for your cover (around 220-250 gsm). For a folded book (zine), use A3 paper of around 135 gsm (anything thicker would be difficult to fold). See below for concertina paper.

Texture/finish: You can choose other kinds of paper such as paper with a smooth or textured finish, tissue paper, metallic paper, tracing paper, decorative paper and handmade paper.

You can order paper in stores or from Amazon. Below are some **specialist places** where you can find paper and bookbinding tools:

- Seawhite: <https://www.seawhite.co.uk>
- Shepherds: <https://store.bookbinding.co.uk/store/>
- GF Smith: <https://shop.gfsmith.com>
- Papermilldirect: <https://www.papermilldirect.co.uk>

From Papermilldirect, you can order prefolded concertina paper (this will allow you to make a zigzag, accordion-style book). You can choose any colour/finish of paper you like, then select "A6" under size, "trifold" under type, and the quantity you want. For example, see links below if you wanted to order white hammered or slate grey concertina paper:

- <https://www.papermilldirect.co.uk/card-blanks/ex-white-hammered-card-blanks-250gsm>
- <https://www.papermilldirect.co.uk/card-blanks/slate-grey-card-blanks-double-sided-240gsm>

Papermilldirect also offers the opportunity to pack your own boxes with different kinds of paper or to order a "small box mystery mix" for variety:

- <https://www.papermilldirect.co.uk/paper-card/boxes/pick-mix-premium-selection/PMP-A5-S>
- <https://www.papermilldirect.co.uk/paper-card/a6-small-box-mystery-mix>

Basic tools:

When you explore our video resources on our website, you will see that you can make a book without using any specialist tools. However, if you want to invest in some basic tools, here is a list (or you can order a basic "book binding kit" which includes many of the necessary tools):

- A (plastic) bone folder for creasing paper
- Bookbinding needle and thread (waxed thread is recommended)
- A scalpel (or retractable craft knife) for cutting paper
- Scissors for basic cutting
- A pricker (known as 'awl') to make sewing holes and to score paper
- A clear ruler to measure
- A cutting mat to protect any surfaces
- Glue (PVA glue is recommended).

We are not affiliated with any of the websites listed here and receive no payment from them. They are mentioned for informational purposes only.