

Binding Guidelines

The way a finished multi-page piece is bound is important to its overall look and function. The correct binding type can reinforce the theme and look of a piece, sending important queues about tone, price and product integrity.

Case (Section Sewn) binding is used for high-quality, hardcover books. Case binding involves stitching the document's sections together, then applying a layer of adhesive and clamping a hard cover over the lot. Case binding allows for a printed spine. **Use case binding for textbooks, reference books, and documentation of a historic nature.**

Perfect binding is commonly used for books and magazines, perfect binding involves gathering the signatures of a document, applying glue to one edge and sticking the cover around the entire booklet. Perfect binding is tidy and precise, but less useful for archival than a case binding. Perfect binding machinery has minimum thickness tolerances – around 100 pages are necessary for a perfect-bound document. Perfect binding allows designers to include the spine with cover artwork, making documents easily identifiable on a shelf. **Use perfect binding for annual reports, magazines, and user manuals.**

Post binding usually involves a hardcover front and back with two or three posts punched through the edge. The advantage of post binding is that documents can be easily taken apart to replace pages. Unlike comb-bound documents, a publication with a post-style binding can still have a printed spine. **Use posts for albums, professional papers, and presentations.**

Saddle Stitch Generally publications under 90 pages are suitable for saddle-stitch binding. This involves folding larger sheets in half and stapling through the spine. Most saddle-stitch machines can handle around 200 sheets. **It's best for magazines, soft-cover books, and pamphlets.**

Spiral / Plastic coil binding A series of holes are punched through documents, then a coil of plastic is threaded through the holes. This binding allows documents to lie flat and fold over, and is suitable for booklets from ¼" to 2" thick. Spiral bindings can't be used to display titles. Also, the bindings can be damaged, compromising the readability of the document over time. **Use spirals for presentations, notebooks, and calendars.**

Wire-o (Double-wire) binding Pairs of wires are placed into pre-drilled holes at the edge of the document. This creates a booklet that will lie flat and can be folded over on itself. There is some scope to print on the spine of a wire-o bound document, but placement of the wire combs compromises legibility and it is generally not advised. **Choose wire-o binding for reports and technical manuals.**



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