

Comic Book Binding Methods

Double-Fan Adhesive Binding (DFAB)

DFAB is a library binding style method that utilizes polyvinyl acetate glue (PVA) instead of thread for the binding. This method provides binding durability and flexibility, is our most requested method for all types of library binding, and allows books to lay flat. It can accommodate comic books, individual pages, and trade paperbacks, or all of them combined.

Note: DFAB is great for nearly all comic books. The only exception is for very glossy paper (like acetate or foil covers). DFAB can still be used on glossy pages, but with significantly reduced margins on those pages. Also, this is a great method to include your own table of contents within the book, to cut apart books and remove pages, or combine comics and trade paperbacks.



Polyurethane Reactive Adhesive Binding (PUR)

PUR is an extremely strong binding option. It is a glue based binding method used on textbooks, school yearbooks, and for many of our edition binding projects. The main benefit when used on comic book projects is its ability to bond glossy pages (like acetate or foil covers) without reducing the margin.

Note: PUR binding has all the benefits of DFAB and it can accommodate glossy pages. With this method you can mix comics, individual pages, and trade paperbacks with no problem. But books bound using PUR binding cannot be rounded; they will have a straight/flat spine that will have a hard strip used on the spine

Oversew Binding

Oversewing is an extremely durable, old-fashioned method of page attachment, and is still popular for certain paper stocks. Oversewing generally takes up more of the inner margin than Ultrabinding and Smyth sewing. It can also accommodate all paper types and all paper formats.

Note: While a thin book (approximately 1.75") will have about the same gutter loss as a DFAB book, the thicker the book is the farther into the margin the sewing needs to go. This results in a reduced margin on thick books.



Smyth Sewn Binding (Sew Through Fold)

With Smyth Sewn binding, the thread is driven “through the fold” of a folded signature. In comic book binding, each individual issue is treated as a signature. This method has no impact on the inner margin of the original comic books, and lays flat when opened.

Note: To use this binding method for a volume of comics, each individual issue must have a centerfold to sew through. If any of the issues are “flat back” (such as a Trade Paperback), a different binding method will need to be chosen. All paper types can be used as well. Also note, the thicker each volume is, the more of a “wedge” effect you will get. A wedge shape is when the spine of the book is significantly thicker than the outside edge. This is caused by the thread build-up used to sew the books.

Note: a small amount of gutter loss will be seen between each comic on the covers from the binding process.

Note: We will bind up to 25 issues (firm maximum) using Smyth Sewn binding, but suggest 18 issues at the most for the best results.



Rounding

Rounding the spine gives the book a curved spine; a thin, flexible backing is added under the cover. Books not rounded will have a flat/hard spine, and a hard cover board will be added under the spine.

Note: PUR books cannot be rounded.

Note: We suggest SMYTH books to be rounded.

Note: Rounding the book allows it to open and lay flat easier and preserve the binding longer.

Rounded vs. Non-Rounded



Trimming

Books are trimmed on the three exposed edges after being bound, and prior to rounding. This gives the books a clean, smooth edge.

Note: How much is trimmed will depend on the size of the books. Not all comics are the same size, even within the same title. To estimate how much will be trimmed, put the books in order and find the smallest book. That is about the size all of the books will be at the end.

Note: All three edges of the book must be trimmed, or none.

Note: Comic Books are “jogged” to the top, meaning all the comics are lined up flush on the top edge. So the majority of trimming is taken off the bottom edge where comics traditionally have more margin.

Trimmed vs. Non-Trimmed:



Ribbon Bookmarks

A ribbon bookmark is a ribbon adhered to the inside spine of the book block that can be used to mark your page in a book.

Available Colors

Black, White, Brown, Orange, Yellow, Purple, Green, Navy, Blue, Teal, Maroon, and Red.

Note: You can have more than one bookmark in a book.

Head & Tail Bands

Head and tail bands are a decorative cloth piece at the top and bottom of the book block.

Available Colors

Black, White, Blue, Black & Gold, Black & White, Red & Gold, Burgundy & Gold, Red & White, Green & Gold, Green & White, Blue & Gold, Blue & White.



End Sheets

All books will receive an off-white end sheet. This is a heavy paper that joins the book block (the bound comics) to the cover.

Black end sheets are available for an additional charge, but only for DFAB books.

Note: Custom End Sheets are only available as part of a premium book service. These books have a minimum order of \$75 per book. Call the bindery to discuss ordering.

Cloth Cover or Graphic Cover?

Cloth books options include different colors and types of material, foil stamping, die stamping, and other decorative elements. They have an attractive “Library” appearance and are extremely durable.

Graphic Cover books allow complete customization of design, present an attractive image throughout the cover, and you can design your own if desired.

The choice is yours! Below you’ll find information about both options.

Cloth Color Options

Below is a listing of material available for Comic Book Binding.

Note: Leather and other specialty material is available as part of our premium book services. These books have a minimum order of \$75 per book. Call the bindery to discuss ordering.

Comic Book Color Charts

Buckram

LBS Buckram is the strongest book cloth available. Designed to protect heavy volumes in a library, it's practically indestructible. Under normal library conditions, a book covered in Buckram will last fifty to one hundred years. Buckram's base cloth is poly-cotton coated with water-based acrylic finish.



Notice, June 2019:

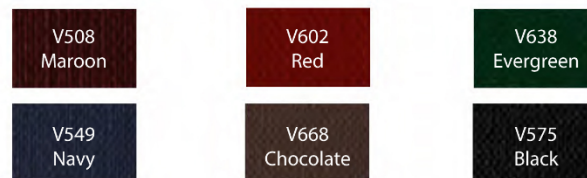
Colors 630 Plum and 943 Dark Grey have been discontinued by the manufacturer and are no longer available.

Buckram colors 188, 290, 370, and 478 will be discontinued in the next 6-12 months.

We will continue to offer these colors while supplies last.

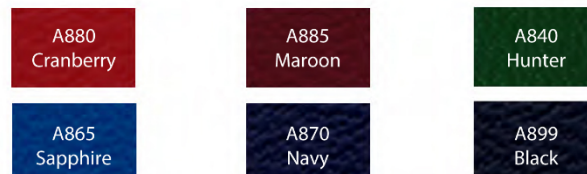
C - 1 Cloth (no extra cost)

A flexible, durable and curl resistant cloth that turns easily over board for tight corners and smooth lines. Engineered thinner and stronger than C grade book cloth with strength characteristics of Buckram.



Advantage 9 (no extra cost)

Advantage is an acrylic-coated paper that combines strength and moisture resistance with a kid leather embossed surface that decorates beautifully.



These materials are regularly stocked by HF Group
Updates will be made as soon as we are notified of changes by our suppliers.

Foil Lettering

Lettering is added to the spine and/or cover of a cloth book using foil stamping in our standard type in either black, white, or gold. Up to 7 lines of lettering is included on the spine.

Size 18 point type is used by default, but an increase/decrease in size may be needed depending on the book and will be done at the bindery's discretion.

Note: Please enter your lettering on the order form in the direction you would like it stamped. If the book's size requires it to be turned vertical we will do so.

Note: Additional lines of lettering and lettering on the front cover are available for an additional charge.

Note: Additional colors of foil are available at an additional charge. Colors available include: Brown, Purple, Yellow, Blue, Green, Copper, Red, Silver, and Orange.

Die Stamps

Die stamps are metal stamps that can apply foil in a pattern or logo onto a cloth book. Houchen Bindery Ltd has a collection available for general use, and new die stamps can be created at any time.

Note: Die stamps are a solid piece of metal and cannot be adjusted in size. New die stamps usually start at about \$65 for a 1" square stamp and go up approximately \$7 per additional square inch. Also note, once created, the die stamp will remain at Houchen Bindery Ltd and be available for general use. If you would like the die stamp returned, there will be a fee (30% of the cost of the die) which is the charge for Houchen Bindery Ltd to have it made and shipped (which we don't add to your charges normally). A request for the die stamp to be returned to you must be made when it is created.

Panel Lines

Panel Lines are horizontal lines of foil placed on the spine of a book. They are decorative and a great way to divide content on the spine. Each line is \$1.

On the order form, simply draw or type a line across the Spine Layout portion to indicate where you want the lines placed. They will be the same color as the type.



Graphic Covers

This is an option where a printed image is laminated and applied directly to the boards of the book in place of the cloth. We offer a variety of options for design, or you can provide your own.



Customer Provided Cover

If you are going to provide your own graphic covers, simply indicate this on your order form. Once the books are bound and ready for the covers we will send you the exact dimensions of each volume. At that time, send us ready-to-print PDFs and we will print, laminate, and apply the cover.

Note: Covers received that are not sized correctly will be sent back to the customer for edits and there will be a \$5 charge to reprint the covers.

Note: We will provide the SPINE, the COVER WIDTH, and the COVER HEIGHT. You will need to add these together and add 0.75" BLEED to all four sides.

For example: Spine is 1.5", Cover is 6" Wide and 10" Height

$0.75 + 6 + 1.5 + 6 + 0.75 = 15"$ Total Width

$0.75 + 10.25 + 0.75 = 11.75"$ Total Height

Tip: Let the images on the cover extend into the bleed, but not text or logos.

HBL Simple Cover Design

For an additional charge we can design a cover for you. We will put one COVER image on the front and one COVER image on the back (with no edits to the images) and TEXT on the spine in the layout shown below. Indicate on your order form the COVER images and text you would like included.

Note: No Substitutions. No edits to the COVER images, no logos, titles images, or characters on the spine.

Simple Cover Design Example/Template:



HBL Premium Cover Design

For an additional charge we can design a cover for you. We will put one character on the front of the cover with text and background removed AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, publisher and title logos on the spine, character image on the spine, TEXT on the spine in the layout shown below, and a COVER GALLERY with background image on the back cover.

Note: No Substitutions or adjustments to the layout.

Premium Cover Design Example/Template



Note: Not all covers are suited for this request. If the character is blocked by type or barcodes, etc, we cannot recreate them.

Good Choice: Character is not covered by logo, title, or barcode.



Bad Choice: Character is covered by logo, title, and barcode.



Frequently Asked Questions

Can I add my own pages or a Table of Contents to the book?

Yes, using DFAB, Oversew, or PUR Binding you can combine multiple types of paper, pages, comics, etc.

All material needs to be cut to size before sending it. If you print pages/TOCs they should be trimmed to size by you first.

How do I send my cover files to the bindery?

After receiving the dimensions for your order, you should send your files as PDFs.

Files should be flattened, without layers, when you send them.

You can email them or share a link to a media source like Dropbox or Google Drive.

How long does it take?

Normal turn around time is 8 weeks from door to door. That said: our goal is to produce the best possible book and as quickly as possible. But comic binding is done one book at a time and is naturally a slow process. We are producing thousands of books a week between libraries, schools, universities, printers, etc. So, comic books, and other types of one at a time books, are done between these projects.

If we are designing the cover for your order it will take additional time.

Summer (May-August) will result in significant delays.

Will I get updates? Can you tell me where my order is in the process?

We will communicate with you when the books are checked in and production has begun. This is not the day they arrive at the building.

We will notify you with dimensions if you are providing a cover file.

When the books are complete we will send you an invoice and ship upon receiving payment.

We will NOT provide updates throughout the process.

Do I need to remove staples or covers to trade paperbacks?

You do not NEED to do so, we will do both. But many people prefer to remove these themselves.

Can I remove pages from comics, like ads and back covers?

You can, using DFAB, Oversew, and PUR Binding methods we can bind loose pages.

This needs to be done before you send them to us.

Pages need to be neatly re-assembled with a smooth and straight edge at the spine.

An additional charge will be applied to any order that is received that requires significant work to straighten the material.

How can I match a book I had done previously?

The best way to match a book is to send it with. We will return it with the newly bound book.

We are unable to match foil stamping done by a publisher or another bindery.

Next best option is to provide pictures with a ruler showing the entire book and spine and clear markings on the ruler.