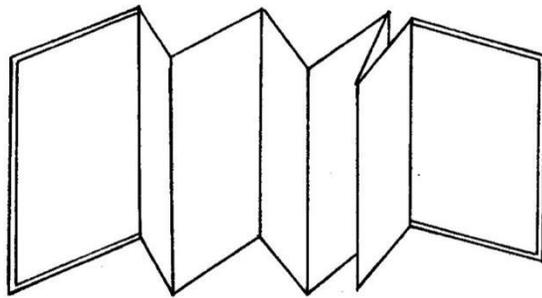


**Accordion (Concertina) Book** | Inspired Design: Fabricating the Handmade Photographic Artist's Book  
La Luz Workshops 2025 – Instructor: Prof. Susan kae Grant | Class Assistant: Danielle Khoury

The accordion binding and hybrid is an ideal structure to use for a bookwork that can be viewed as a traditional book format or visually extended out as a sculptural table piece. It is a binding that lends itself well to sequential movement visually through time and space because the entire sequence can be seen at once and both sides of the structure can be utilized to create a cyclical approach. Signatures can be added to create a hybrid form allowing for more pages within.

It can be bound with a soft or hard cover. The paper for the body of the book can be very thin or a medium weight cover stock. Depending on paper size, the book can be constructed from one piece of paper or multiple pieces can be joined together. Any kind of paper that can be folded without cracking can be utilized for this binding. If you plan to mount an image on the surface, a cover stock weight paper is preferable.



**Book Construction:**

This book is made with one strip of paper or joining multiple strips.

1. Assembling Pages and Determining Size

- Design layout with an even number of pages
- Pages should begin and end facing in the same direction as a traditional book (See sample below)



**Formula to determine paper size:**

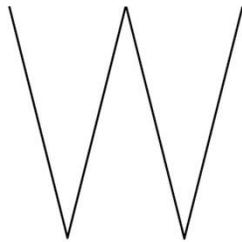
- Length = length of page size x number of pages
- height = height of page size
- Grain should run parallel with the spine

## 2. Preparing and sizing sheets for a four-page accordion:

- Tear or cut paper to size using the formula above
- Cut multiple sheets if you are planning to join pages

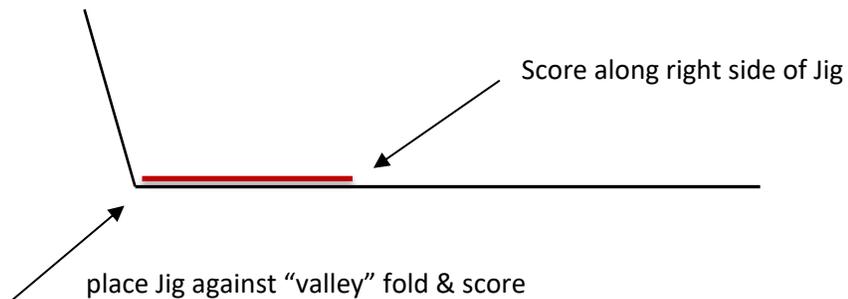
## 3. Folding Pages:

- Find the short side of the sheet
- Fold sheet in half, (V shape) carefully line up edges and use bone folder to crease
- Next Fold each side back to the center fold and crease (Fold one side at a time to align folds and edges evenly)
- Open to reveal a W shape (“valley” fold, “peak” fold, “valley”)



## Alternative Folding Method:

- Create a folding jig out of cardboard to the exact H x W of your page size
- Confirm jig is perfectly square
- Line up jig at first short edge, score next to jig, then fold paper

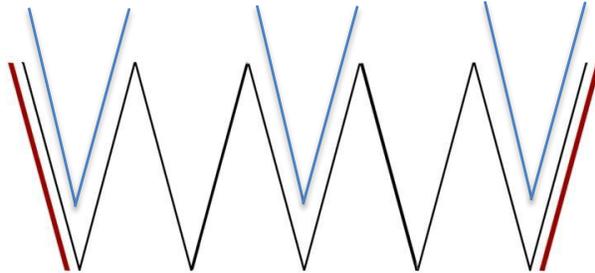


- Next, flip over paper, place jig against “valley” fold, score, and fold
- Continue this method always pushing jig up to fold
- Trim off excess on last page
- Add covers if desired (see below)

## Creating the Hybrid Form with Signatures

### 1. Assemble signatures for accordion hybrid

- Determine number of signatures
- Signatures can be sewn into the “valley folds” on front and/or back



Formula to determine paper size for signatures:

- height = height of accordion
- Length = length of accordion page size minus 1/8-1/4” depending on page size
- Grain should run parallel with the spine

### 2. Preparing, sizing and folding paper for signatures

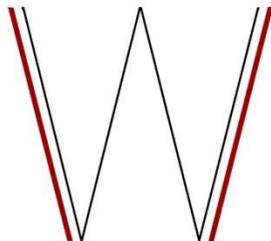
- Tear or cut paper to size using the formula above
- Find the short side of the paper
- Fold paper in half, carefully line up edges and use bone folder to crease

### 3. Attach signatures to accordion using the “Pamphlet Stitch”

- Create template for sewing pattern
- Attach signatures to the “valley folds” using the pamphlet stitch
- Start inside or out depending on where you want the knot to show

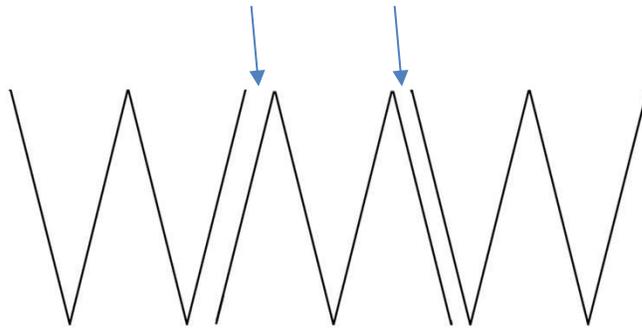
End sheets & Soft Cover Construction:

- Decorative end sheets and/or soft covers can be added
- If adding decorative end-sheets, be sure you have an even number of pages
- To attach decorative pages, use a dry glue such as Artist-tac or glue stick
- Illustration below shows finished 4-page accordion with decorative covers made of paper.
- For hard covers: allow 1/8” overhang on top, bottom and right side of book.



**For a longer book:** Join/hinge three or more strips (accordions) together  
Directions for joining three accordions:

- Tear & fold 3, four-page strips (accordions)
- Line up accordion shapes as follows: “W”, “M”, “W”
- Apply glue to pages to be joined/hinged (see arrows)
- Use a dry glue such as PMA, Artist-tac or glue stick to page (hinge)
- Burnish with bone folder or brayer



- See instructions above for adding decorative end-sheets and/or covers
- Illustration below shows finished 10-page accordion with joined pages and decorative cover.



**Resources:**

- Accordion with 5-pages:  
SkG demo folding five-page accordion promo book with photos  
(sample shown in class) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNlJu8DZERg>
- Accordion Book with Signatures:  
Ali Manning, Vintage Page Design  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dPHgWp2l58>  
<https://vintagepagedesigns.com/accordion-book-with-signatures-2/>

### Hard Cover Construction for Accordion Book:

The hard cover construction consists of two “binders” boards covered with decorative paper or book cloth and a flexible hinge made of paper or cloth.

1. To begin construction of cover boards, measure outside dimensions of book:  
(Measure book only after trimming!)

Your Book is:

Height:

Length:

2. Formula For Cover Construction:  
Height = Height of book plus 1/16" top and bottom  
Length = Length of book plus 1/16"  
Use book measurements listed above to fill in formula below:

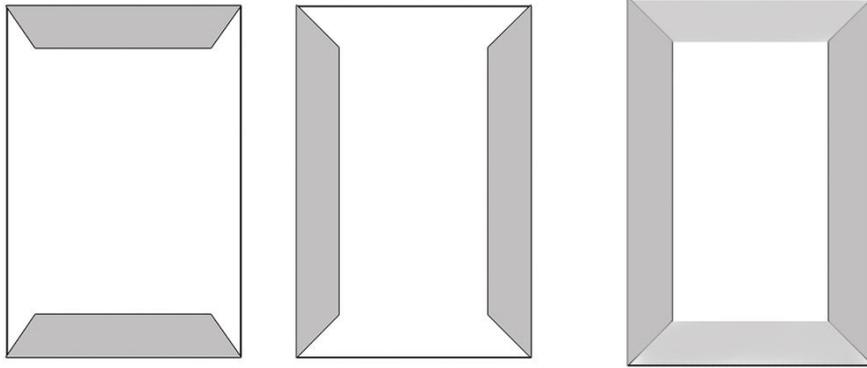
Your Cover:

Height:

Length:

3. Grain of binders board must run parallel with the spine of the book  
Using a SHARP UTILITY KNIFE, cut two boards exactly the same size  
Use measurement as determined above  
Use sandpaper to clean up rough edges on all four sides
4. Cut two pieces of decorative paper or book cloth 1.5" larger than board measurement on all sides
5. Dry glue method: Apply Artist-tac to board  
Wet glue method: Using PVA Glue or (Soboe) and a glue brush, spread glue on surface of board (hold board at edge in center, apply glue from center out)
6. Place glued board in center of the wrong side of the decorative paper  
Turnover and rub out wrinkles and/or bubbles with brayer or bone folder
7. Trim edge of decorative paper to 1" on all sides of board, then trim corners to a 45-degree angle  
(Leave the thickness of a board space between trimmed edge and board)

8. Fold decorative paper around board & burnish  
If using wet glue: Apply glue to the edge of decorative paper,  
fold board & burnish (Glue top and bottom first, then the two sides)  
Place under pressure to dry



9. Attach cover to accordion book
- Apply artists-tac or PVA glue to accordion endpaper and attach cover
  - Add wax paper between cover and first page if using wet glue
  - Dry under pressure

### Photoshop Accordion Pop-up Layout: Basic Steps

1. Create a new document at 300 dpi
  - Pull out a series of guidelines (horizontal and vertical) to designate your pages and also where your photos will go.
  - Remember to allow extra space on all 4 sides for trim.
  - To "pull out" a guideline, make sure that your rulers are showing (view>rulers), then click inside the ruler and drag a line out onto the layout.
2. Adjust all photos in photoshop ahead of time and save them in a folder all at the same resolution as the layout.
3. Drag and drop each photo into the layout document & label each layer by name of photo.
4. Click in the desired layer corresponding to each image and then use the move tool to drag the image into the correct location in the layout.
3. To adjust the size of each image on the layout, click in the layer corresponding to the image and select "Edit>Free Transform" or (command T) and drag the corner of the image box to desired scale.
4. Remember, you can add adjustment layers to every single image for correcting density, contrast, color etc.
5. Illustration below shows accordion layout with 3 ducks that pop out. Blue lines designate fold and/or score lines. To create the pop-ups, cut along top and bottom edge of each duck image, then score and fold on the sides of each duck. The structure is then folded just like a regular accordion book. Pop-ups always occur on the folds.

