



## hardback

The final project brings together all the skills you've developed, with the addition of a new binding method – the classic kettle stitch – and the ability to add hard covers. This is a proper practical book, hardy enough to work as a sketchbook or journal. The exposed spine helps the pages to lie perfectly flat when open, making them a joy to draw or write on. Once you've got your head and hands around this binding, use different weights and types of paper to suit your purpose and style.

## you'll need

1 X SHEET OF  
WATERCOLOUR NOT PAPER  
(MINIMUM 190GSM), FOR  
THE PAGES

GREY BOARD, 2MM (1/8IN)  
THICK (OR 2,000 MICRONS),  
CUT TO SIZE AFTER  
SECTIONS ARE FOLDED,  
FOR THE COVER

WATERCOLOUR PAPER,  
CUT TO SIZE AFTER BOARD  
MEASUREMENT IS KNOWN,  
FOR THE COVER

SCALPEL

CUTTING MAT

BONE FOLDER

SLITTING KNIFE

PAPER, FOR TEMPLATE

WATERCOLOUR INK

BRUSH

MECHANICAL PENCIL

METAL RULERS, 30CM (12IN)  
AND 15CM (6IN)

NEEDLE

WAXED LINEN THREAD

SCALPEL

GLUE

GLUE BRUSH

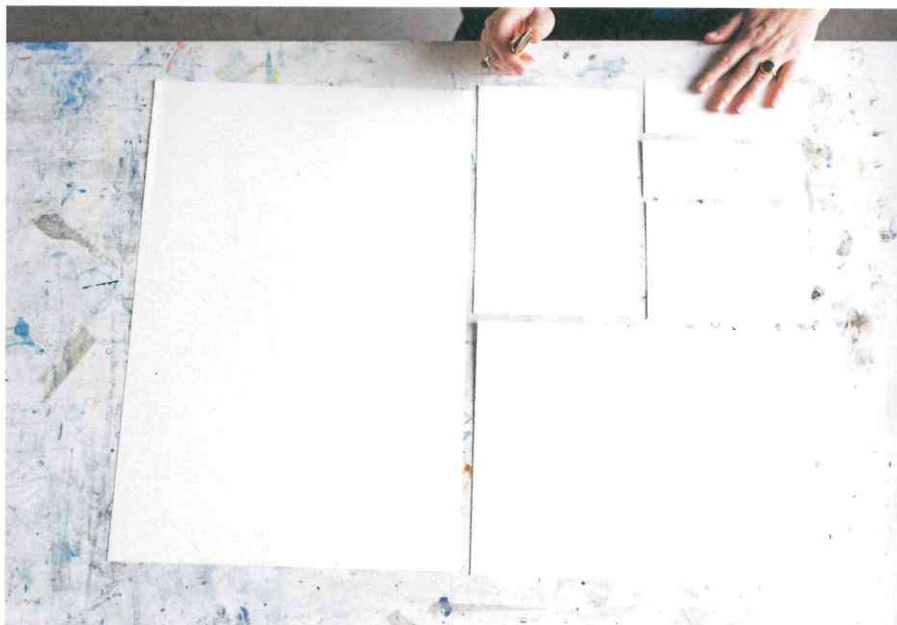
WASTE PAPER

SCISSORS

HEAVY BOOKS, TO USE AS  
A PRESS

## 1

Begin by cutting your large sheet down into double-page spreads. I have a thing for small chunky books, so I'm dividing my sheet into 16. Fold and cut steadily in half, quarters, eighths and, finally, sixteenths. See diagram on page 153.



## 2

Fold the pages in half widthways and nest them in pairs. You'll end up with 16 sections. Use the long edge of your bone folder to smooth down the crease of each section that little bit more firmly.

3

Next, mark up the spine in preparation for sewing. Make sure your block of sections is squared up to the spine, by tapping it firmly onto a flat surface. When you're happy that the sections are lined up neatly and evenly, grip them with your non-writing hand.



4

Lay a small ruler across the spine at a right angle. Mark a single line, in pencil, 12mm (1/2in) in from one end, so that you have a dot of graphite on each crease. Do the same 12mm (1/2in) in from the other end.



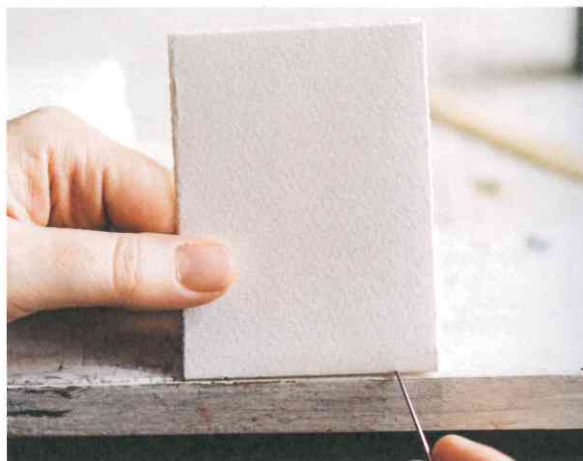
5

Systematically open out each section, one at a time, and prick the two holes with a needle, placing them down in a neat pile once you're done (so they end up in the same order and the right way up).



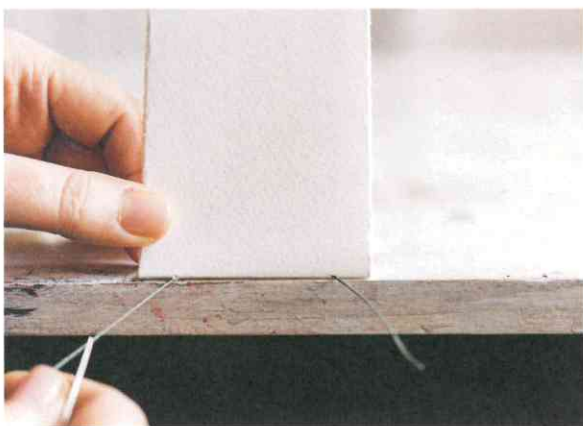
## 6

You'll need a length of thread that is 20 times the height of your book. This binding is going to take you up and down each section, linking them together with a knot at each end as you go along. I'm right-handed, so I always lay my stack of sections on my left, spine out.



## 7

Flip over the first section. Start at one end – it doesn't matter which, and take your needle from the outside to the inside – leaving a 5cm (2in) tail. Go along the crease and come out of the second hole. Lay it flat, spine facing you.

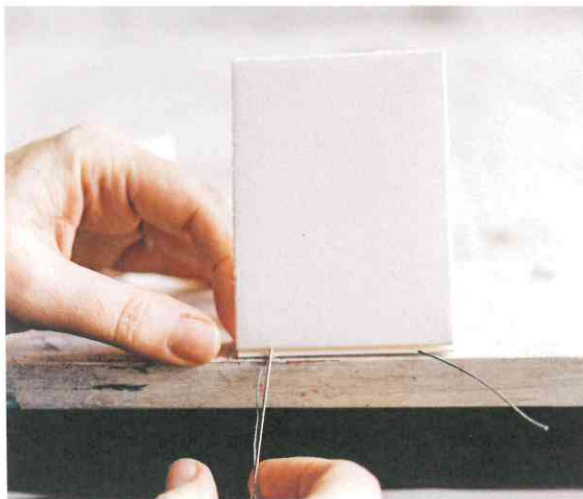


### pulling thread

To pull the thread tight without ripping the paper, always pull in the direction that you're sewing. You can leave the tail long, as it'll be hidden later.

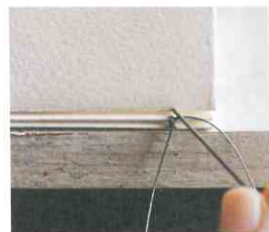
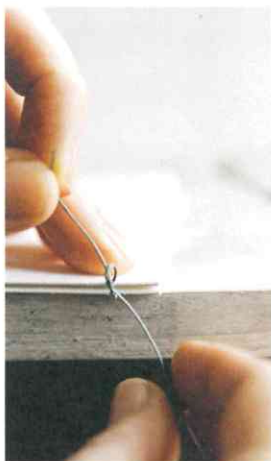
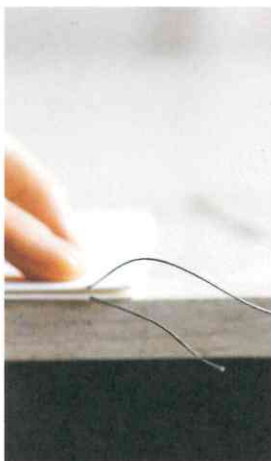
## 8

Flip over your second section and place it directly on top of the first. I find it helps to see what's going on if the sections are lined up at the edge of my workbench. I hold the needle and thread in one hand and place the fingers of the other hand in between the pages, so that I can flick to the middle and the outside easily.



9

Go into the hole right above the one you've just left, along to the second hole and out. Tie the ends together here, with a double knot.

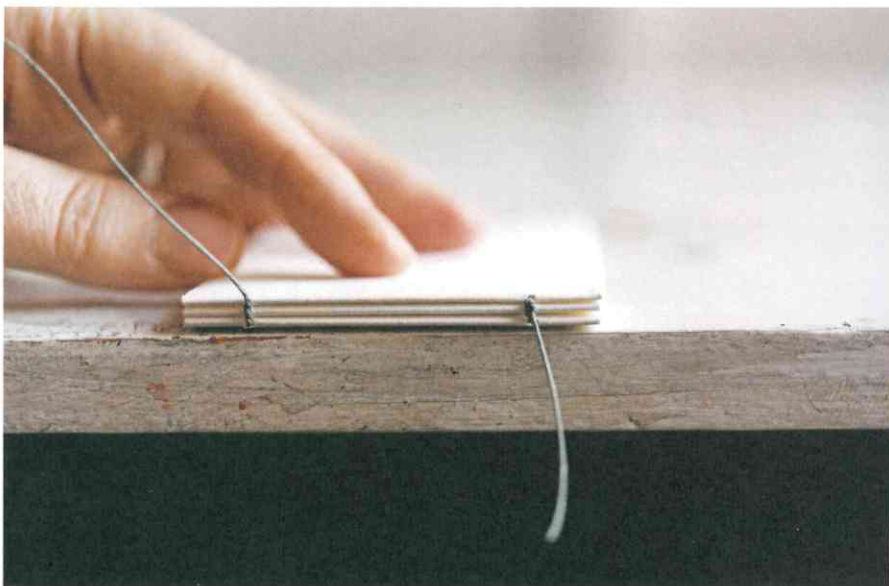
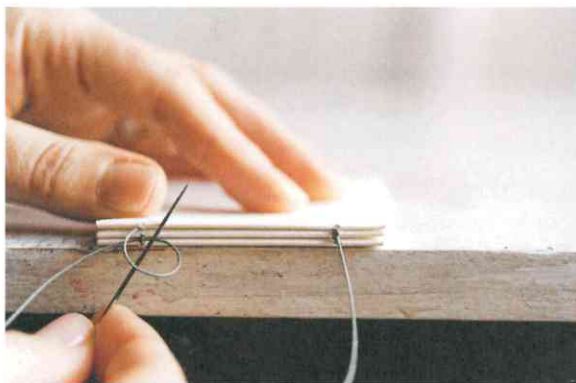


10

Flip the third section over, to lie on the second, checking the holes line up. Go in and out of the holes as before.

11

It's time for the first kettle stitch! When I started bookbinding, I assumed this was something to do with cups of tea, but actually the word derives from the German word for chain, *ketten*. Take your needle around the stitch (or post) that links the sections below from the inside to the outside. As you're pulling it through, put your needle up through the loop that is forming. Now when the knot is tightened, it looks like the link of a chain.

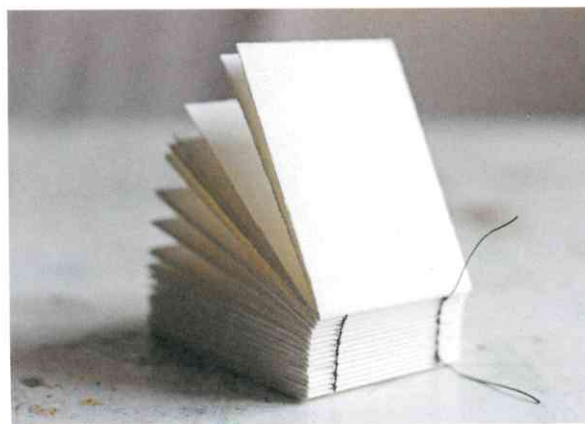
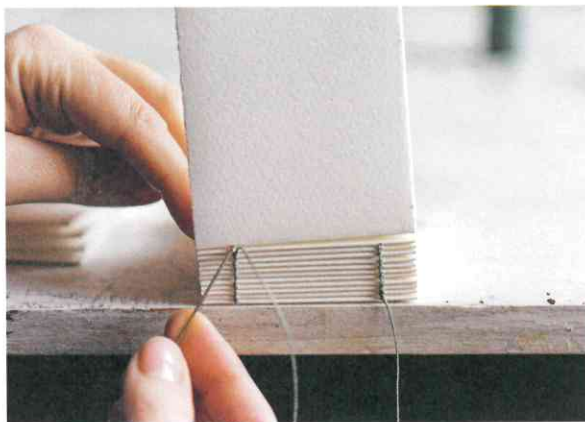


**12**

Place the fourth section on top of the first three. Sew in and out of the holes as before, and form a kettle stitch at the end, before adding the fifth section.

**13**

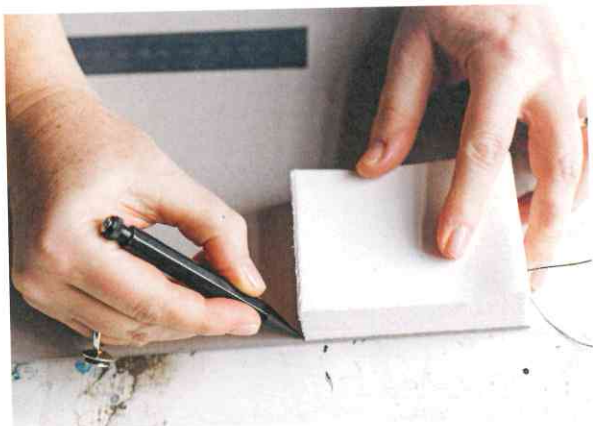
Continue in this way until all 16 sections are sewn. Do a double kettle stitch at the end (just one on top of another) and leave the tail untrimmed.





14

Now you can cut the covers to fit the book! Check the grain direction of the board, then place the book block down in one corner. Mark a fine pencil line just on the fore edge and tail, where the book meets the edge of the board.



15

These boards are going to be exactly the same size as the front and back pages of your book. Carefully cut the boards with a fresh blade and steady strokes. Excellent.



16

The boards will be covered with your customized paper, so we'll prepare these next. Lay each board onto the watercolour paper, leaving an extra "turnover" of 1.5cm (3/4in) on all four sides. Cut these out.

17

Paint and decorate one side of each cover paper with inkery, bearing in mind that the outside edges will be turned in and hidden.



18

While you're waiting for the ink to dry, gather together everything you'll need for gluing: a few sheets of waste paper, glue, glue brush, scissors, bone folder and some heavy books to use as a press.

19

Place one of the covers, painted side down, in the middle of a sheet of waste paper. Load up the glue brush with a generous dollop of glue and spread it from the centre to the edges in a starburst pattern. Stay calm, as the paper will undoubtedly curl up, confirming the grain direction (as the moisture of the glue is absorbed into the paper – it will relax, but it can be a stressful moment).

20

Whisk out the gluey waste paper. Set down the card centrally on the cover paper. Lightly press it down with the heel of your hand. Quickly cut the corners at an angle of 45 degrees, leaving a gap that is one and a half times the thickness of the board (3mm/1/8in).



21

Using all your fingers, draw over the long sides first. Really mould the paper around the contours of the board, and press down at the edges to make sure it's stuck.



22

With a thumbnail or the point of a bone folder, push the cover paper toward the board.

23

Now turn in the short sides and smooth the edges down. Wipe away any excess glue that may have squeezed out. Repeat the same process with the second cover. Place the covers in between clean waste paper and press under a heavy weight for a few hours until dry.



24

To attach the first board to the book, slip a piece of waste paper between the first and second pages, and spread a thin layer of glue all over it. That waste paper means that you can go right up to, and over, the edges. Lay the thread ends across the book page, so that they will be sandwiched by the cover.

25

Pull out the waste paper and set the front cover in place, checking that it's positioned centrally. Push down firmly. Gently open the book and lay the cover down flat. Look for dobs of glue at the edges, and wipe them away. Use the long side of your bone folder through a sheet of waste paper to thoroughly smooth the endpaper to the cover board.



26

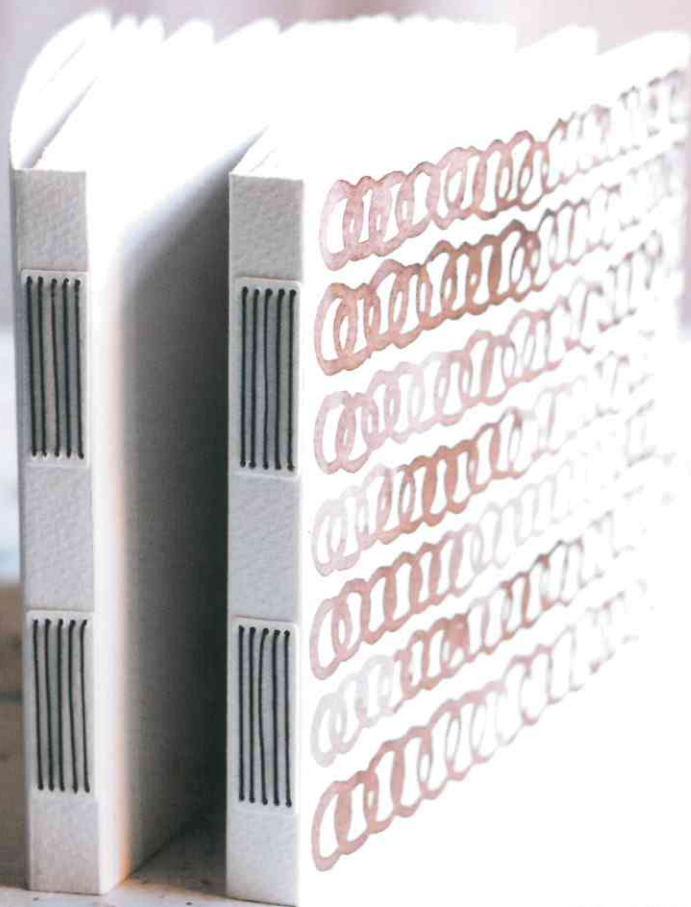
Repeat the process with the back cover. Slip waste paper between the first and last pages to absorb the moisture. Place under a weight until dry.





# bound

15 BEAUTIFUL BOOKBINDING PROJECTS



Rachel Hazell