

## Leather-bound longstitch journal



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### Materials:

2 large sheets of Maidstone or other 100% rag paper for pages (heavy weight)  
1 piece of 5-6oz leather (sized to fit block)  
Linen binder's thread + needle

### Supplies:

Bone folder  
Craft knife  
Glue stick  
Awl  
Beeswax

### Pages:

1. Fold your large sheet in half across the width. Crease with a bonefolder. Turn the folded paper so that the folded edge is to the right (or left if you are left-handed). Slit the paper: Insert your bonefolder into the fold from the bottom edge. Keeping your bonefolder close to the table and holding the paper firmly with your left hand, slide the bonefolder out and away from you in short movements, as though slitting an envelope.
2. Fold the two sheets you now have in half again across the width. Crease. Slit again (with heavier paper, separate and slit them one at a time). You now have four sheets (quarto).
3. Fold each of the four sheets individually and slit again (octavo). You now have eight sheets. Fold each of the eight sheets in half, crease the fold but **do not** slit.
4. Go through the pages and turn them so that the deckle edges alternate. This will give a soft, deckle appearance to the whole block.
5. Repeat for the second sheet. When finished, you should have eight signatures of two folios each.
6. Tidy the stack and set aside. This is your block.

### Cover:

1. Measure your block from the block edge on one side, around the spine and to the block edge on the other side. Cut cover leather half a centimetre larger all around.
2. Cut a strip of scrap leather 2 cm wide and the height of the cover piece. Gently fold the cover piece in half to ascertain the centre, then glue the scrap leather strip centred down the fold for reinforcement.
3. Attach the leather thong with glue just inside the middle front cover, rubbing well down with

your bone folder until good adhesion is achieved. When stitching, you can pierce holes through this with your awl and sew a cross stitch through it for strength.

#### Preparation for stitching:

1. Create a jig. Using a scrap piece of cardstock 3cm wide and the height of the block, fold down 1cm from each end. Crease firmly and open out. Fold the cardstock into thirds to the 1cm fold lines (not the paper edge). Crease with your bonefolder and open out. Mark four stations where each of the four folds intersects with the centre fold.
2. Take the first signature from the stack. Open slightly and nest the jig tightly inside the centre fold. Drill holes with your binder's awl or bodkin through the fold of the signature.
3. Lay the first signature aside and repeat with each of the remaining signatures. Be sure to keep them all laying in the same direction. It may help to make a slight pencil mark on the outside spine edge to show the head or top end.
4. Now lay the jig onto the inside spine reinforcement on the leather. Mark through the station holes with a pencil. Remove the jig and mark a slit line using your square 2cm wide. Cut the slits very carefully with your craft knife, ensuring the ends line up neatly. Do not overcut. It gives a neat and pleasing appearance to cut the ends of the slits round with the Japanese punch or drill.

#### Stitching:

1. This book will be bound using long-stitch from the bottom of the stack of signatures to the top (reverse order). Thread your needle with linen binder's thread in a colour of your choice. Note: The head of the book (the top) is to the left, tail to the right. The sewing stations are 1 through 4 from left to right. Alternating stitches run on the outside of the cover and are visible.
2. Begin with the needle on the outside of 4<sup>th</sup> station. Enter spine and signature, leaving 6" tail. Wrap thread tail around tail of book and signature and tie a square knot on inside of signature between 4<sup>th</sup> station and tail of book. Clip tail to quarter inch (\*). Proceed to head of book with a running stitch: exit signature at 3<sup>rd</sup> station, through slit in leather, re-enter at 2<sup>nd</sup> station and exit at 1<sup>st</sup> station.
3. Wrap thread over head of book and re-enter 8<sup>th</sup> signature at 1<sup>st</sup> station. Add 7<sup>th</sup> signature on top of 8<sup>th</sup>.
4. Wrap thread over head of book again and exit 7<sup>th</sup> signature at 1<sup>st</sup> station. Proceed to tail of book with a running stitch: enter 7<sup>th</sup> signature at 2<sup>nd</sup> station, exit at 3<sup>rd</sup> station. Enter at 4<sup>th</sup> station. Add 6<sup>th</sup> signature on top of 7<sup>th</sup>.
5. Wrap thread around tail of the book and 7<sup>th</sup> signature, and enter 6<sup>th</sup> signature at 4<sup>th</sup> station. Wrap thread around tail again and re-enter 6<sup>th</sup> signature at 4<sup>th</sup> station (#).
6. Note: This is different than the way thread was wrapped at the head of the book. At head of the book, wrap and re-enter signature before adding a new one. At tail of book wrap after adding new signature, wrap again and re-enter same signature.
7. Repeat from (\*) to (#), adding signatures where instructed until exiting 1<sup>st</sup> signature at 1<sup>st</sup> station. Wrap thread around head of book and tie a half hitch knot on inside of 1<sup>st</sup> station on inside of 1<sup>st</sup> signature. Pull thread until loop forms.
8. Slip needle through that loop and pull until knot forms. If desired, repeat this step to make a double half hitch knot for security. Clip thread to quarter inch.
9. Close book, neaten and adjust stitches as needed on outside of spine, wrap leather thong around and knot loosely to secure.