



# Japanese Stab Binding

Japanese stab bindings are a great introduction to book making. They are simple to make and don't require many tools.

## Joe Rotella

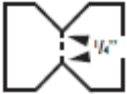
### Materials

2 pieces of heavy, flexible material for the covers  
 2 Pieces of decorative paper for the covers (7"x5")  
 2 Pieces of paper for the end papers (6"x4")  
 16 Pieces of paper for the pages (12"x4")  
 2 Small pieces of book cloth  
 Linen thread (for the inside binding)  
 Decorative thread – About 40-75" in length  
 White glue

### Tools

Ruler  
 Craft knife with a sharp blade  
 Scissors  
 Cutting mat  
[Proxxon Drill Press TBM 115](#)  
 Large needle  
 Binder clips  
 Bone Folder  
 Pencil

## Project Steps

1. Fold the 16 pages of 12"x4" paper in half along the short side. Use a bone folder to make each fold crisp.
2. Mark and end paper with two pairs of sewing holes.
3. Build the bookblock by stacking an end paper, the 16 pieces of foded paper and another end paper. Be sure the folded side of the pages is on the same side as the marks you made on the end paper. In traditional Japanese stab binding books (also called pocket books), the open ends of the folds are in the binding. Clamp the book block together with the binder clips.
4. Drill the 4 sewing holes with the [Proxxon Drill Press TBM 115](#).
5. Using the linen thread, sew the bookblock together. Sew each pair of holes separately. Tie the ends of the threads off in a knot. Trim the ends about 1 inch long.
6. Cut two small "butterfly" shapes out of the book cloth. Start with two rectangles, about 1" x ¾". Fold these in half. Then cut out two small triangular "darts" from the center, leaving ¼" along the middle seam. When you open up the rectangle, it should look like a small butterfly. 
7. Apply glue to the paper side of the book cloth. Place a corner on the two spine corners and fold the book cloth over the bookblock. Wrap tightly and hold until it's dry. This protects the corners of the spine and gives your book a more finished look.
8. Trace the bookblock on the back side of the cover papers (or draw a 6" x 4" rectangle in the center). Score along the lines you've drawn. Clips the 4 corners off. Then fold down the four sides and glue in place, making a nice neat edge around each of the 6" x 4" papers.

## Project Steps (Continued)

9. Glue a folded cover sheet on to the top and bottom of the bookblock, tucking in the threads left from when you sewed the bookblock together.
10. Now you're ready to bind the book. There are many Japanese stab binding patterns available, including the 4 Hole, Noble and Tortoise Shell. Google "Japanese Stab Binding Patterns" and you'll find many options to choose from. Drill holes for sewing being sure the hole is big enough to accommodate the thread (usually twice through the same hole) and the needle. Design Sponge (<http://www.designsponge.com/2013/03/bookbinding-101-japanese-four-hole-binding.html>) has an excellent tutorial for a Basic 4 Hole stitch.

