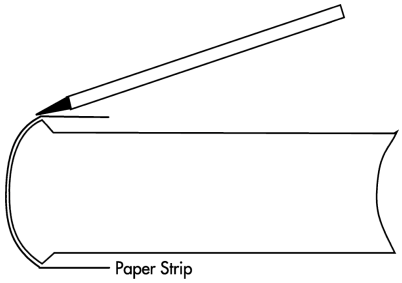
Making the Case for the Edelpappband

Dieter Räder

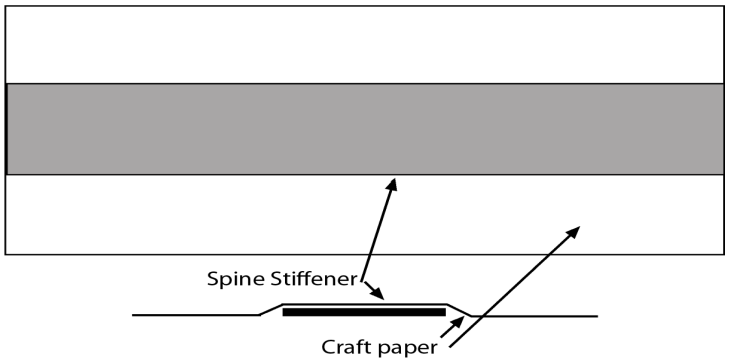
This case binding is the most common, general-purpose binding structure in use by binders in Germany. The cover boards and spine stiffener are joined together with a strip of sturdy paper before covering. This allows the covers to be fitted precisely to the text block, especially at the joint and fore-edge. The structure is also very well suited for beginners. Books using this structure are generally covered in full cloth, full paper or a combination of the two. The structure is not appropriate for leather bindings.

Preparing the Boards
The board thickness is decided after backing so that the shoulders and boards are level. Cut boards to size so that the height of the boards equals the height of the text block plus the head and tail bands. The width of the boards should be the width of the text block plus 1cm. This may seem very large, but once the case is assembled and rounded (but before covering) it will be trimmed to the proper width so that we have even squares all round.

Measuring the Spine
To measure the width of the spine, lay a strip of paper across the widest part of the spine, usually round the tapes or headbands, and mark exactly at the shoulder on both sides. Double-check at the other end to make sure the spine is not uneven. If there is a difference, choose the larger of the two. Cut a spine stiffener out of card-weight paper (about 350gsm) to that width and slightly longer than your boards, making sure the grain runs parallel to the spine.

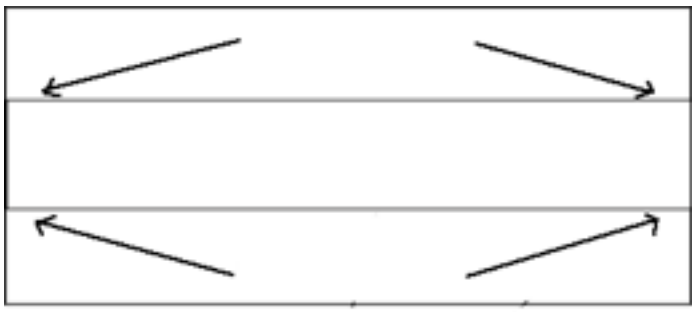


Cut a connecting strip of 80-120 gsm craft paper to the width of the spine stiffener plus 6cm and the same length as the spine stiffener. Mark out the centre on both ends of both the spine strip and the connecting strip. Apply PVA to the spine strip and centre it on the connecting strip. Rub down with a bone folder, turn over and, again with the bone folder, accentuate the edges of the spine strip.



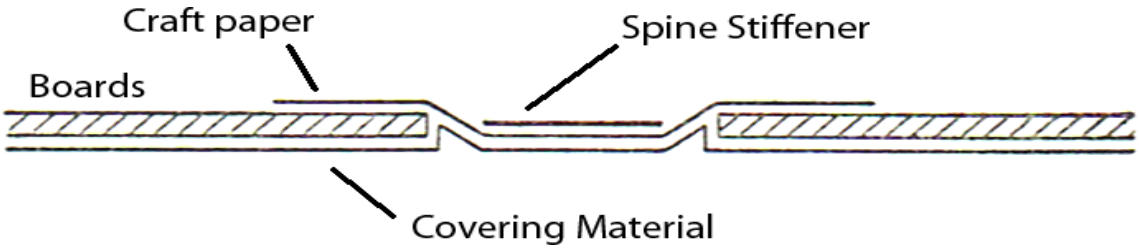
Assembling the Case

The distance between the board and spine stiffener should be the thickness of the board plus the thickness of your covering material. If you use paper it can be slightly narrower; if you use thick cloth it will have to be wider. Mark this distance with a pencil or dividers on the outer side of your spine piece.



Have a narrow strip of waste board ready to line up your boards along the top edge. Arrange your two boards and spine piece in a step-like manner with the spine piece on top, paper side up (card side down). Brush adhesive on all three steps, turn the spine piece around and brush on some more. Lay down your spine piece, (glued side up) align your first board (glued side down) along your marks on the spine piece without covering the marks as you need this extra millimetre for a nice fit. Then, using your piece of waste board as a guide, lay down the second board and turn the now three connected parts over and rub the craft paper down. The boards must be parallel to the spine piece and level with each other.

Next, cut the spine piece to the height of the boards with scissors.



Fitting the Case
Fit the case by first sharpening the joints of the case with a bone folder. If appropriate, round by rolling the case gently but firmly in the ball of the hand over the edge of the bench. It is important to round the spine evenly so that it matches the round of your book. If overly rounded, the spine can be flattened by rubbing it down again with a folder or fingers. Without glue fit the cover to the book, marking the top of your case and book on the spine and spine stiffener. Using a knife or sharp pencil mark the fore-edge square. This will help give you an even square on all three sides of the paste-down even if the book is not actually quite square. The top and bottom edges are always parallel. Trim off the excess on the fore-edge.

Covering without Reinforcement
Cloth and paper are the materials of choice for covering. It is not recommended for use with leather. The following directions for covering are for a full binding but can easily be adapted for the Edelpappband. Select your covering material and cut to size allowing for 1.5cm turn-ins all around. This may seem very tight, but is more than adequate. For covering the case I like to use a 50/50 mixture of PVA and thick paste because of its longer working time. Glue out the entire piece of material and allow it to expand. Then, with the cover facing down (the inside of the boards facing up), put down the first board, holding the spine and second board away from the glued-out covering material and make sure the turn-ins are even on all three sides.

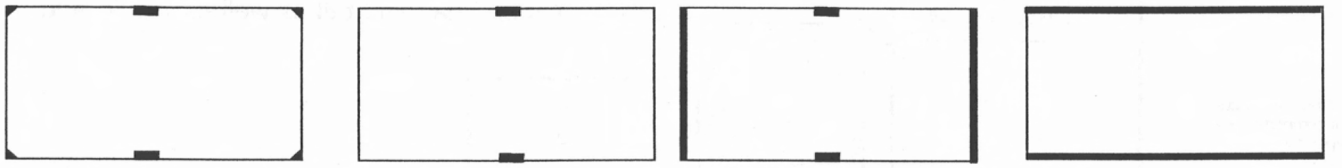
Flip the case over onto a new piece of wastepaper using your arm to support the glued-out material. Smooth the covering material down on the first board and work it into the joint carefully, making sure it adheres to the edge of the board. Continue smoothing across the spine (rubbing down along the edges of the spine stiffener), up the edge of the second board then across.



Smooth out the material with your folder, with a piece of clean wastepaper on top of the cover to prevent marking it with the folder. Lift the cover, discarding your wastepaper, and lay it on your clean bench with the covered side down. Cut the corners, leaving 1.5 board thicknesses of material. Then turn in your top and bottom edges first, beginning at the spine, pinch the corners and turn in your fore-edges. When dry, trim out the inside of your case so that your turn-ins are even, being careful not to cut through at the spine.

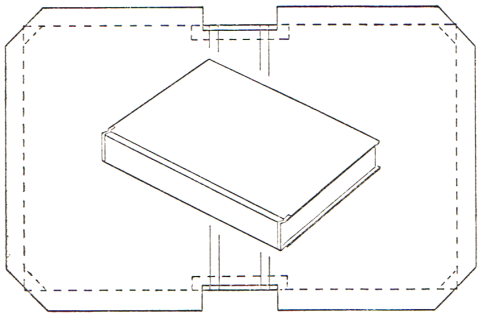
The Reinforcement
Head and tail, edges and corners can be reinforced, with many variations and combinations being possible. The materials which can be used are mostly leather and parchment. Cloth is rarely used. The reinforcement will only show as fine lines and the corners are sometimes hidden so they do not show at all on the outside of the binding. The reinforcement material needs to be quite thin so it doesn't create bulk underneath the paper cover. Leather is pared and parchment is scraped with a broken piece of glass and/or sandpaper.

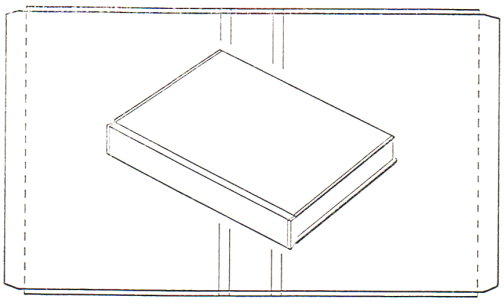
Different patterns of reinforcements:



Cut the material slightly bigger than needed, pare or thin out and cut the material now to exact size. Apply to the chosen areas and make sure the material is sharply worked around the boards. After drying, the edges of the reinforcement material can be carefully pared on the outside with a scalpel, again to prevent a bulk forming underneath the paper cover.

Covering after Reinforcement on Edges or Corners
Usually marbled paper or, more traditionally, paste paper is used but any other decorated paper can be chosen. Of course, a handmade paper enhances the look of an "Edelpappband". The paper must be prepared for covering depending on the style of the reinforcement by cutting out the unwanted areas so that the reinforcements will be visible. It is helpful to cut a template first before cutting the covering material. Here are two examples for an "Edelpappband" with reinforced caps on head and tail as well as hidden corners:





Casing-in

Re-round and shape the case spine so that it fits well around the hollow of your text block. Using 50/50 mixture of PVA and thick paste, glue up the hollow and fit the case, adjust the c (?) if needed. Ensuring the case is sitting right, use a bone folder to rub in the joints (be careful not to tear your material). Use two clean pressing boards and place the book between them leaving the spine hanging over the edge of the boards and press for about 20- 40 min. Trim turn-ins and add infill to accommodate the height (thickness?) of the turn-ins. Glue up the pastedowns and close the book one side at a time. Insert a piece of card known as a "fence" between the pastedown and the flyleaf — this will help absorb some of the moisture and prevent the turn-ins from impressing themselves onto the flyleaves. Place the book in the press again as before, giving a good hard nip for another 20 min or so, then take out, change the fences and check for any unwanted glue residue then let dry under weight.

German - English terms
Edelpappband - Fine or noble paper binding
Pappband - cardboard binding
Papierband - paper binding
Edel- noble
Papier - paper