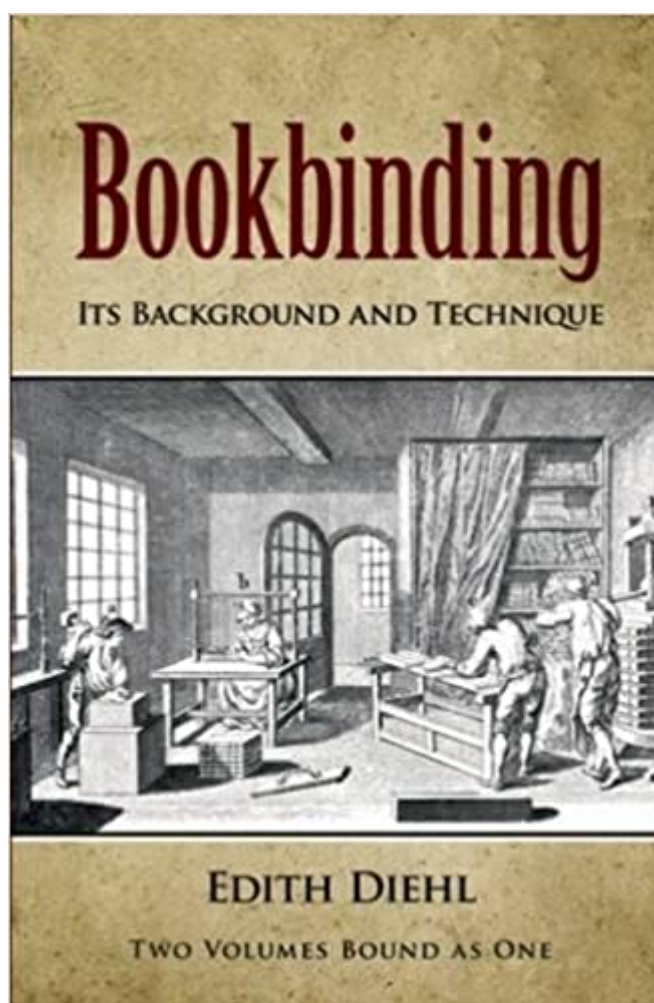


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# Bookbinding: Its Background And Technique (Two Volumes Bound As One) (v. 1 & 2)



## Synopsis

Edith Diehl (1876–1955) was one of the world's foremost practitioners of traditional bookbinding and an exceptionally able teacher. From the vantage point of a lifetime's experience, she gives today's bookbinders a historical survey of this centuries-old art and an eminently practical guide. Nearly one half of the encyclopedic volume is devoted to an overview of the historical development of bookbinding. The author shows how the codex form of the book became identified with the Christian era, how bookbinding became a craft and trade in the 15th century, and how the production and distribution of books shifted from the monasteries and universities to the illustrious printer-publishers of the 15th and 16th centuries. She describes various bookbinding practices such as sewing, the use of boards and leathers, hand versus machine binding, cased books, etc. And she examines in depth the different national styles of book decoration in Italy, France, England, Germany, North America, and other countries, and the specific contributions of such influential bookbinders as Jean Grolier, Thomas Mahieu, Le Gascon, Samuel Mearne, Roger Payne, Jacob Krause, Edmund Ranger, and John Ratcliff. Ninety-two full-page plates provide visualization of certain key points and, above all, numerous examples of the finest decorated bindings. Edith Diehl then guides the reader through more than 400 profusely illustrated pages on the craft of hand bookbinding. She details and illustrates the steps involved in the nearly 30 necessary binding operations: collating and paging, pulling and removing glue, guarding and mending, pressing, sewing, backing, lacing-in, headbanging, lining up back, casing texts in protective cover, covering, cutting inside margins and filling in, and many more. In addition she conveys much useful information on such ancillary topics as doublures, fly-leaves, half bindings, limp bindings, vellum bindings, slipcases, repairing old bindings, cleaning and washing papers, materials (leather, paper, gold leaf, glue, paste), finishing tools, tooling, lettering, etc. The 242 illustrations that accompany this book-within-a-book are unmatched for economy and clarity.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Historically speaking, this two volume set fares well. Unfortunately, the techniques that are discussed suffer from both time and a lack of clear diagrams. In some instances, I had to look up some of the terms being used as they are no longer referred to as they're used in this book - "tins" and "zincs" for instance were used as cutting surfaces, but modern cutting surfaces are not referred to as these metal surfaces are. Another issue I had was with the editorial comments throughout this book. Claiming that a binding is of an elegant design while another is gaudy without having pictures of them had me confused on more than one occasion. Once past the dated dialogue, I was able to get quite a bit of valuable research and helpful hints that will make my own bindings better.

I'm the author of the YA series, "The Library of Illumination" about an ancient Library that is home to all literature. One of the duties of the young curator and her apprentice are to repair some of the wonderful old books that have been neglected, abused, or ravaged by time. Edith Diehl's "Bookbinding: Its Background and Technique" was highly recommended as a reliable source of information. I use it as a reference, and I have not been disappointed.

I got this book hoping it will give me some simple, yet thorough advice or guidance to book binding, as I'm into handmade paper making and would like to create different sorts of journals, notebooks, book covers, etc. The book has amazing historical information and detailed explanation on various techniques, but my level is too low and I don't understand much of the technicalities. Also, the illustrations are scarce and that's not a good thing for a beginner. Will look for another book on the subject.

The book is a good introduction to the world of bookbinding, in particular the part on the history of this craft/art. The practical part, being very well explained, lacks explicit illustrations. After all, as the author says, one cannot learn a craft from books.

super good book for bookbinders!

I bought this among others for my daughter. She decided that she wanted to get into bookbinding. During the summer, she worked at one of the big libraries in Philadelphia, PA doing for some hands-on learning. Now she is at the MIT library in Cambridge, MA doing the same thing. Nothing like the good old books.

Too much blah, blah, but can not find anything worth illustrative to see inside.

This is a paperback compilation of the original two-volume hardcover set by one of the 20th century's foremost bookbinding experts. It covers an enormous range of topics related to bookbinding - papers, end papers, cover materials, print, format, signature and sewing, binding types, slipcovers, inks, design, etc. It covers historical techniques (e.g., sewn-cord raised spines) as well as strictly modern ones (e.g., perfect binding). Much of what I know about physical book quality, I learned from this book. As a result, I do not hesitate, for example, in buying a quality paperback - because I know exactly what a quality paperback book should be. Conversely, I also don't bother with inferior hardcovers. This thick paperback even takes its own advice regarding quality in that it documents its paper and binding approach. As a result of the care taken in the physical design of the book, it lays flat, has not yellowed, it is easy to read right into the margins, and the binding is intact, though I've owned it for perhaps 20 years. It's still like new. You should also buy this book if you maintain your own books, as it will instruct you in the proper techniques for minor repair as well as restoration. I wouldn't advocate restoring very valuable books at home, but there is much you can do with decent-quality books you wish to keep that need some repair. You might consider this book if you are an author, as it will set you up quite well to discuss details with your publisher. The longevity of your work may literally depend on it. A book about books - a topic any bibliophile should enjoy!

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