## Binding 101

**There are a number of options to consider when it comes to binding your document. Below are descriptions of the most general methods for binding of either single-sheet or folded "signature" pages. Each has it own advantages/disadvantages and costs will vary. Discuss your job with your printer for more details and to determine the binding option that will best fit your needs.**

### SADDLE STICHING:

**Saddle-Stitching utilizes nested (not stacked) signatures that are "stitched" at the fold with wire staples. Saddle-Stitched documents do "lie-flat," however there is no "spine" on a saddle-stitched document, and this method is only effective for books with, at most, approximately 80 pages.**

### SIDE-STITCHING:

**Side stitched books are more or less loose sheets of paper stapled together. A printable spine can be made by wrapping and gluing a paper cover the entire stack. Side-Stitched documents do not lie flat.**

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## Mechanical Binding Options:

### GBC or PLASTIC COMB BINDING:

**Most often used for manuals and publications that MUST lie flat. Holes are punched through the stack of pages along the binding edge. A plastic comb (which can be printed on as a spine) is inserted through the holes. This method is effective for numerous pages ( depending on the size of the spine and pages can be added or removed as needed.**

### SPIRAL, WIRE-O , or PLASTIC COIL BINDING

**Wire-O is a series of parallel wire loops attached along a wire, while spiral binding is a metal or plastic continuous loop passing through the punched holes in a spiral from the top to the bottom of the book ( like a high school notebook). Both Spiral and Wire-O binding allow for the document to "lie flat." Neither method will hold as many pages as GBC or Comb binding and neither will offer a printable spine (or the functionality of adding/removing pages)**

**Plastic Coil Binding is just like spiral binding but uses a plastic coil in place of the wire coil. Plastic is more flexible than wire. It will bend without being "crushed" and is also available in multiple colors.**

### TAPE, POST and VELO BINDING:

**All used mainly for Presentation booklets. Tape Binding "tapes" the pages and cover together over the binding edge. Post Binding inserts screws in the bind ( much like the staples in saddle-stitching). Unlike Staples, the screws can be removed to add or remove pages. Velo Binding uses thin, flat pieces of plastic that run the length of the bind edge on the front and back of the book,. They are connected through the pages by thin plastic pegs.**

### RING BINDERS:

**The binders we used in school. The vinyl covers can be silk screened or can have a clear cover, allowing for paper inserts.**

**Note: Mechanical Bindings are more expensive per unit than perfect binding or saddle-stitching, and their cost does not go down when quantity increases. They are usually best for short runs because of their higher per-unit cost.**

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**CASE BINDING or EDITION BINDING:**
**Method used for the general hardcover book. This is the most durable and most expensive bindery option. Signatures are stacked and sewn together ( adding strength). This "book" is then trimmed on three sides and glued into a "case" (spine, front cover, and back cover (a single unit) made of binders board covered with paper or cloth). The first and last sheets of the book are pasted to the "case".**

**Another option to cut costs is to set perfect-bound book blocks into cases (as opposed to sewing the signatures then gluing).**

**PERFECT BINDING:**
**Stacked signatures are "ground off" at the spine ( "notched") then glued into a paper cover. The glue can spread into the "notched" areas making a longer-lasting hold. The cover(s) and content are trimmed to be flush.**

**Perfect Bound Books are dramatically cheaper than case-bound books, but are much less durable without the reinforced endsheets. Durability can be improved by either sewing the signatures or notching the spine.**

**LAY-FLAT BINDING:**
**Very similar to perfect-binding. The main difference involves using a flexible glue in the edges of the spine. Allowing the finished book to remain open (lie-flat) on a table or surface. This form of binding takes longer (for glue to set) and costs more than Perfect Binding**