

'We are Amused': Victorian Humour in the Digital Age

A Pocketbook-Making Workshop • 7 November 2024

What are we making?

Small, pocket-sized books. These can be used as calendars, planners, journals, notebooks... You can include facsimiles from *Punch's Pocket Book* (calendar grid, table of contents page) if you so desire.

Why?

You'll need:

- paper
- paper cutter or x-acto blade
- cutting mat
- thumbtack (our office supply awl replacement)
- 2-4 binder clips
- sewing needle
- thread
- other decoration materials as you see fit: pens, markers, stickers, stamps...

Step 1: Decide on your finished pocketbook size

From A4 paper you can easily make a

Quarto (A6, approx 105 x 148 cm inside) **OR Octavo** (A7, approx 74 x 105 cm inside)

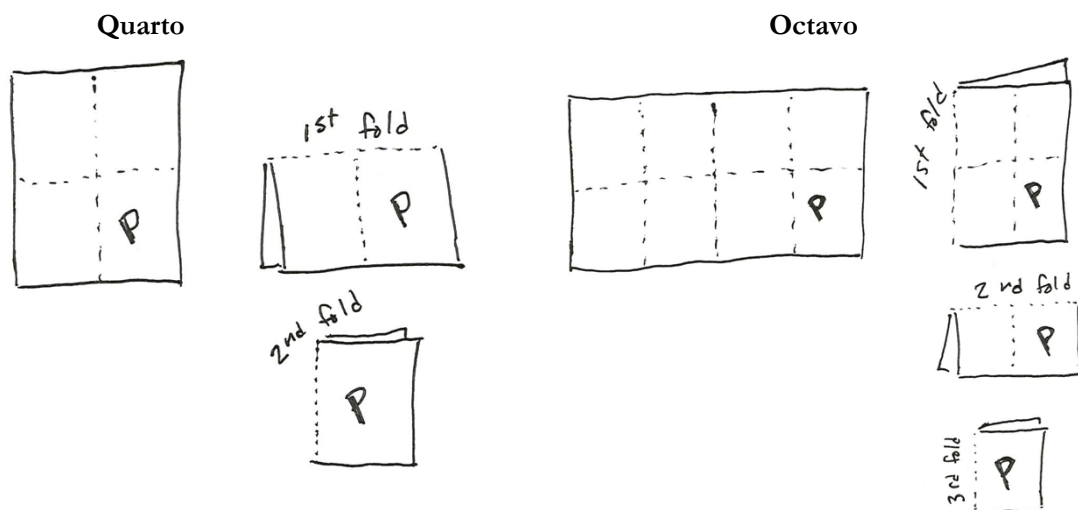


***note:** What I'm calling "quarto" is one page folded to make 8 pages (or 4 sheets/leaves); the "octavo" is one page folded to make 16 pages (or 8 sheets/leaves). Books that bibliographers typically call "quarto" or "octavo" are actually larger because printers started with bigger sheets of paper than we are using here.

Step 2: Make your cover! Fold your cover in half, making a sharp center crease.

(If using regular weight paper, folding paper over and gluing it together will give you a slightly sturdier cover. Cardstock or thin cardboard also work, as long as it can easily fold. If you do use glue, make sure it is dry before the sewing step)

Step 3: Fold your first signature, making your folds as crisp and sharp as possible.

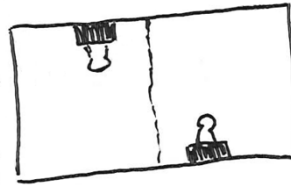


Step 4: Fold some more signatures until you have enough pages for your pocketbook.

Step 4: Stack your signatures, lining them up on the center crease, and the cover on top. (At this stage it will look like a tent.)

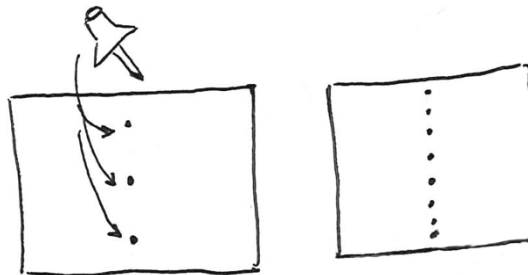


Step 5: Use at least 2 binder clips to hold the cover and pages together like this:



Step 6: Take your thumbtack and punch holes along the spine. You'll need a minimum of 3 holes (near top, middle, and bottom); even more will make a sturdier book.

Measure if you want to ensure even spacing or just freehand, your choice.

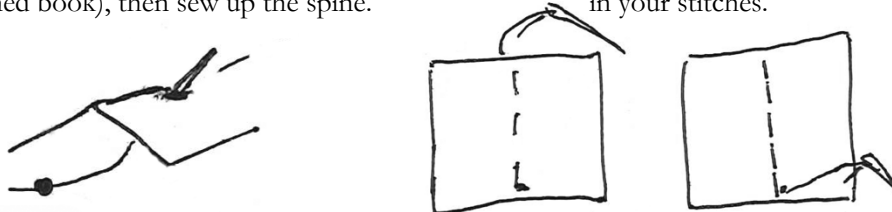


Step 7: Sew!

Cut thread 2 ½ times the length of your book spine.
Make a strong knot at one the end.

Bring your needle up from inside the bottom hole (this makes your knot be inside your finished book), then sew up the spine.

For a strong spine, when you reach the top of the spine, sew back down so there are no gaps in your stitches.



Step 8: Tie off your thread looping through bottom stitch. Make another large knot, trim excess.

Step 9: Cut your pages open

Use a blade, letter opener, scissors... if you want, trim the book block to make all the edges neat and tidy

Want to find out more about bookbinding history and practice? Check out these resources:

☞ Sarah Werner's [Early Printed Books](#), including "[Make Your Own Quatro](#)"

☞ Folger Shakespeare Library's "[DIY Quatro](#)" and "[DIY First Folio](#)"

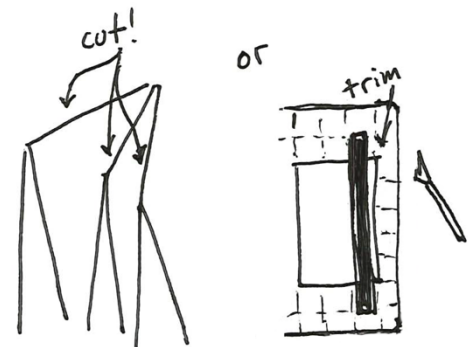
This handout also draws on advice from tutorials by:

☞ [Marlow in Sheets](#), "How to Print and Assemble Quartos"

☞ [I Like to Make Stuff](#) (uses staples if you want to skip the sewing)

☞ [Jen Hewett](#) ☞ [Crafts with Ellen](#)

☞ [Paper Connection](#) ☞ [Gathering Beauty](#)



Bonus content:

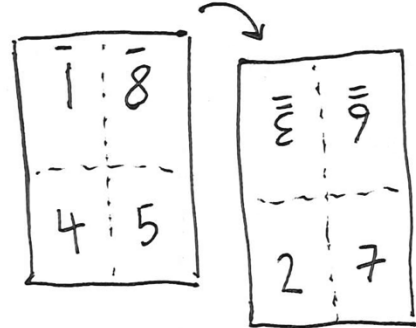
Add a pocket to the inside of your cover!

Some methods to try:

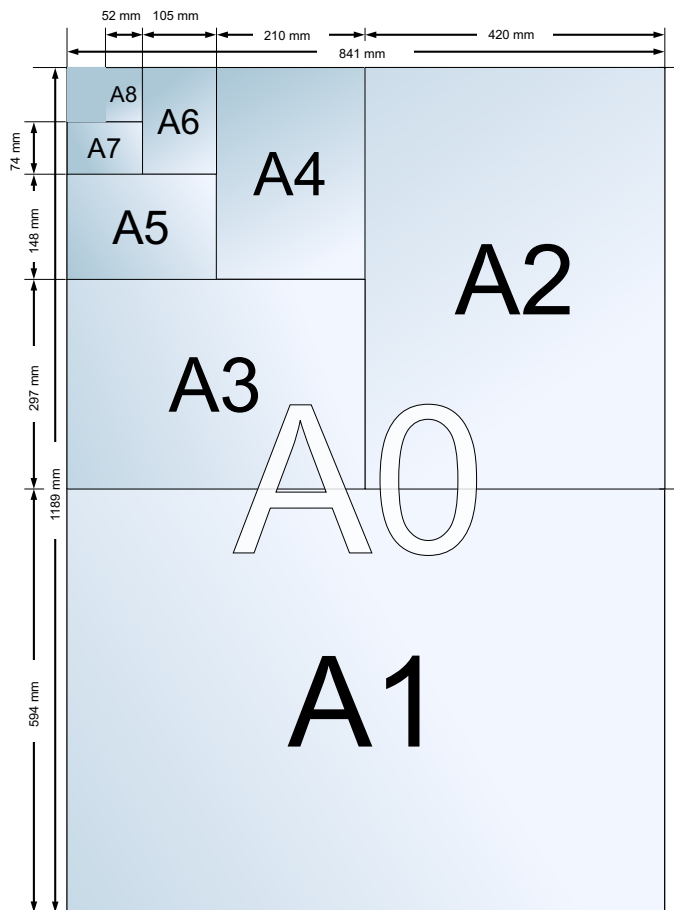
- Fold over cover to create pocket, then glue your cover's edges down
- Fold down part of your cover material before sewing it to your pages

Want to include some pre-printed content?

Here's how to lay out a quarto so everything ends up in the right direction when folded:



And for the curious, here's how A0 turns into A8 paper:



'We are Amused': Victorian Humour in the Digital Age

A Pocketbook-Making Workshop • 7 November 2024

What are we making?

Small, pocket-sized books. These can be used as calendars, planners, journals, notebooks... You can include facsimiles from *Punch's Pocket Book* (calendar grid, table of contents page) if you so desire.

Why?

You'll need:

- paper
- paper cutter or x-acto blade
- cutting mat
- thumbtack (our office supply awl replacement)
- 2-4 binder clips
- sewing needle
- thread
- other decoration materials as you see fit: pens, markers, stickers, stamps...

Step 1: Decide on your finished pocketbook size

From A4 paper you can easily make a

Quarto (A6, approx 105 x 148 cm inside) **OR Octavo** (A7, approx 74 x 105 cm inside)

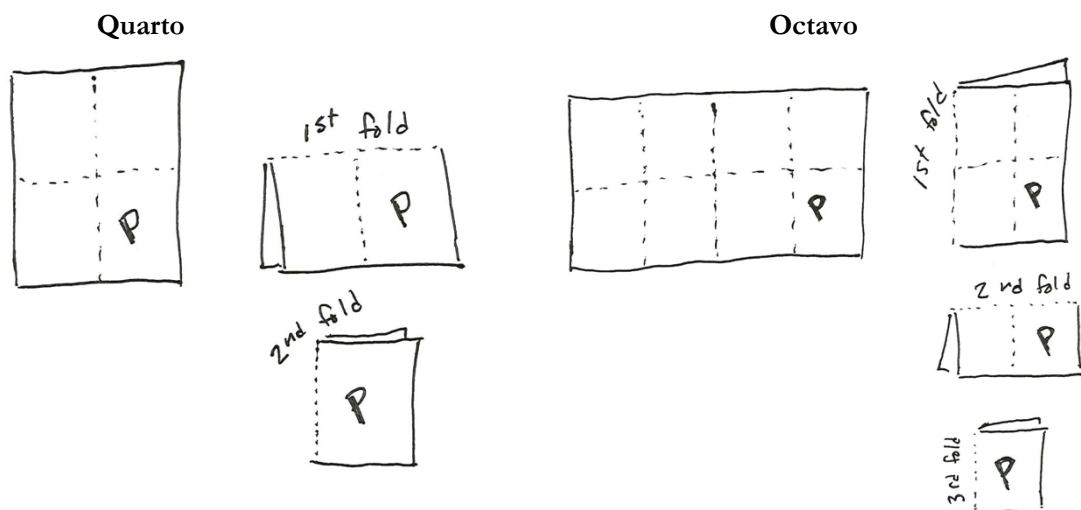


***note:** What I'm calling "quarto" is one page folded to make 8 pages (or 4 sheets/leaves); the "octavo" is one page folded to make 16 pages (or 8 sheets/leaves). Books that bibliographers typically call "quarto" or "octavo" are actually larger because printers started with bigger sheets of paper than we are using here.

Step 2: Make your cover! Fold your cover in half, making a sharp center crease.

(If using regular weight paper, folding paper over and gluing it together will give you a slightly sturdier cover. Cardstock or thin cardboard also work, as long as it can easily fold. If you do use glue, make sure it is dry before the sewing step)

Step 3: Fold your first signature, making your folds as crisp and sharp as possible.

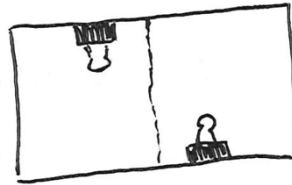


Step 4: Fold some more signatures until you have enough pages for your pocketbook.

Step 4: Stack your signatures, lining them up on the center crease, and the cover on top. (At this stage it will look like a tent.)

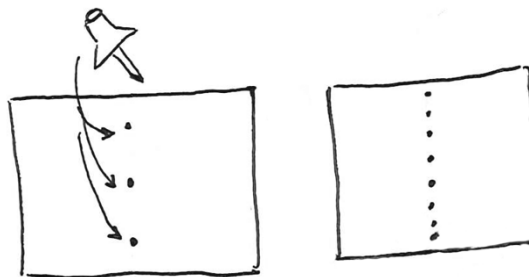


Step 5: Use at least 2 binder clips to hold the cover and pages together like this:



Step 6: Take your thumbtack and punch holes along the spine. You'll need a minimum of 3 holes (near top, middle, and bottom); even more will make a sturdier book.

Measure if you want to ensure even spacing or just freehand, your choice.

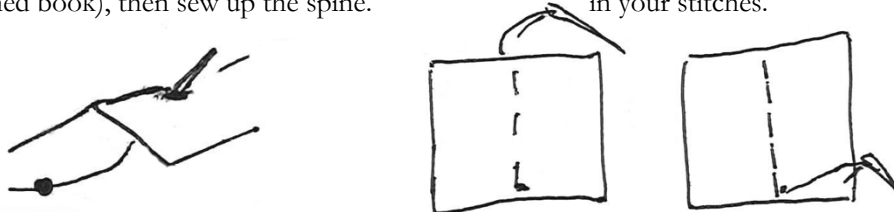


Step 7: Sew!

Cut thread 2 ½ times the length of your book spine.
Make a strong knot at one the end.

Bring your needle up from inside the bottom hole (this makes your knot be inside your finished book), then sew up the spine.

For a strong spine, when you reach the top of the spine, sew back down so there are no gaps in your stitches.



Step 8: Tie off your thread looping through bottom stitch. Make another large knot, trim excess.

Step 9: Cut your pages open

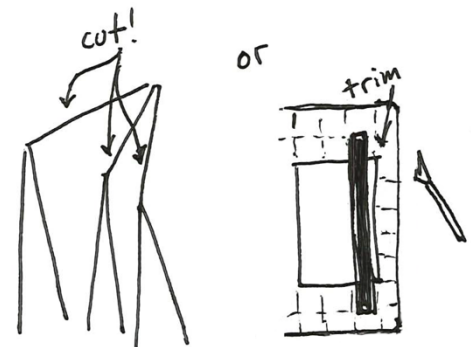
Use a blade, letter opener, scissors... if you want, trim the book block to make all the edges neat and tidy

Want to find out more about bookbinding history and practice? Check out these resources:

- ☞ Sarah Werner's [Early Printed Books](#), including "[Make Your Own Quatro](#)"
- ☞ Folger Shakespeare Library's "[DIY Quatro](#)" and "[DIY First Folio](#)"

This handout also draws on advice from tutorials by:

- ☞ [Marlow in Sheets](#), "How to Print and Assemble Quartos"
- ☞ [I Like to Make Stuff](#) (uses staples if you want to skip the sewing)
- ☞ [Jen Hewett](#) ☞ [Crafts with Ellen](#)
- ☞ [Paper Connection](#) ☞ [Gathering Beauty](#)



Bonus content:

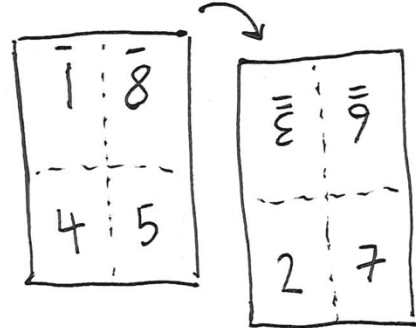
Add a pocket to the inside of your cover!

Some methods to try:

- Fold over cover to create pocket, then glue your cover's edges down
- Fold down part of your cover material before sewing it to your pages

Want to include some pre-printed content?

Here's how to lay out a quarto so everything ends up in the right direction when folded:



And for the curious, here's how A0 turns into A8 paper:

