



MITCHELL PERFECT BINDING

5 THINGS DESIGNERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PERFECT BINDING

Perfect binding remains a polished, elegant solution to elevate your publications, books and high-end brochures. However, to achieve that sleek finish, there are specific considerations a designer must be aware of. As bindery experts, we've compiled the essential points designers should know about perfect binding:

- 1 Understanding Perfect Binding:** Perfect binding involves gluing the pages at the spine after they're gathered in a block, then attaching a cover. This method offers a clean, professional appearance, making it ideal for thicker publications like novels, magazines, and corporate reports. Its key benefit is its streamlined look, which is both durable and aesthetically pleasing.
- 2 Design Considerations for Binding:** With perfect binding, designers need to be mindful of the "gutter" or center margin. Critical content should steer clear of this space to ensure it isn't lost in the bind or difficult to read. Adjust your design margins to compensate for crossovers of Text to Cover where you may lose upwards of 0.25" of image area.
- 3 Choosing the Right Materials:** The paper quality can influence the strength and longevity of the bind. Opt for a paper that's not too slick, as adhesive needs to grip the pages. The cover, usually made of a thicker cardstock, should be flexible enough to open easily but sturdy enough to offer protection and support.
- 4 Navigating Common Challenges:** One challenge a designer face with perfect binding is ensuring the spine thickness matches the number of pages. Ask your printer to confirm the spine size so you can design accordingly. Additionally, because the spine is glued, it does not lay flat when opened, which can affect design elements across two-page spreads. To counteract this, consider using narrower columns or placing critical elements away from the center fold.
- 5 Perfect Binding vs. Other Methods:** Perfect binding isn't always the answer. For thinner publications, saddle-stitching might be more appropriate. For upscale, heirloom-quality books or those meant to lay flat, case binding or spiral binding could be better options. However, for a blend of cost-effectiveness, professional appearance, and durability, perfect binding often comes out on top.

In summary, while perfect binding offers numerous advantages in terms of aesthetics and functionality, it demands particular attention from designers to ensure the final product meets both visual and functional expectations. As you design, always keep the binding method in mind, allowing it to inform and enhance your creative decisions.

Great news, Mitchell can assist with guiding you through the perfect binding process - from assistance with file building to print. Request a quote or send us your project idea to learn more.

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MITCHELL PRESS LTD
8328 Riverbend Ct
Burnaby BC V3N 5C9

1.604.528.9882
hello@mitchellpress.com
mitchellpress.com