

## Envelope Book Instructions

### Materials:

6+ envelopes of similar (ideally identical) size and type \*

Ruler

Pencil

Waxed thread

Binding needle (curved is preferable but not necessary)

Scissors

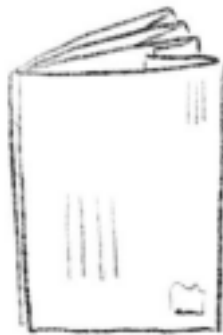
Weights or clips or clamps of some kind

Any desired décor for the covers/ spine

Each envelope is a signature, and you can bind this book with either the envelope flap as the centerfold, or the inside bottom of the envelope as the centerfold (that is, the flap opens towards the outside of the book). Binding using the flap crease is easier, but storing things in the envelope later is a little bit trickier. Binding from the inside of the envelope is a little harder but it affords much easier access to things stored in the envelope later. This is what I will be demonstrating. “Envelope” and “signature” will be used interchangeably in the following steps.

\*If you are using envelopes of varying shapes and sizes, the binding hole measurements should reflect that. This is not impossible to do, but requires a bit more planning. I recommend basing your hole measurements on the smallest envelope you’re going to use.

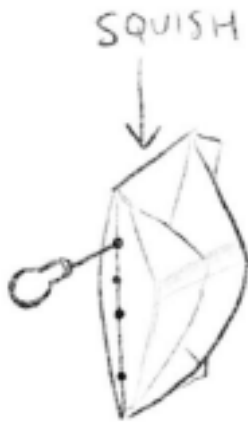
1. Decide which envelopes are going to be your front and back covers. These can be decorated before or after binding but they must be stacked with the other signatures so that the blank sides (where you would put the address) are facing outwards. Optional: reinforce the crease of the envelopes on the outside with decorative tape or paper for a fancier-looking spine.



2. Stack the envelopes accordingly and either weight them down at the edge of a table with something or clamp them together so that you can mark the binding holes

along the outside of the spine with your ruler and pencil.

3. How many holes you have and how far apart they are will depend on the size of your envelopes but you must have an **even** number of holes.
4. To punch the holes from the outside, use a very small and sharp awl (or even a sewing needle) and open the envelope a little so that the bottom crease of the envelope affords a bit more area for punching. You can go back and widen the holes from the inside of the envelope after the initial hole is made from the outside.



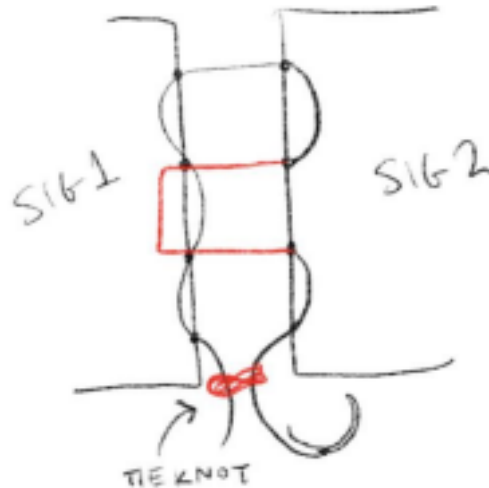
5. Cut waxed thread according to how many signatures you have—measure out one length of the spine for each envelope, and a little extra for safety. Thread needle as usual.
6. Start from the outside of your first envelope and do a simple running stitch (in-out) all the way through to the final hole. Leave a tail on the outside of about 2-3 inches.



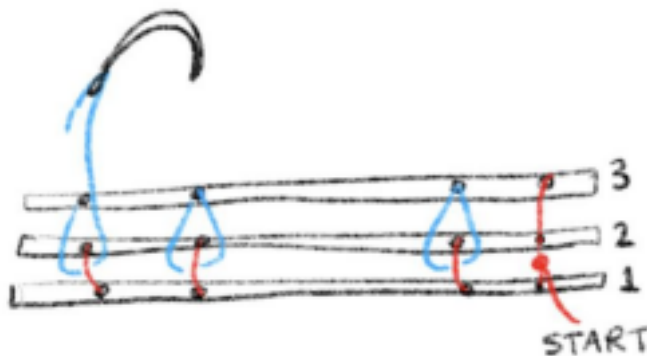
7. Add second envelope. Stitch in through top hole, out through second hole, and **back** into second hole of first envelope. (This way of attaching the first two signatures is also used in codex binding as can be seen here:

<https://youtu.be/DESTQzN6Vqc?t=126>)

8. Once you reach the bottom of the second envelope, tie a knot to hold the signatures together.



9. From here, go directly into the first hole of your third signature. From here on, you are doing a Coptic binding. Stitch out through the next hole, loop the thread around the stitch connecting signatures 1 and 2, and back in through the same hole, etc. At the last hole of the third signature, instead of returning to the inside of the third signature, you will add your fourth signature. Continue in this way until all the envelopes are attached.



10. Once you reach your final hole, you can either loop around that final stitch and tie a knot on the outside of the spine, or stitch back into the final hole and tie on the inside of the envelope. This is a little fiddly but looks cleaner from the outside.
11. Optional: thread the tail left on the outside of the spine onto your needle and return it through the first hole of the first signature.