INTRODUCTION
TO THE ART
OF
BASIC BOOK REPAIR

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Are you ready to jump into the pool of basic book repair?
I think I might enjoy repairing books, but how can I get started?
Opportunities abound to learn about the process of basic book repair

• Read books or watch DVDs
• Enroll in a course (often a few hours or 1 day)
• Check online for videos using a search engine
• Ask a knowledgeable person at your library or one nearby to let you observe them making repairs
• Stay for the rest of this program
Guides and books are available

- DEMCO® Collection Care Guide (demco.com)
- Bookcraft and Guide to Collections Care (gaylord.com)
- And more (google.com), but trust only reliable sources
Workshops and classes as well

• DEMCO® Repair Workshops
• Other well-known suppliers may also offer workshops
• Archival Book and Paper Repair classes through the Midwest Collaborative for Library Services
But easy does it, at first

- Start with simple repairs
- Leave the rare, involved, or special cases to those with more training and experience
- Send out for professional re-binding any items that you want to keep indefinitely in your collection
- You can step up to more involved projects yourself when you feel that you’re ready
You may hear of tension between archival and functional book repair.
By all means . . .

• Always use the best repair methods you can
• Always purchase the best materials you can afford
• Always attempt to make the longest lasting, most stable repair you possibly can, but
you probably already know that in public library settings

- Circulating items have shorter life spans than rare books in archives
- Time to make repairs is often limited
- As are the funds for materials
- So you may need to adopt a more functional approach than you would in a perfect world
You might, however,

• Consider taking a more advanced course that teaches the best archival methods of book repair
• Check with the Midwest Collaborative for Library Services about courses such as “Archival Book and Paper Repair and Preservation for Circulating and Non-Rare Materials”
• See if those methods might be incorporated into your program of book repair
Check into the techniques available and select those methods which work best for you.
But wherever you come down between archival and functional repair, we should all be able to agree that ...
Basic book repair is **Beneficial**

- To your library by limiting the funds used for re-purchasing damaged items
- To your patrons by keeping currently popular books in circulation longer
- To you because putting a book back in circulating condition is rewarding work
Basic book repair is Affordable

• Good quality materials aren’t too expensive
• Properly repaired items can remain circulating for years
• And less time is required the more you practice and develop your proficiency (and, as some say, “time is money”)
Basic book repair is Doable

• You can learn to do it—you’re intelligent library people
• You just need the desire to learn the skills
• And you need time to practice
• But even doctors don’t start working on live patients, so start out with discarded books--it won’t even matter if you make a mistake!
So, basic book repair is B. A. D. But that’s good!
The process of basic book repair begins as items are returned for discharge

- Examine each book for damage (mold & insects, too!)
- Visually inspect the outside first (front and back covers, spine, and page edges)
- Next check inside the front and back covers for loose hinges or text blocks
- Flip through the pages to find if any are loose or separated, or if any have stray marks
Ask yourself if you’d want to borrow the book as you find it

• Then, either way, **DISCHARGE THE ITEM**

• If the book needs work, complete a bindery slip to accompany it through the process of repair and draw attention to the problem(s) noted
Sample bindery slip to accompany item needing repair

Routing Item | Date | Initials
---|---|---
Title

___ Juv/Ya Bindery problem (Casey)

___ Adult bindery issue

___ Bindery Issue Page:

Check off as you complete:

___ Discharge item

___ Change status to Bindery
Supply helpful information regarding any damage needing repair

• Indicate any important information (such as date, damaged noticed, etc.)

• Be sure to include the location of the damage (e.g., “inside front cover” or “at foot of spine”)

• And include page number(s) whenever appropriate
Be sure to “Edit Item Attributes” to change the status to bindery

• Evergreen makes this procedure easy
• After discharging the item, just highlight the item on the screen
• Click on “Actions for Selected Items”
• Click “Edit Item Attributes”
• Change status to “Bindery” then click “Apply” and after that click “Modify”
Evergreen Menu
Evergreen Check In Screen

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<th>Barcode</th>
<th>Checkin D...</th>
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**Check In or Process Item**

**Auto-Print Hold and Transit Slips**

Effective Date: 03/15/2018

Actions for Selected Items:

Fine Tally: $10.50

Send and activate: Items found: 0,
Actions for Selected Items

Check In or Process Item
Auto-Print Hold and Transit Slips

Check In
Enter Barcodes: 3722001315640

Barcode: 3722001315640
Title: Cam Jansen and the mystery of the stolen diamonds
Status: checked in

Effective Date: 03/15/2016
Fine Total: $10.50

Actions for Selected Items:
Send and activate Items found: 0
Edit Item Attributes
Change Status to “Bindery”
Click "Apply" then "Modify Copies"
Purpose of changing the item’s record in this way

• Foremost, this process respects patrons
• It allows catalog searches to reflect the unavailability of the item while it is repaired (The status shows as “bindery” and no holds are allowed for it)
• In addition, it allows the item status to be changed back to “available” by simply discharging the repaired item when it is ready to be released from the bindery
Basic book repair is best done in conjunction with your library’s weeding program

• At MPL we route items needing repair to a supervisor to make the final determination
• Sometimes they decide that due to its age or general condition the book should be weeded from the collection rather than being repaired
• Thanks to Evergreen, though, there are often copies available even after you’ve weeded one
If it needs repairs and you decide not to weed it from the collection, send the book to bindery.
After repairing the book, discharge it like any normal return

• Evergreen will return a “Copy Bad Status” window
• Force the override to remove the item from the bindery and return it to circulating status
After repairing a group of items, release them from the bindery.
Return the book to the collection so it can resume circulating
So far, easier said than done, right? But what about actually fixing books?
There are many common problems you can easily learn to repair; we’ll consider 3 today

• Loose (= still attached) cover hinge
• Broken cover hinge
• Separated (= text block detached) book cover
Ready to get to work

• Read the notes on the repair slip to help focus your attention, but give the book another good close look to catch anything that might have been missed in the initial overview
• Group similarly damaged items together to help speed the process along
• Prepare your work area by laying out your tools and supplies so everything is at hand
Some helpful tools and supplies

- Scissors
- Box Knife
- Ruler
- Brushes (flat edged)
- Scotch® Magic™ Tape
- Mending stick
- Rubber bands
- Bowl for water
- Polymer eraser

- Waxed Paper (note the better quality of the commercial grade sample)
- PVA (polyvinyl acetate) adhesive—NOT Elmer’s® (note the difference between the samples)
- Single- and Double-stitched Cloth Binder Tape (see samples)
- Bone folder
Helpful tools
Other necessary supplies
Single-stitched binder’s tape
Double-stitched binder tape
Loose cover hinge
Loose cover hinge

• Repair with PVA adhesive
• Hold book at angle with hollow tube in spine open
• Apply PVA adhesive to a mending stick (Think “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”)
• Keep PVA between cover and end sheet (not out in area over spine) and use the a mending stick to twirl it into the entire length of the hinge
Loose cover hinge (continued)

- Use a bone folder to gently smooth the end sheet onto the cover
- Place waxed paper between cover and the end sheet
- Close the cover and secure with rubber bands
- Allow to dry completely
Broken cover hinge
Broken cover hinge

• Repair with PVA and Single-Stitched Binder Cloth Tape
• Clean edges with scissors or box knife
• Measure, cut, and dry fit the binder tape to ensure that it will work; trim tape if it is too wide
• Apply PVA to one pre-gummed surface (Again, think “Goldilocks”)
• Attach ½ this glued surface along text block spine and ½ along first (or last, as required) page and smooth each with bone folder
Broken cover hinge (continued)

• Use waxed paper to protect flyleaf
• Apply PVA to other pre-gummed surface
• Attach ½ this glued surface along length of inside spine and ½ along inside front (or back, as required) cover and smooth with bone folder
• Ensure waxed paper in place to prevent cloth tape from binding to itself or to flyleaf
• Secure with pressure and allow to dry
Separated Book Cover
Separated book cover

• Repair with PVA and double-stitched cloth binder tape (with inserted strip of waxed paper)
• Clean edges with scissors or box knife
• Apply PVA to one pre-gummed surface (Always think “Goldilocks”)
• Attach this glued surface along the length of the text block spine and along the first and last page and smooth each with bone folder
• Apply PVA to other pre-gummed surface (“Goldilocks”)
Separated Book Cover (continued)

- Be certain that top edge of text block and top edge of cover are both up!
- Attach this glued surface along the length of the inside of the cover spine and along the inside of the front and back cover hinge edge and smooth each with bone folder
- Insert waxed paper sheets between the text block and cover (both front and back) to prevent cloth tape from adhering to itself
- Secure with pressure and allow to dry
Conclusion

• Thanks for attending; I hope this was helpful
• Now that you’ve been introduced to basic book repair, I hope you have enough information to think about jumping in—and that you will
• If you do, I hope you’ll enjoy repairing books as much as I do and that you’ll enjoy returning many to circulating condition
• Time for that drawing, so get out your library cards . . .
Bonus material—no extra charge!
A few words about cloth binder tape

• Generally, cloth tape is for cloth books
• *Always* apply cloth binder tape with added PVA—don’t let the pre-gummed surface fool you into thinking you don’t need PVA
• You can separate single-stitched binder tape to give you two pieces which can each be used to strengthen a weak hinge
More on cloth binder tape

• Always use waxed paper between any layer of cloth binder tape that you don’t want to adhere to an adjacent surface

• Always insert a length of doubled waxed paper—extending out the top and bottom, so you can pull it out later—in the hollow of double-stitched cloth binder tape before applying PVA (this will keep the hollow from being obstructed after the PVA dries)
A few words about PVA

• A polyvinyl acetate (such as Demco’s® Norbond®) is a good liquid adhesive for a variety of book repairs
• It’s water soluble so it can easily be thinned as you’re working with it
• It dries clear and remains pliable
• It won’t crack or discolor
• It’s available in a number of quantities—from 2 oz. up to a gallon
A few more words about PVA

- Look for plastic bottles that seal tightly (e.g., plastic mustard or ketchup bottles with lids). Check the kitchen utensil section at a local store
- Try to find some with different sized nozzles
- Apply PVA from the bottle; then spread with a comfortable flat-edged paint brush
- Keep an open container of water at hand so you can keep the bristles from drying out
Last words about PVA

• PVA will start to dry if you are too slow in spreading it, so plan to work quickly once you apply PVA and begin spreading it
• If it should start to dry, you can wet your brush and re-moisten the area or add a little more PVA (or both)
• Don’t use PVA to attach cloth tape to very shiny or slick endpapers without sanding them or scoring and removing the surface sections of the shiny paper first
Use a “damage” stamp to note damage that you cannot repair

- Always stamp in the same location inside a damaged book (perhaps inside the back cover) so staff members can check for note easily
- Write in the date and a few words about the damage
- This is very important because it will keep a future borrower from being falsely accused of causing the damage
Damage stamp example
A suggestion about weeding

• Consider weeding items from your collection before they reach the point of total dilapidation

• You may wish to repair items with minor damage to make them more appealing for a library sale even if they are to be culled from the collection

• This seems a considerate way to treat your patrons and your books