

Backing

The process of shaping a “shoulder”, or the more commonly known “joint”, on each side of the binding edge prior to the casing-in is known as “backing”. In this process the “rounded” spine is evenly distributed as the signatures or leaves are worked from the center outward to progressively interlock with each other, much like, as shown in the tapered bricks of a Roman arch. The ‘joint” produced accommodates the cover boards which act as columns, preventing the text block from moving forward in the cover and providing a hinge-line from which the cover will pivot. Backing not only provides joints, it also scores the leaves at their binding edges. The outermost leaves are bent to an angle of approximately 45 degrees. The leaves at the center of the book block remain flat and those in between are progressively bent over in increasing angles. In this manner, unlike flat backed book blocks, the strain on the leaf attachment is relieved allowing the spine to retain its shape while enhancing openability. The easier a book block can open, the longer it will last.