Build a Notebook
Step-by-Step

Make a notebook with simple cuts and folds, using minimal materials!

What you'll need:

- Paper for the inside pages (3+ sheets)
- Paper for the cover
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Scissors
- String

These instructions are based on paper 8.5" x 11" in size, but you can adjust the measurements according to the paper size you're working with.


Building the inside pages:

1. Separate your inside pages into two piles: 2 sheets, and 1 sheet. The single page will be called the leader, and the two remaining pages will be called followers.

2. Fold all three sheets in half, width-wise.

3. Draw a dot on the center of the fold on the leader page. From that dot, draw a 1.5" line towards the top and another towards the bottom, so that the line runs along the fold.

1.5"

1.5"
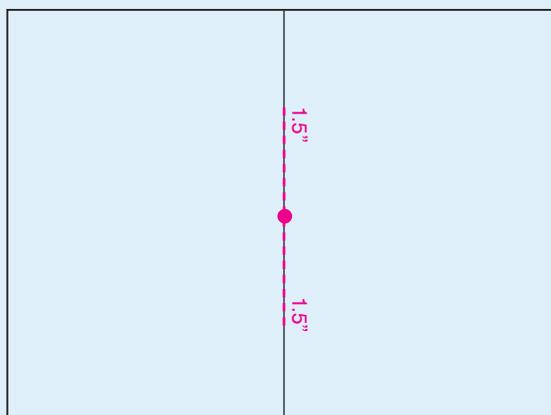
Leader page

4. Using your scissors, make tiny snips at the end of each line. Cut alongside the fold where you drew the line, but no more than that. You will end up with a long cut in the middle of the sheet.
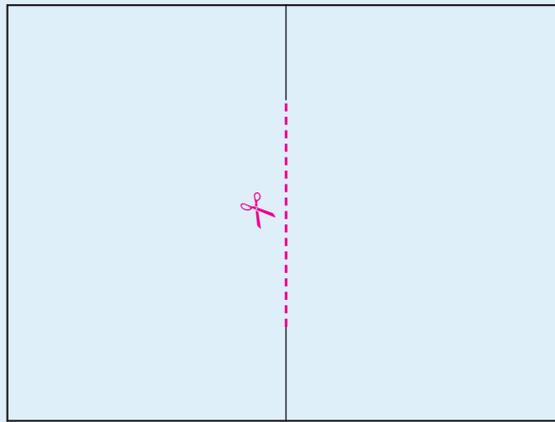
Leader page

5. Take the follower pages and draw the same dot on the center of the fold. From that dot, draw a line 1" long towards the top, and another towards the bottom, so that it runs along the fold. Do the same for both sheets.
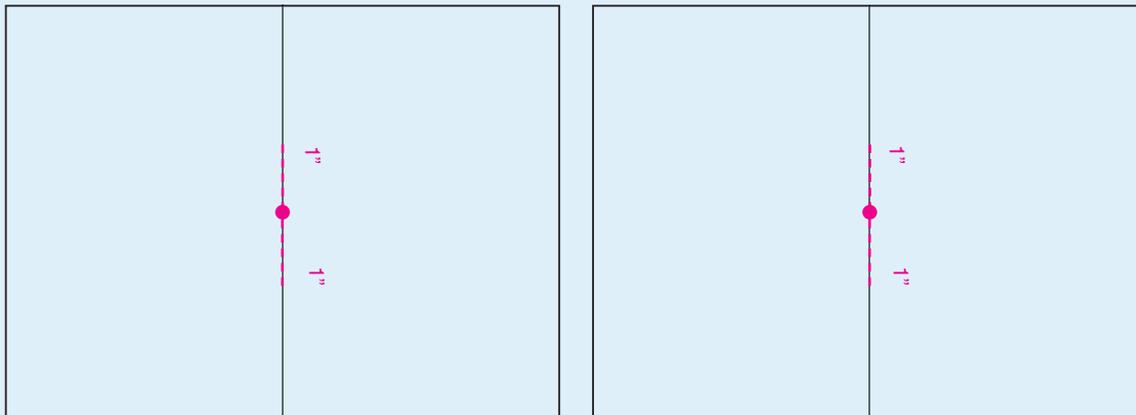
Follower pages

6. Cut from the edge of the sheet until you reach the closest edge of the line you drew. Do this for both the top and the bottom of the sheet. You will end up with two sections attached at the center.
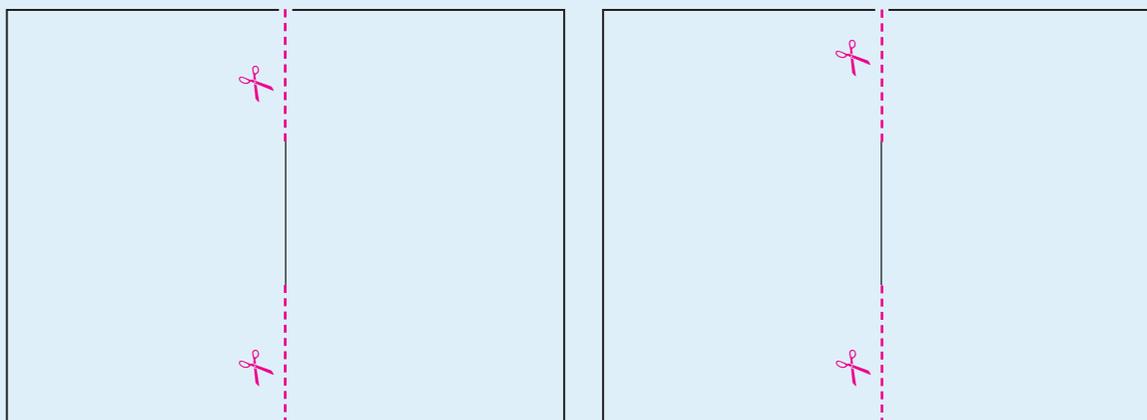

Follower pages

7. To assemble the book, take one of the follower pages and gently roll the left section into a tube. Nest it inside the opening of the leader page.

8. That's it! You can continue adding as many follower pages as you'd like.

Attaching the cover:

9. For the cover, fold the cover paper in half and place it around the inside pages.

Cover page

Inside pages are in here
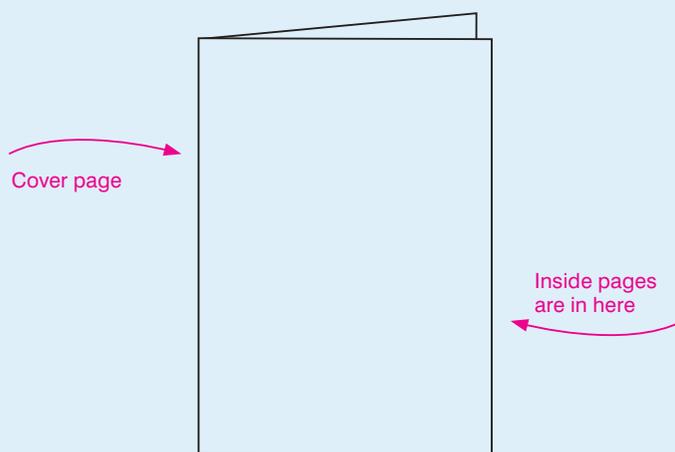
10. Make two tiny dots along the spine- one 3" from the top, and another 3" from the bottom.
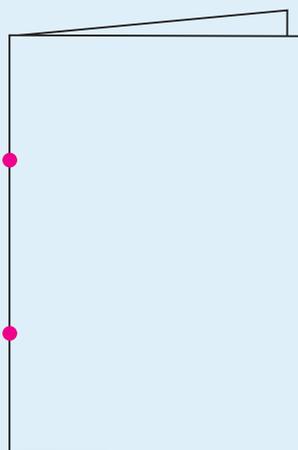
11. Holding the stack of sheets together, use your scissors to make a tiny cut over each dot, cutting through the cover and inside pages.

12. Cut approximately 12" of string for the binding.

13. Open the notebook to the middle point and begin by threading one end of the string through the cut, towards the outside of the cover. Then, do the same on the other cut.
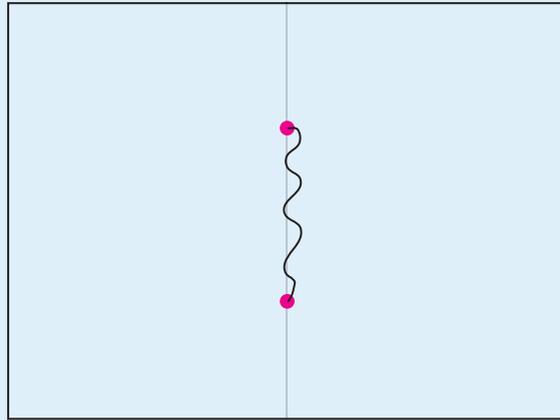
View of notebook opened to middle point
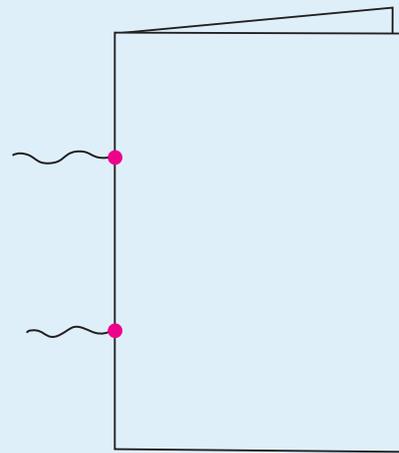
Closed notebook

14. Finish by tying the string into a knot, a bow, or whatever you'd like, to secure the cover. Trim off the excess string.