



## How to make common book repairs

### What to fix and what not to fix

Rule number one in book repair is don't try to fix everything. Before you reach for the tape or glue, ask yourself if a damaged book belongs in your collection. If it's out of date, badly soiled, or one of several duplicate copies, it is a candidate for the discard pile.

On the other hand, if you decide that the book adds to the strength of your collection but it's damaged beyond your capability to repair in-house, send it to a commercial bindery for treatment.

The second rule of book repair is to make in-house repairs as soon as possible. This will prevent books with minor damage from becoming damaged beyond repair. You will find many books can be returned to service quickly and easily using these repair techniques.

### Mending a cut or torn page with tape

For the vast majority of books, using transparent tape to repair a cut or tear is

perfectly acceptable. If you're working on a very old or rare book or one that has been torn through a nice illustration, see "Mending a Torn Page with Adhesive" on p. 13.

It's important to use a tape that will remain transparent and flexible for a long time, such as **Scotch® 810 Magic™ Tape**. While this technique is simple, there is a drawback. Over time the tape can collect dirt along its edges since a bit of the adhesive may work its way out from under the tape. This may only be a concern in special cases. For example, you may wish to use a liquid adhesive when the tear goes through an illustration.

The taping process is straightforward:

Attach the tape just beyond the end of the tear and smooth it along the entire length of the tear.

Cut the tape long enough that you can wrap about a half-inch of it over the edge to cover the other side of the tear. Don't try to trim the tape even with the edge of the page, as this

can leave a rough edge that can snag and start a new tear.

Smooth the tape with a **plastic bone folder** to ensure it adheres well.

It's not necessary to apply a second strip of tape to the reverse side of the page with this technique.



Watch this how-to video to see exactly how to mend a torn page with tape.



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### Mending a cut or torn page with adhesive

Repairing a tear with **Norbond™ adhesive** takes a little more effort and care but will result in a tear that is almost invisible and won't develop a dirty edge like tape sometimes can. Follow these steps:

1. Slip a piece of waxed paper under the page you will be repairing. Have a second piece available to cover the repair before you close the book.
2. Dip a **mending stick** into the **Norbond**

**adhesive** and gently apply a small amount evenly along the edge of the tear.

3. Place the torn page on the waxed paper, being certain that the two sides of the tear are overlapped correctly, and then press the repair with a piece of cheesecloth or **paste cloth**. Don't rub the repair at this point or you'll cause more damage.
4. Once you have pressed the repair together, place your second piece of waxed paper on top of the page, and gently run a **plastic**

**bone folder** along the repair to ensure that it is flat and secure. Leave the waxed paper in place and close the book.

5. Allow the adhesive to dry overnight.
6. Remove the waxed paper. If it sticks to the repair, just give it a gentle tug.



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## Reattaching a page that was torn out

Reattaching a page that has come out of a book is no doubt the book repair that is most often done incorrectly. In the vast majority of cases, you will want to choose liquid adhesive instead of tape to make this repair.

It is difficult to make this repair with tape because the tape adhesive won't allow it to slip all the way into the gutter of the book.

Follow these directions to use **Norbond™ adhesive** instead:

1. Protect each of the adjacent pages with a piece of waxed paper.
2. Using a mending stick, apply a small amount of adhesive along the edge of the page.
3. Slip the page into the gutter of the book with the top of the page extending out from the text block. Then slide the page down until it is even with the text block, pressing it deep into the gutter of the book to seat it.

4. Keep the waxed paper in place on either side of the repair, secure the book with **rubber bands**, and let it dry overnight.



Watch this how-to video to see exactly how to reattach a page that was torn out.

If you encounter multiple pages that have been pulled loose, you can generally reattach all of them in a single step.

- Gather the pages together, check the page numbers, and make certain the edges are even. Apply the adhesive to the inner edges, being certain that each page has an even coat, and reinsert them all at once following the directions above.
- Use a spring clamp or two to keep the pages even until they are back in the book where they belong.
- Remove the clamps and close the book to dry overnight.

