

The librarian's starter guide to book protection and repair

Build your shelf-confidence!

demco®



Introduction

Your collection is one of your greatest assets as a librarian. With the right guidance, you can become a pro at protecting and repairing your books so they last longer, reach more readers, and leave money in your budget.

This guide will walk you through how to protect your circulating collection and make some of the most common repairs. You'll learn the following:

- Book care terminology
- How to protect softcover books
- How to protect hardcover books
- How to clean dirty books
- How to do common book repairs



How to protect softcover book spines and covers

Softcover books offer a cost-effective way to grow your collection. However, due to their construction, they are subject to premature wear, which can cause them to become unattractive or unusable. Luckily, there are a wide variety of products designed to protect softcover materials and extend their life.



The products you select to protect specific softcover books will depend upon the value of the book, how much use you think it will receive, and how long you expect it to remain in your collection. You may wish to simply reinforce the spine or protect the whole cover. Let's look at the best way to do each.

Terms to know

You'll want to understand these terms to help you evaluate which softcover book protection products are right for your needs.

Mil: The measurement of the thickness of the plastic film in protection materials. One mil is 1/1,000 (0.001) of an inch. Protection films generally range from 2 to 15 mil.

Polyester vs. polypropylene vs. vinyl: All of these are types of plastic used in book protection films, but polyester is much stronger than polypropylene or vinyl. Only polyester and polypropylene are safe for archival materials. We recommend using vinyl only for materials you do not expect to retain for an extended period of time.

Repositionable adhesive: An adhesive applied to book covering materials that does not form a permanent bond until several hours after application. This allows the user to carefully lift the covering material, if necessary, and reapply it to eliminate creases or air bubbles. All **CircExtender**[®] products use repositionable adhesive.

pH neutral or acid-free: Any material lower than 7.0 on the pH scale is considered acidic, which ultimately shortens the life of that material. Book protection materials should be either acid-free (7.0 or higher) or pH-neutral (7.0 exactly) as any acidic material that comes in contact with paper will cause it to discolor and deteriorate.

How to protect softcover book spines and covers

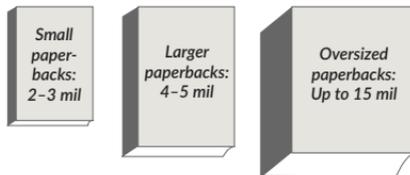
Reinforcing spines

Mass-market paperbacks are generally the lowest-cost books you will buy, and you may wish to discard them after several circulations. However, many librarians use tape to reinforce the weakest area of these books and maximize their lifespan.

Protecting covers

To protect the entire cover of a paperback, you'll want to use laminate, which is available on rolls or in pre-cut pieces. The thickness you choose should match the size and weight of your book. You will want to use heavier laminate on larger materials to provide more support.

Use the following as a guide:



Types of cover protection

Tape

To protect paperbacks, many librarians reinforce the corner where the covers attach to the spine using a durable clear tape, such as **Demco Premium Book Tape**.

The **Demco C-27 Taping System Applicator** greatly speeds up this process and eliminates taping errors. Use the following steps, or view this **short instructional video** to see how the applicator can save you time.



1. *Depress the platform and slide the book under the cutter lip with the spine facing right. (The outriggers can be extended to support large books.) Line up the lower corner of the book's spine on the spine guide. Pull the tape out to the end of the book cover and line up the edge of the tape parallel with the spine.*



2. *Press the tape down on the cover of the book and slide the cutter to trim the tape. Press the book down and slide it toward you.*



3. *Press the tape down onto the spine of the book.*



4. *Slide the book across the applicator to adhere the tape to the opposite cover of the book.*

How to protect softcover book spines and covers

Laminate rolls

Demco offers a wide variety of laminates designed to meet different needs. All are sold in rolls with a printed grid on the backing paper to aid in accurate cutting, and the adhesive allows you to reposition the material after placement if needed.

Applying rolled laminate can be a bit tricky until you get the hang of it, but if you practice the following steps, you'll come out with smooth book cover protection every time.

LAMINATE	MATERIAL	FINISH	MIL THICKNESS	ROLL LENGTH
CircExtender5X®	Polypropylene	Gloss/Matte	5.0	200" or 400"
CircExtender4X®	Vinyl	Gloss/Matte	5.0	400" or 600"
CircExtender3X®	Polypropylene	Gloss/Matte	2.0	200" or 400"
CircExtender2X®	Polypropylene	Gloss/Matte	2.0	200" or 400"
CircExtender®	Polypropylene	Gloss	2.5	200" or 400"



1 Lay the open paperback on the Demco Laminate and cut to size, leaving approximately 1" around the edges. Remove the liner paper by peeling away at the split. Lay the laminate on a flat surface, adhesive side up.



2 Center the spine of the book on the laminate. Roll the book first to one side of the laminate and then the other. Smooth gently with a bone folder to eliminate air bubbles.



3 Cut away the corners of the laminate at a 45° angle. Also slit the laminate at the corners of the spine at a 45° angle.



4 Fold the overlapping laminate around the book edge and secure to the inside of the covers. Trim off the remaining center tabs at the spine.

How to protect softcover book spines and covers

One- and two-piece covers

Choosing your preferred style of cover may involve a bit of trial and error, and you will likely find that some styles are best for some applications and other styles work better for different materials. Use the charts and links below to explore Demco's available cover styles.

Pre-cut covers

The corners and spine have been trimmed on pre-cut covers to minimize measuring and cutting and make them the easiest to use.

PRODUCT	THICKNESS	MATERIAL	FINISH
CircExtender Pre-cut	4 mil	Vinyl	Gloss
CircExtender Pre-cut	2 mil	Polypropylene	Gloss

Semi-rigid covers

These semi-rigid covers include 5 mil front and back covers, offering outstanding protection for larger books, while the 2 mil spine area retains flexibility.

PRODUCT	THICKNESS	MATERIAL	FINISH
CircExtender book covers	2 mil	Polyester	Gloss
CircExtender Semi-rigid	5 mil	Polyester	Gloss
CircExtender Poly	5 mil	Polypropylene	Gloss

Rigid covers

15 mil polyester front and back covers offer the most support for your oversized softcover books. The spine area on these covers is also 2 mil to retain flexibility.

PRODUCT	THICKNESS	MATERIAL	FINISH
CircExtender Rigid Cover IV	15 mil	Polyester	Gloss

No matter which cover you choose, application is quick and easy. Instructions are included in every package.



Remove the center strip liner paper and position the spine of the book onto the exposed adhesive. Note: For pre-cuts without a center strip liner, remove one side of the liner and roll the book onto the adhesive.



Remove one side of the liner paper and roll the book onto the exposed adhesive. Repeat for the other side. Use a bone folder to gently smooth out any air bubbles.



For 2.5-5-mil material, cut away the corners at a 45° angle. For 7-mil material or thicker, trim off the excess along the book edge.



Fold the excess material over the book cover and smooth with a bone folder.

Protecting hardcover books

Hardcover books are a larger investment for your library than softcovers, which makes it even more important that you have the right materials to protect them. One of the easiest and least costly ways to retain the visual appeal of your dust jacket graphics is to add plastic book jacket covers.

Book jacket covers are available in a wide variety of styles. The specific style you choose is often a matter of personal preference.



Terms to know

You'll want to understand these terms to help you evaluate which hardcover book protection products are right for your needs.

Mil: The measurement of the thickness of the plastic film in book jacket covers. One mil is 1/1,000 (0.001) inch. The film in book jacket covers sold by Demco ranges from 1 to 4 mil.

Adjustable vs. exact-size covers: Adjustable covers can fit any book within a wide range of heights, while exact-size covers will fit only one specific height.

Paper liners: Paper attached to most book jacket covers provides added body to improve durability. The paper liners in all of the covers sold by Demco are acid-free to further protect the book's dust jacket.

Polyester vs. polypropylene vs. vinyl: All of these are types of plastic used in book protection films, but polyester is much stronger than polypropylene or vinyl. Only

polyester and polypropylene are safe for archival materials. We recommend using vinyl only for materials you do not expect to retain for an extended period of time.

Tape tabs and continuous adhesive: Most of Demco's adjustable book jacket covers with paper liners have a small tab of double-sided tape preinstalled to aid in fitting them to your dust jackets. The **Securefold™ covers** have a continuous strip of adhesive which provides additional durability.

Attaching tape: This is the tape that secures the book jacket cover to the book. Two librarian favorites are **Demco Film-Fiber Tape**, which is available in rolls, and Demco 3 mil polyethylene **Pre-Cut Book Jacket Tape**, which comes in 1/2" x 3" strips on paper liner. You should avoid using transparent mending tape and filament tape, as neither will hold up over time.

How to choose the right book jacket cover

Choosing your preferred style of book jacket cover may involve a bit of trial and error. Most styles are available in both continuous rolls and individual sheets, and many are available in packages of assorted popular sizes.

You may find that one type of cover works best in one situation while something else is better adapted for another circumstance. For instance, if your library receives a large number of books in one size, it makes sense to keep an inventory of exact-size covers that will fit these books. Since all your books will not be that particular size, it also makes sense to maintain a supply of adjustable covers to fit the other books.

Here are some basic guidelines for choosing the book jacket cover that will work best:

- **Paperfold** products continue to be our best-selling book jacket covers because they offer a good mix of durability, ease of use, and budget-friendly pricing.
- If you're covering children's books that will receive heavy use, you may opt for the extra strength of the 2 mil polyester found in the **Superfold** and **Durafold II** book jacket solutions.
- If you're dealing with books that will be gently used, you can reduce cost by choosing from the **Paperfold**, **Securefold**, **Durafold**, or **Polyfit** lines.

- If cost is your primary concern, choose **Econofold** or **Budget** covers.

The charts below provide an overview of what is available along with links to where you will find additional information about each style.

Adjustable

PRODUCT	MATERIALS	FEATURES	PAPER LINER
Paperfold™	1.5 mil Polyester	Tape tabs	Yes
Securefold™	1.5 mil Polyester	Continuous adhesive	Yes
Superfold™	2 mil Polyester	Tape tabs	Yes
Econofold™	2.5 mil Polypropylene		Yes
Polyester	4 mil Polyester	Tape tabs Blocks ultraviolet light	Yes
E-Z Fit	1 mil Polyester		No
Durafold™	1.5 mil Polyester		No
Durafold II™	2 mil Polyester		No

Exact size

STYLE	MATERIALS	FEATURES	PAPER LINER
Polyfit™	1.5 mil Polyester		Yes

How to apply book jacket covers

Adjustable book jacket covers



Place Book Jacket Cover on a table or desk with the paper side up. Insert the book jacket face down, sliding it between the paper backing and the transparent film



Fold the paper backing along the perforations at the edge of the book jacket for a straight, perfect fit.



Remove the liner from the face of the anchor tab(s) and fold the transparent film over onto the paper backing. Press down on the adhesive to secure the position.



Crease the film with a bone folder



Wrap the covered jacket around the book. Apply Demco Film Fiber Tape to the outside cover of the book. Wrap the tape around the edge and secure to the book jacket cover inside. Tape the top and bottom of both the front and back covers.

Exact-size book jacket covers



Place the Demco Polyfit™ Book Jacket Cover on a table or desk with the paper side up. Open the center slit of the paper backing.



Insert the book jacket face down, sliding it between the paper backing and the transparent film.



Crease the film with a bone folder.



Wrap the covered jacket around the book. Apply Demco Film Fiber Tape to the outside cover of the book. Wrap the tape around the edge and secure to the book jacket cover inside. Tape the top and bottom of both the front and back covers.

What to do when your books come back dirty

Even with the best protection, it's inevitable that your books will see some wear and tear from use. Some marks and stains can be overlooked, but sometimes what is written — or drawn — in a book must be eliminated. Here are some common problems and suggestions on how to clean books.

General cleaning of covers and page edges

- **Cloth covers:** These can usually be cleaned with **Absorene** or **Demco Book Cleaner**. Since Absorene is a dough-like product there is very little chance of it discoloring the cover, but the residue can remain on books that have rough covers. Demco Book Cleaner is an effective product for removing soil from cloth covers, but since it is water-based, it's a good idea to test it on an inconspicuous place on the cover for color-fastness. Book cleaner is not recommended for use on book paper.
- **Paper covers:** For these choose a dry product, such as **Absorene Book Cleaner** or



Dry Cleaning Sponges.

- **Plastic covers:** These are easily cleaned with **Demco Book Cleaner** and a piece of cloth or a sponge.
- **Page edges:** Cleaning the page edges can make an amazing improvement in the appearance of a book and is easier than you might expect. Simply use a piece of fine sandpaper (120- to 220-grit or higher) to quickly restore the edges of the text block to a like-new appearance.

Pencil marks

Erasing pencil markings is usually easy — provided you use a good eraser that doesn't smear the marks or discolor the paper. Some of the best erasers to use are **Pink Carnation** erasers. They will usually do a complete job of removing pencil, pastel, and charcoal markings.

It's never a good idea to use the built-in eraser on pencils as they may already be blackened from previous use or dried out and hardened. In both cases, the eraser tends to rearrange pencil marks rather than completely remove them. The pink wedge erasers that fit over the end of pencils also tend to smear the marks and discolor the paper.

When erasing, never scrub the eraser back and forth over the marks, as you can easily wrinkle or tear the paper. Instead, move the eraser in one direction only while holding the paper in place.

What to do when your books come back dirty

Ink

Unfortunately, removing ballpoint pen ink is nearly impossible. You will probably not be successful in trying to eliminate ink marks from your books. Ink eradicator or nail polish remover might be effective on markings on unprinted areas, but if the markings extend over the printed areas, you're probably out of luck.

If the markings are objectionable and make the book unusable, you can try to find another copy of the book and photocopy the needed page. Then remove the marked page and **tip in** a clean replacement. This process can be tricky if the page is printed on both sides. See "Reattaching a page that was torn out" on p. 14 for the process.

Crayon

Crayon marks can be unsightly and distracting, but rarely objectionable. They're almost always made by young children who haven't yet developed a propensity for

drawing more unsightly pictures.

Still, it's best to remove as much excess crayon as possible by carefully scraping it off with a knife. Then place a paper towel on both sides of the marked page and warm it with an iron to draw out some of the wax and keep it from spreading to adjacent pages.



Chewing gum and food stains

You've probably encountered many unusual things used as bookmarks and left in books when they are returned. Unpleasant things do get inside books and often leave a residue. Try these fixes.

Chewing gum and anything else that has some bulk can often be removed by freezing it and then gently scraping it off.

Residual oil and grease can be partially removed with a paper towel and a warm iron.

Some stains can be improved with a kneaded rubber eraser or **Absorene Book Cleaner**. Knead a small amount of Absorene in your hand until it is soft, and rub it lightly in one direction over the soiled surface. As it picks up the stain or dirt, knead it again to freshen it. If some crumbs are left behind, brush them away.

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:

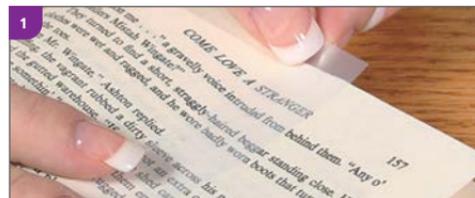
Attach the tape just beyond the end of the tear and smooth it along the entire length of the tear.

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.

How to make common book repairs

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.



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



How to make common book repairs

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.

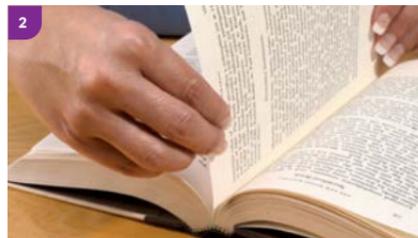
4. Keep the waxed paper in place on either side of the repair, secure the book with **rubber bands**, and let it dry overnight.



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.



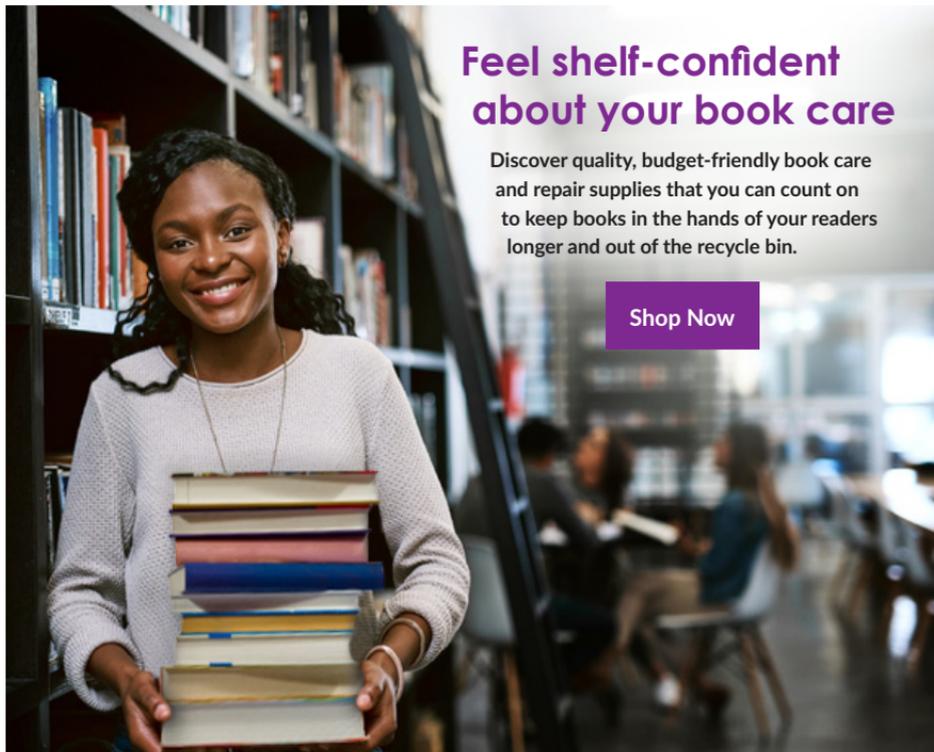
How to make common book repairs

Discover more ways to repair books

The **Demco Collection Care DVD and Guide** offer directions for making many of the most repairs you'll encounter while maintaining your books, magazines, and discs.

You'll also find step-by-step directions on Demco's YouTube channel for many common repairs, such as:

- **Repairing a loose cover hinge on a book**
- **Repairing a worn hinge on a book**
- **Reattaching a torn-off cover**
- **Repairing a worn spine**
- **Patching a damaged page**
- **Reinforcing and repairing book corners and headcaps**



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