Dos-à-dos Binding

Dos-à-dos means back to back in French. The binding is made up of two separate sections, sewn into one cover. The ‘Z’ fold structure provides a playful and interactive touch to a simple binding that can be embraced in the design and layout of the book.

Use 4 - 10 sheets of text-weight paper (60 - 150gsm) per section. For the cover use 1 sheet of heavier paper/card, equal to the height and 3 times as wide as a folded section. All the paper should be short grain.

01. Fold and gather the text-weight paper to form two sections.

02. For the cover: measure and mark the width of the section from the left edge. Score with a bone folder and fold.

03. Flip the cover over. Measure and mark from the right edge. Score with a bone folder and fold to create a ‘Z’ fold.

04. Make a sewing template: Cut a piece of scrap paper the same height as your sections and as wide as a page, fold it in half across the width. Mark 5 equally spaced points on the inside of the fold.

05. Place one of the sections in one of the spine folds of the cover. Use binding clips at the head and the tail to hold the pages and cover securely in place while piercing the holes.

06. Place the sewing station into the centre fold of the section, aligning it to the head and tail and pierce holes at each of the marks.
07. Thread a needle with a piece of waxed thread 2x length of the spine. Begin sewing from the outside into the centre hole, leaving a tail of 40mm.

08. Sew out through the next hole to the right; in again through the final hole and back through the previous hole.

09. On the outside, skip over the centre hole where you started and sew through next hole along.

10. Continue out through the final hole and back in through the previous hole. And finally, back through the centre hole to the outside.

11. Make sure that both ends of the thread are taught and on opposite sides of the central thread and tie a square knot over it. Trim the thread leaving a 10mm tail.

12. Repeat steps 5-11 with the other section on the other spine fold to complete the binding.