

How to Make at Home: a Quarto Booklet

By: Kaki Okumura

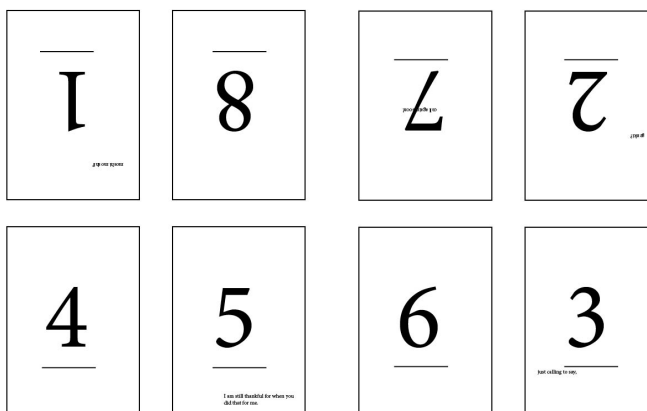
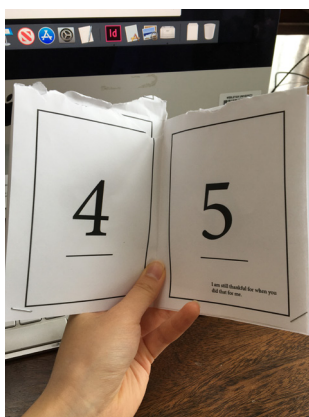


Introduction to the Quarto

A quarto book is a great gift to give to friends and family for the holiday season! It's very easy to make, yet demonstrates an art and skill that anyone would be impressed by and appreciate.

What is a quarto?

A quarto is an 8-page double-sided booklet, made by folding a single sheet of paper into four sections. The pages are then ripped along the folds to open into a booklet.



One of the most basic forms of the book, it used to be common for books to be made like this. Individuals would buy books with the pages still sealed, and then use a knife to break open the print. The earliest European print book using movable type is actually a quarto, a medieval poem called the Sibyllenbuch (or Book of the Sibyls), printed by Gutenberg in 1452.

Materials

- **US Letter size paper**

Some places you can buy paper:

- In Brooklyn and online: [Talas](#). A brick and mortar location in Brooklyn; you should walk in with a good idea of what kind of paper you want! They have lots of options.
- Online only: [French Paper co](#). A family owned company that often uses post-consumer material in their paper, and their factory runs on hydro-electric power so it's also environmentally conscious!

- **Waxed string**

- I prefer to use colorful thread; nothing too skinny or too thick or else it won't support the paper or it won't go through the paper nicely.
- A 30/3 or 0.45mm thickness (30 thickness with 3 strands) is pretty standard
- You can also buy normal string and wax it yourself with a block of beeswax

- **Large eye needle**

- **Bone folder (ideally; but optional)**

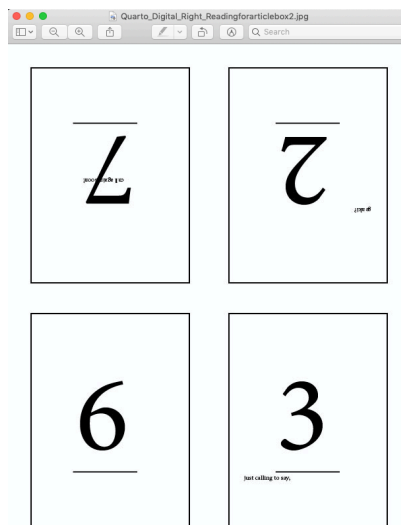
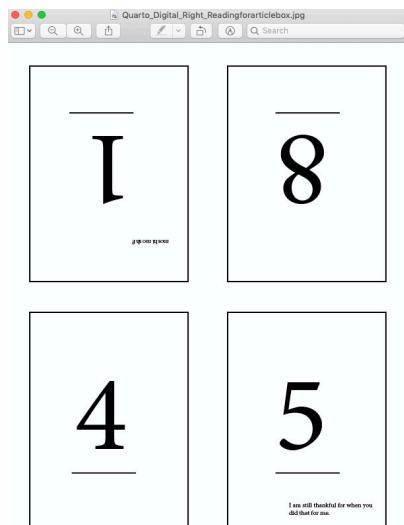
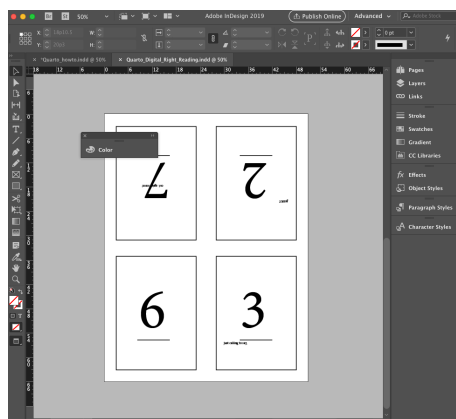
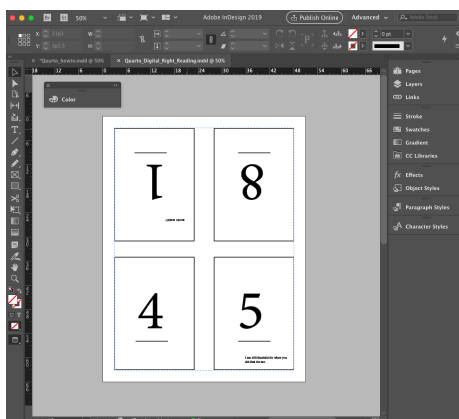
- **Awl (ideally; but optional)**

- **Bookbinding punching trough (ideally; but optional)**

*Note: You can buy a bookbinding kit on Amazon or Etsy, for ~\$20
It usually will include the waxed string, needle, bone folder, and awl.

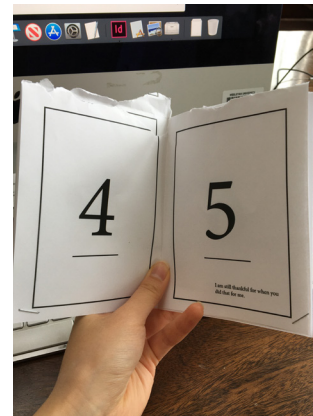
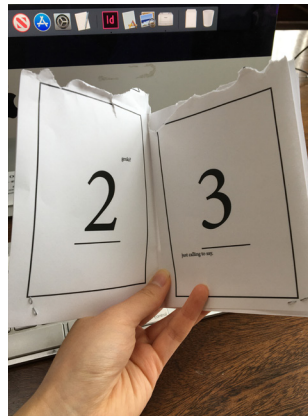
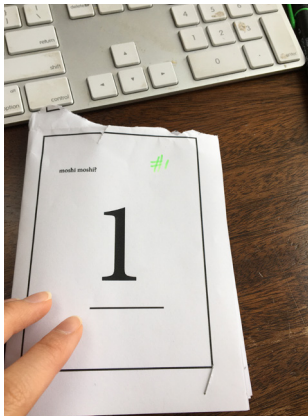
Instructions

1. Open the template file provided [here](#) in InDesign and type up your text and insert images or illustrations of your choice, formatted on the page to your liking. Remember to delete the [@kakikata.space] at the top!
2. The numbers correspond to the page numbers, with 1 being the cover and 8 being the back page.
3. Export as pdf, and open in Preview.

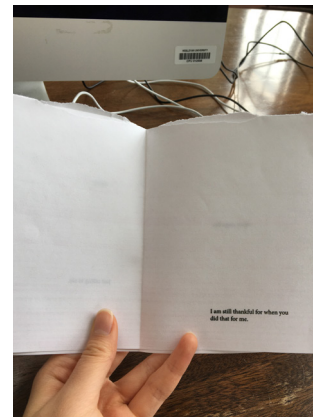
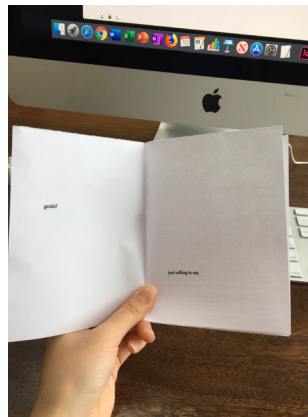
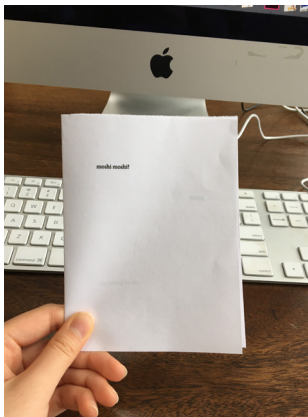


Instructions

4. Print double-sided, long-edge binding. **DO A TEST PRINT ON REGULAR PRINTER PAPER.** (Printer settings are not universal, and not doing a test print can ruin your high-quality paper.)
5. Take your test print and fold your paper “hamburger” style, or short edge first, unfold, and then fold your paper “hotdog” style, or long edge. Then, combine the two folds so your paper is folded into a quarto.
6. Once you’ve confirmed that the numbers print in the right order, in the correct orientation, remove all of the paper in your printer and place a single sheet of your high-quality paper in the printer. This step prevents printer jams.
7. Print the number of desired booklets on high quality paper.



Test print with numbers



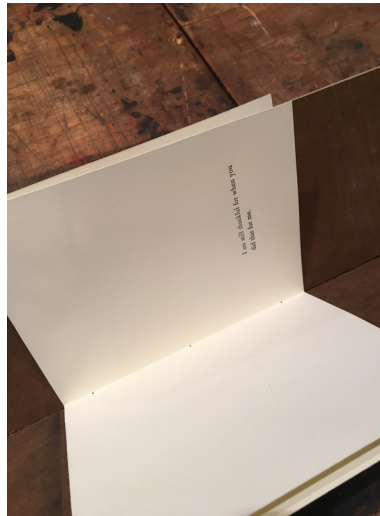
Test print on blank

Instructions

8. Taking your needle, place your folded sheet in the punching trough with the middle page open. Poke one hole roughly in the middle of the book, one hole about a centimeter away from the top, and one hole about a centimeter away from the bottom. If you don't have a trough, you can instead put your folded paper on a soft surface (like a pillow or folded towel you don't care about), and use the needle to poke through.
9. Cut a piece of string roughly 2-3x the length of the spine of the book. (If you are waxing your own string, then run the string along the beeswax block twice, to cover it. Any more can be overkill.)
10. Loop the string through the eye of the needle, leaving about 2 inches or 5 centimeters at the end.



Poking holes with the awl and needle



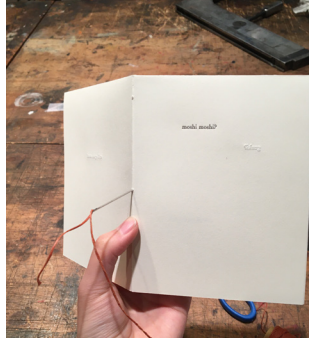
Notice the location of the three small holes



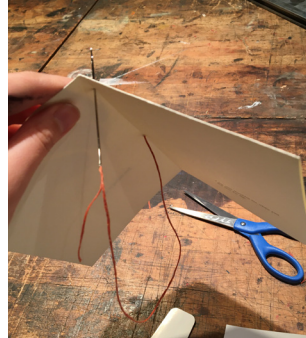
Running string through the beeswax block

Instructions

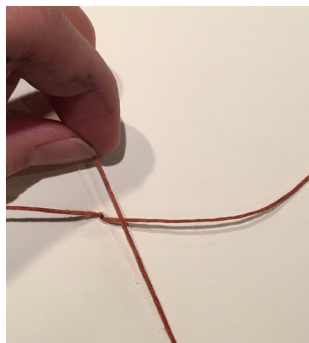
8. Starting from the outside of the middle hole, loop your string through, leaving about 2 inches or 5 centimeters of tail string.
9. Next, go to the top hole and loop your string through. Pull until taut.
10. Then, skipping the middle hole, take your string along the outside spine and pull it through the bottom hole. Pull until taut.
11. Your string should be on the inside now, and pull your string through the middle hole again. Make sure that your string is on the opposite side of the tail end you left in the beginning--the long middle string should be sandwiched between the two ends. Pull the string in the direction they're facing, until taut. This ensures you don't stretch out the holes you made earlier.
12. Make a box knot (first tie left over right, and then right over left) to secure your book with a clean knot.
13. Cut the loose ends to your desired length.



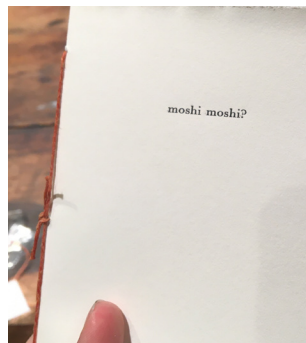
Starting from outside



Loop to top, skip middle and loop to bottom



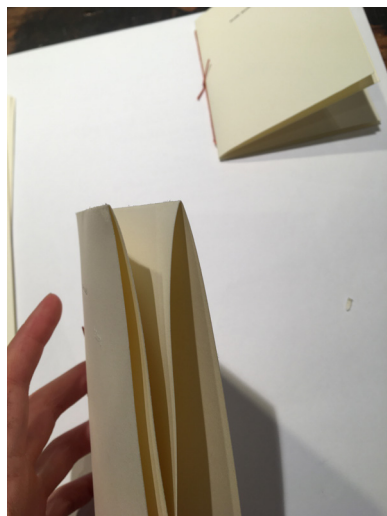
From bottom to middle, make sure the loose ends "sandwich" the long length (fall on either side of it)



Make a box knot, and cut ends to desired length

Instructions

14. If you have thick paper, I recommend you wet paper towel with a bit of water, and run it along the closed end of the top of the pages. This is to soften the paper and make it easier to rip through.
15. Taking the bone folder (or other blunt pointed material/regular cutter knife), run it along the closed pages to make a softened, but clean rip.



The closed ends of
quarto booklet

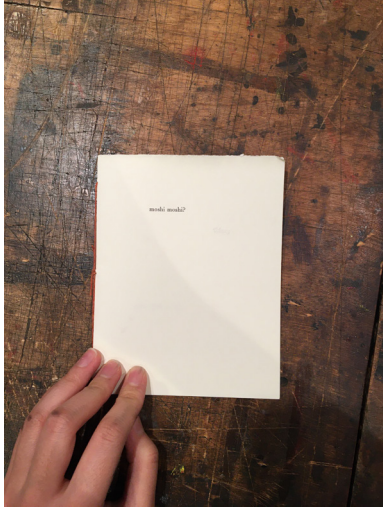


Running wet paper
towel along edge

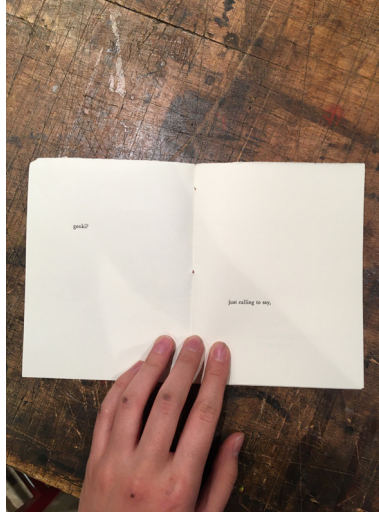


Using bone folder to
break the pages

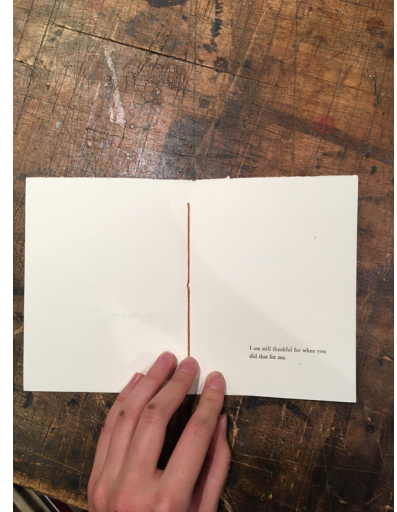
You Are Now Done!



Cover



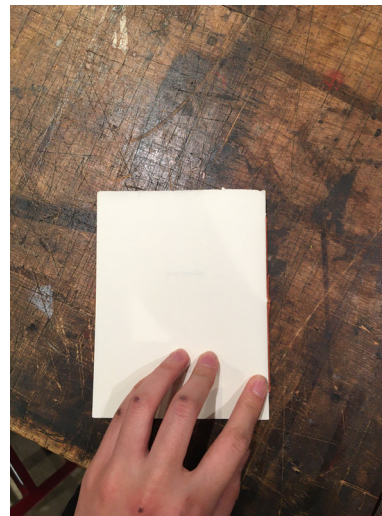
Pages 2-3



Pages 4-5



Pages 6-7



Back cover

Resources

Templates:

- InDesign template: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BkUPGnriUNIZNE6MX0o5I9VWUd8GoMd/view?usp=sharing>
- Pdf template: http://kakikata.space/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/kakikata_quartoTemplate.pdf

Where to Buy Paper:

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- Online only: [French Paper co.](#) A family owned company that often uses post-consumer material in their paper, and their factory runs on hydroelectric power so it's also environmentally conscious!

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I read and respond to every email I get, and love hearing from readers.

Kind regards,
Kaki

