Cut and Fold Book Folding Instructions

Whilst it may look difficult and complicated, **Cut and Fold** book folding is actually very easy to do. It can, at times, be a little fiddly and time consuming because, depending on the level of detail in a pattern, you may have to deal with very many folds per page alot of which may be of just a mm in size.

Hopefully these tutorials will provide answers to all your questions but if not please [drop me a line](#).

Tools you will need

Tool requirements for cut & fold book folding are very minimal. You will need:

1. A sharp pencil
2. A Ruler - ideally with very clear and well defined markings
3. A pair of small(ish) scissors
4. An old credit card or bone folder

Cut & Fold Patterns

The cut and fold patterns list all of the marks required for each leaf of the book and by marking, cutting and folding the marks you build up the design.

The size of book (number of pages) needed will be determined from the pattern. The majority of cut & fold patterns will give the total pages needed so you just require a book that size.

However, there are some designers that give the number of folds (leafs) instead. In these cases you will need to double the number to give the numbered pages needed.

If a pattern is not clear whether it is giving the number of pages or folds you can usually detemine which by looking at the pattern sequence. If it specifies 1,2,3,4 etc.. then it is likely to be referring to leafs in which case you will need to double the total

number to give the number of pages needed. If the sequence runs 1,3,5,7 etc.. then this is pages and you will not need to double the total.

Page No.	Measure, Mark, Cut & Fold Points										
1	18.1	18.5									
3	Inset Page										
5	14.3	14.9	15.3	16.1	18.0	18.7					
7	Inset Page										
9	14.3	14.9	15.3	16.1	18.0	18.8					
11	Inset Page										
13	14.3	14.8	15.2	16.0	16.3	16.4	18.1	18.9			
15	Inset Page										
17	14.3	14.8	15.2	15.9	16.2	16.3	18.1	19.0			
19	Inset Page										
21	14.3	14.8	15.1	15.8	16.1	16.3	18.1	19.0			
23	Inset Page										
25	14.3	14.8	15.1	15.8	16.1	16.3	18.1	19.1			
27	Inset Page										
29	14.3	14.7	15.0	15.8	16.0	16.3	18.2	19.2			
31	Inset Page										
33	14.3	14.7	15.0	15.7	15.9	16.3	18.2	19.2			
35	Inset Page										
37	14.3	14.6	14.9	15.6	15.8	16.3	18.2	19.2			
39	Inset Page										
41	14.4	14.6	14.9	15.5	15.8	16.3	18.2	19.3			
43	Inset Page										
45	14.4	14.5	14.8	15.4	15.7	16.2	18.3	19.3			

Cut & Fold Methods

There a number of cut & fold methods used by designers at the moment:

1) [With folded Inset Folds](#)

2) [With unfolded Inset Fold (Partial or Shadow fold)](#)

2) [Without Inset Folds - Just Cut and Fold](#)

3) [Without Inset Folds - Fold, Cut & Fold](#)

4) [Traditional Fold & Cut and Fold Combination (Combi fold)](#)

Although a pattern will have been designed with a particular method in mind, there is nothing to stop you using a different one. You will just end up with a finished fold that may be thinner or fuller than originally designed. If you do change from Inset Folds to Without, or Without Insets to with, you will need to remember that the number of pages needed will also change by half, either up or down.

Cut & Fold - WITH FOLDED INSET PAGES

This method consists of cutting and folding every other page with a blank folded (inset) page between them. The purpose of the inset page is to fill out the smaller less detailed patterns so that the finished book is fuller. Without them, the design may look a little thin.

Inset folds tend not to be used in the more detailed designs because they increase the number of pages needed. They also are not generally used in the traditional combi methods.

The inset fold is a full length fold typically 1cm or 1.5cm (this is not set in stone but are the sizes that are felt to give the most appealing results). Personally I fold at 1cm unless the pages are prone to cracking, or are too stiff, in which case i'll fold at 1.5cm.

Method:
How you wish to attack the sequence is up to you, but the sequence below seems to be popular with the majority of folders:

1) FOLLOWING THE PATTERN - MARK EVERY OTHER PAGE

Then once all the marking has been done, return to the start of the book and in batches of around 10 - 20 pages or so:

1. FOLD THE INSET PAGES BETWEEN EVERY MARKED PAGE
2. CUT & FOLD EACH MARKED PAGE
    a) Cut at every mark
    b) Fold the tabs according to whether you want an incut or stqnd out design (see below)

Tabs should be folded in the same distance as the inset page. You can use the inset page as a guide by folding the tab over it (but do not leave it folded over the inset page).

By folding tabs 2,4,6 etc.. you create an **incut** design
By folding tabs 1,3,5 etc.. you create a **stand out** design
and Voila you have a completed cut & fold !

Cut & Fold - WITH UNFOLDED INSET PAGES (SHADOW or PARTIAL FOLD)
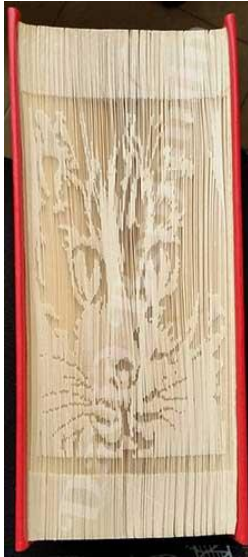
This method is virtually the same as the with folded inset page method but you leave the inset pages unfolded.

Many folders fold their patterns with insets this way first to see what it will be like and then if desired go back and fold the insets.

** You will not be able to fold a Stand Out design with this method as the unfolded inset pages would stand proud of the design.

Method:

How you wish to attack the sequence is up to you, but the sequence below seems to be popular with the majority of folders:

1) FOLLOWING THE PATTERN - MARK EVERY OTHER PAGE

Then once all the marking has been done, return to the start of the book and in batches of around 10 - 20 pages or so:

1. CUT & FOLD EACH MARKED PAGE
   a) Cut at every mark (you don't have the inset pages here to guide so typically most people cut in and fold at 1cm or 2cm)
   b) Fold the tabs according to whether you want an incut or stand out design (see below)

By folding tabs 2,4,6 etc.. you create an **incut** design

By folding tabs 1,3,5 etc.. you create a **stand out** design

Cut & Fold - WITHOUT INSET FOLDs

This method involves cutting and folding every single page. It's often used for more detailed designs as it:

1. Keeps the number of pages required down
2. Creates a tighter design because the pages are not seperated.

Again, the sequence used is up to you, but as above the most popular is:

1) FOLLOWING THE PATTERN - MARK EVERY PAGE

Then once all the marking has been done, return to the start of the book and in batches of around 10 - 20 pages or so:

1. CUT & FOLD EACH MARKED PAGE
    a) Cut at every mark (typicallay depth of 1cm or 1.5cm)
    b) Fold tabs according to whether you want an incut or stand out design.

Unlike when using inset pages, you don't have a ready made folding depth guide with this method as there are no inset folds to help you.

To get round this many folders use a template made of heavy card, or acetate, that is 1 or 1.5cm narrower than the width of the page. You lay this into the spine and then fold the tabs over it.

A common problem encountered with using a template though is that often you will encounter sections of pages in the book where the spine is bent or the pages are glued a little deeper. These areas stop the template from going in all the way to the spine evenly and results in uneven folds.

Some folders use the edge of the text to fold to, but again depending on the book this is not always uniform across all pages.

Fold,Cut & Fold - WITHOUT INSET FOLDs

This method involves folding every page as an inset (typically by 2 or 3cm) and then cutting and folding every single page (typically by 1 or 1.5cm).

This method provides volume to the fold without increasing the number of pages. However, I have found that depending on the thickness of the pages it can sometimes result in the pages bending in towards the centre.

Method:
How you wish to attack the sequence is up to you, but the sequence below seems to be popular with the majority of folders:

Working in batches of around 10 or 20 pages:

a) Fold each page in by 2 or 3 cm
b) Measure and Mark each folded page
c) Cut and fold each marked page according to whether you want an incut or stand out design (See below).
d) Repeat the above until the pattern is completed.

Incut or Stand Out design

By folding tabs 2,4,6 etc.. you create an **incut** design

By folding tabs 1,3,5 etc.. you create a **stand out** design

Cut and Fold - COMBI

This consists of traditionally folding the outside edge of the design and cut and folding the internal pattern. Most patterns used for the basis of a combi fold DO NOT use insets, although it is possible to do so.

Method:

Again, how you wish to attack the sequence is up to you, but the sequence below seems to be popular with the majority of folders:

1) FOLLOWING THE PATTERN - Measure and Mark every Page

Working in batches of around 10 or 20 pages:

a) Traditionally fold the 1st and last marks on the page
b) Cut and fold all other marks in between (folding tabs 1,3,5 etc..)
d) Repeat the above until the pattern is completed.

** If you decide to combi fold a pattern that was not specifically designed for it be aware that the incut and standout sections of the pattern will be reversed.

INVERTED Cut and Fold - COMBI

The process of folding a regular combi, results in the inset and outset parts of the design being reversed. In order to preserve these you can fold as what's known as an iverted combi.

The process is exactly the same as for a regular combi (see above) but in addition to folding the first and last marks, you also cut them.

Method:

Again, how you wish to attack the sequence is up to you, but the sequence below seems to be popular with the majority of folders:

1) FOLLOWING THE PATTERN - Measure and Mark every Page

Working in batches of around 10 or 20 pages:

a) Traditionally fold the 1st and last marks on the page
b) Cut and fold **ALL** marks (folding tabs 1,3,5 etc..)
d) Repeat the above until the pattern is completed.