



Book Binding Guide

What self-publishers actually pay — pricing & availability by binding type

Binding	Lay flat	Spine	Safe	KDP Distribution (deducted from royalty)	KDP Author copy (you pay + ship)	IngramSpark Distribution (deducted from royalty)	IngramSpark Author copy (you pay + ship)	Mixam 50 / 200 / 1k	Indie printer 50 / 200 / 1k	Notes
GLUED No lay-flat. Has spine. Professional appearance.										
Perfect binding EVA glue	No	Yes	Yes	~\$4.00	~\$7–10 print + ship	\$4.25 Feb 2026	~\$8–11 print + ship	~\$8 / \$5 / \$3.50	~\$12 / \$7 / \$3.50	Best default. Spine can crack with heavy use.
PUR binding Upgraded glue	No	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	~\$9 / \$6 / \$4	~\$14 / \$8 / \$4	More durable than EVA. Not available via POD.
Case binding Hardcover, glued interior	No	Yes	Yes	~\$9.00 no dust jacket	~\$12–16 print + ship	\$7.95 no jacket	~\$11–15 print + ship	~\$18 / \$12 / \$7	~\$22 / \$13 / \$7	Rigid cover, glued interior. Does not lay flat despite hardcover.
LAY-FLAT Lays flat. Has spine. Professional appearance.										
OTA / Otabind Layflat softcover	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	~\$10 / \$6.50 / \$4	~\$15 / \$9 / \$5	Best for music books. Recommended for music stands.
Smyth sewn Sewn signatures, softcover	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	~\$12 / \$8 / \$5	~\$16 / \$10 / \$5.50 offset; min qty	Durable, lays flat. Underused — ideal for music method books.
Case binding Hardcover, Smyth sewn interior	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	~\$20 / \$14 / \$8	~\$28 / \$18 / \$9 offset; higher min qty	Most prestigious and durable. Not available via POD.
MECHANICAL Lays flat. No spine. Utilitarian appearance.										
Saddle stitch Stapled; max ~64 pages	Yes	No	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A dropped 2021	N/A	~\$2 / \$1.25 / \$0.75 32pp baseline	~\$2 / \$1.25 / \$0.75 32pp baseline	Max ~64 pages — cannot use 200pp baseline. Good for pamphlets, programs, short guides only. Not durable.
Spiral / coil Plastic or wire coil	Yes	No	■	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	~\$6 / \$4 / \$2.50	~\$6 / \$4 / \$2.50	Wire hazardous for children, damages furniture. Plastic safer but feels cheap.
GBC / comb Plastic comb	Yes	No	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	~\$5 / \$3 / \$2 in-house only	Office use only. Combs break. Not for commercial publishing.

Baseline: 6×9 B&W, 200 pages, 50lb white. KDP/IS = POD, cost deducted from royalties; author copy = print cost + shipping. IS hardcover is glued interior — not lay-flat. Smyth sewn and OTA require Mixam or indie printer. IS rates Feb 2026. All bulk prices approximate. Saddle stitch priced at 32pp baseline.