Make an Embroidered Fabric Bookmark

A slim reversible bookmark with a tiny original stitched twig

A flat bookmark with a finished back

This beginner project makes a soft, reversible two-layer fabric bookmark. Instead of leaving loose embroidery threads exposed against book pages, you embroider the front before sewing it to a plain back. The two panels join around the edge and turn right side out through one small gap. The result is for dry books and ordinary page marking, not a structural tab or toy.

The calculated finished dimensions

Cut two fabric panels of 55 x 190 mm. A consistent 6 mm seam allowance around the edges produces a nominal turned outside shape about 43 mm wide and 178 mm long. Fabric bulk and pressing can change the actual finished dimension. The back panel has a 45 mm opening along one straight long side for turning; it is closed during the final edge stitch.

Embroidery goes on before final trimming

To avoid struggling to hold a narrow strip in an embroidery hoop, start the front on an oversized woven scrap of approximately 180 x 230 mm. Mark the planned 55 x 190 mm front outline on this oversized piece; locate its centre 27.5 mm from either long edge and 95 mm from either end. Mark that centre on the right side with an offcut-tested temporary dot. Centre the original twig within its 20 x 70 mm paper field on this mark, comfortably inside the future seam line; embroider only the twig. Do not transfer the paper field boundary. Cut out the narrow front after stitching. A separate backing panel is cut directly from the template.

Materials and realistic limitations

Use a stable, smooth, non-shedding cotton or linen-cotton with compatible care instructions, a little matching floss, sewing thread, a hand needle or sewing machine, clips, fabric scissors, optional hoop, ruler and removable marking pen. No buttons, magnets, beads, bulky tassels or metal decorations belong against delicate pages. This publisher has not physically tested the sleeve, dye transfer, thickness, laundering or bookmark retention.

If the twig disappears into a seam

Mark a wider central safety area next time before embroidery. Never cut through the stitched decoration to rescue a misaligned panel; the safest repair may be to restart on a new scrap.

Measure and plan

Understand what to transfer

PATTERN 1 prints two exact 55 x 190 mm panel outlines, both with dotted 6 mm stitch lines; the back panel marks a 45 mm opening midway along its left long edge. PATTERN 2 supplies the original twig inside a 20 x 70 mm placement field and a brief stitch key. The four 50 mm scale bars are drawn OUTSIDE the panels and transfer field. Before cutting, physically check both bar length and a full 190 mm cut edge with a ruler. Transfer the motif and cut outlines only where instructed.

Keep the decoration away from the seams

The stitch line lies 6 mm inside each raw edge. Keep all raised embroidery within a central zone, at least 9 mm clear of the final seam line and away from the 45 mm turning opening on the backing panel. A thin stem and two small leaves work better inside a closed book than French knots or thick padded satin stitches.

Why the 45 mm side opening matters

The side opening is part of the long seam, not a split at the corner. A 45 mm gap leaves room to turn the slim shape without forcing the corners. Mark where to stop and resume stitching, secure the two gap ends and never sew across the gap before turning. After turning, a fine edge stitch closes it; press the seam allowances into line first.

How to avoid frayed or sharp corners

The right-sides-together method hides four raw edges. When trimming excess fabric at corner points, keep a small safe margin outside the seam and avoid cutting the actual stitch. Use a blunt turning tool, not sharp scissors or a needle point, to ease the corners into shape.

Try the paper size against your book

Print at Actual Size / 100% and physically verify every 50 mm bar. The finished nominal width of 43 mm is intentionally narrow; a very small pocket book or special edition may need a shorter bookmark. Do not force thick stitched decoration between fragile pages or use a wet or dye-transferring bookmark.

Publisher evidence boundary

The design, measurements and prose are original digital instruction. No fabric was embroidered or stitched, no ruler applied to real output and no book abrasion, bleeding or wash test was performed by the publisher. Choose suitable textiles and verify their behaviour for yourself.

If the gap will not close neatly

Align the two folded 6 mm allowances with the seam on either side. Press with suitable fabric precautions and close with small stitches. Do not try to flatten an uneven edge by dragging or stretching it.

Rights and evidence

The little twig, two full-size rectangle templates, measurements, records and written instructions were authored for Steadleaf Press. No commercial motif or photograph was copied. Finished size, ease, page suitability and wash performance are calculated or advisory, not physically verified.

Step-by-step / 1 to 7

1. Review the book and materials

Choose a clean, dry book that can accept a flat 43 x 178 mm nominal bookmark. Collect cloth, floss, sewing thread, ruler, needle, scissors and a suitable fabric marker. Keep needles away from children and pets.

2. Print and inspect both sheets

Print PATTERN 1 and PATTERN 2 at 100%/Actual Size; disable Fit and Shrink. Check all four 50 mm ruler bars and independently measure a full 190 mm panel edge. The scale bars are outside the cut outlines. Do not cut fabric from a mis-scaled printout.

3. Plan a comfortable front scrap

Use an oversized front fabric piece approximately 180 x 230 mm so the little motif can sit in a hoop. Mark the intended 55 x 190 mm cut rectangle in line with the grain. Locate its centre by ruler at 27.5 mm from either long cut edge and 95 mm from each short end; transfer a tiny removable centre dot to the RIGHT side before tracing embroidery. Keep the centre clear of seam guides.

4. Trace only the small twig

Align the centre of the 20 x 70 mm field on PATTERN 2 with the temporary centre dot on the right side of the oversized front cloth. Copy only the little twig with a marker already checked on an offcut, and check its position BEFORE stitching or cutting. Do not transfer field borders, captions or seam lines.

5. Stitch the twig before cutting

Hoop the oversized fabric if needed. Work the stem with small backstitches of about 2–4 mm and the two leaf outlines with similarly modest stitches. Secure each thread tail discreetly on the back. Do not fill the leaves with bulky knots, buttons or metal accents.

6. Protect the embroidery and mark

Remove the hoop and inspect for loose thread tails. Remove temporary marks only as the product specifies, then dry the fabric fully. Use a fabric-safe pressing method and keep heat away from any remaining heat-sensitive markings.

7. Cut the two exact rectangles

Cut the completed front to 55 x 190 mm using the printed outline or a ruler. From compatible cloth, cut one plain 55 x 190 mm backing. Check that the motif is centred inside the future 43 mm finished flat width.

Step-by-step / 8 to 14

8. Face and align the panels

Place the embroidered front and plain backing RIGHT SIDES TOGETHER, keeping the motif facing inward. Align all four raw corners and clip around the edges. On the backing side, mark a 45 mm turning gap midway along one long edge.

9. Stitch the first part of the perimeter

The centred 45 mm gap leaves 72.5 mm of RAW long edge on each side. Begin at one gap end, 6 mm in from the raw edge; backstitch to secure. Sew the first long-edge section toward the nearest corner, pivot 6 mm before the raw corner, and sew the entire adjoining short edge and the full opposite long edge, pivoting 6 mm before each corner.

10. Return along the final gap-side section

From the opposite long edge, pivot around the remaining short end and stitch the OTHER long-edge section back to the second gap mark at the same 6 mm seam allowance. Secure at this mark. Both 72.5 mm raw-edge flanks are now seamed, while the centred 45 mm TURNING GAP remains open. Do not stitch across the gap before turning.

11. Reduce bulk without cutting seams

Trim small triangular excess from each outer corner while leaving a few millimetres beyond the stitching. Do not nick the sewn line. If woven cloth frays readily, protect the seam allowance appropriately without creating a thick edge.

12. Turn through the side gap

Gently draw the fabric through the 45 mm opening so right sides face outward. Ease corners with a blunt tool and smooth the long edges. If the opening is too tight, stop rather than ripping the embroidery or the seam.

13. Press and close the gap

Fold the unsewn allowance of each gap edge inward by 6 mm so it continues the adjacent seam. Press carefully if the textile and marker instructions permit. Stitch near the entire perimeter to close the opening and flatten the outline; keep the edge stitch consistent and avoid catching the twig.

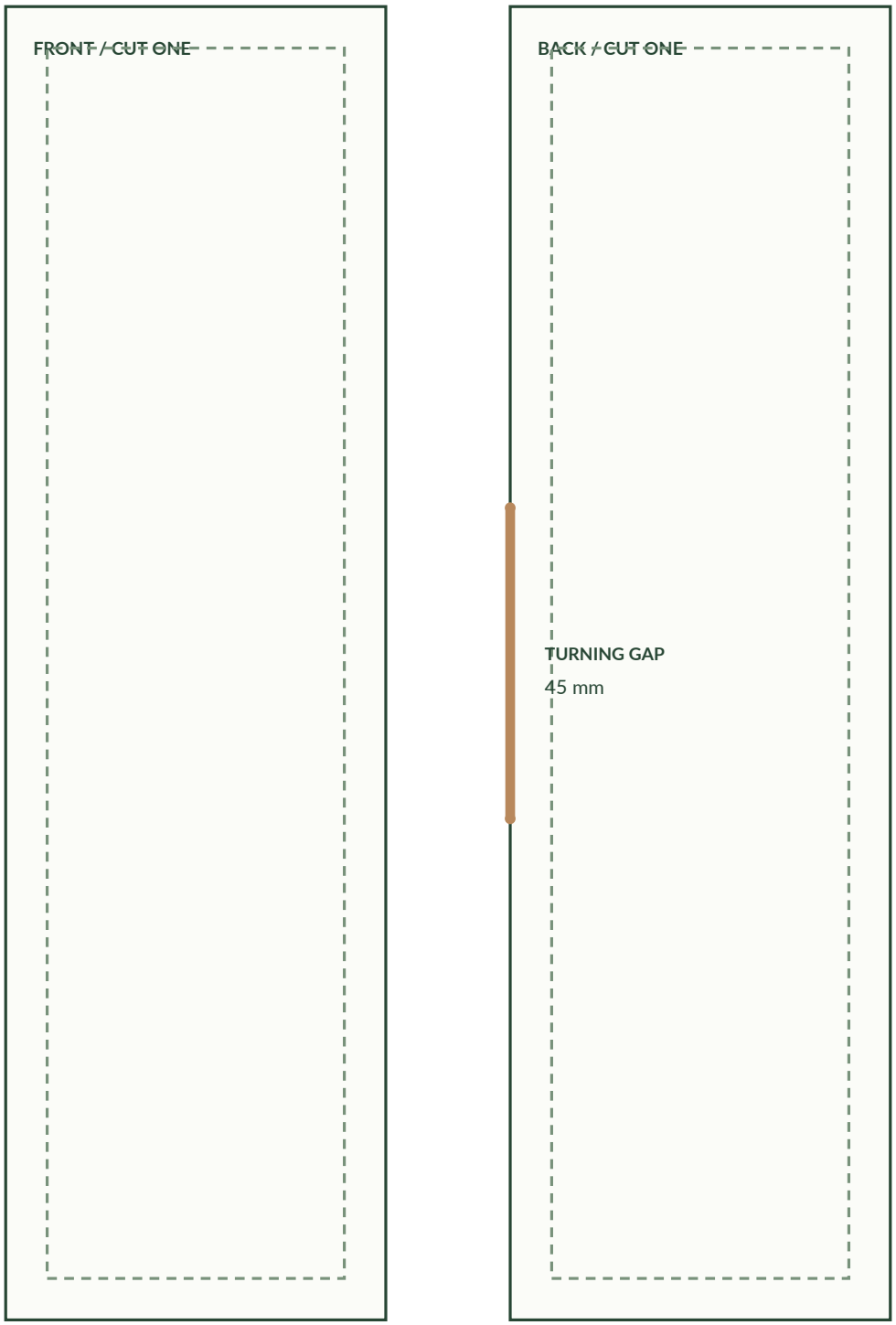
14. Inspect and use with care

Look for stray needles, sharp trim, loose embroidery, frayed areas and dye transfer. Slip the dry, flat bookmark between ordinary pages without pushing it into the spine. Use RECORD 1 for size and stitching notes and RECORD 2 for repairs and textile care.

STP-MAKE-F062 PATTERN 1 OF 2

Original 55 x 190 mm two-panel bookmark; 6 mm seam all around.

REFERENCE: check all 50 mm bars with a physical ruler before tracing or cutting.



Nominal finished width 55-12 = 43 mm; length 190-12 = 178 mm.

50 mm scale check (measure after printing)

50 mm scale check (measure after printing)

Actual Size (100%). No Fit to Page. Paper-only labels are not embroidery marks.

STP-MAKE-F062 PATTERN 2 OF 2

Original 55 x 190 mm two-panel bookmark; 6 mm seam all around.

REFERENCE: check all 50 mm bars with a physical ruler before tracing or cutting.

Original twig within a 20 x 70 mm placement field - TRACE twig only.



On oversized working cloth: embroider FIRST, cut the 55 x 190 mm front SECOND.

Leave at least 9 mm between raised stitches and the future 6 mm seam line.

For the final assembly, keep both stitched and lining pieces right sides together.

50 mm scale check (measure after printing)

50 mm scale check (measure after printing)

Actual Size (100%). No Fit to Page. Paper-only labels are not embroidery marks.

MAKE / MEASURE / ADJUST

Pattern and size

Two cut panels 55 x 190 mm; allowances 6 mm per edge; nominal finished 43 x 178 mm.

Pattern scale

Pattern 1 bar A ____ / B ____; Pattern 2 bar A ____ / B ____ (expected: 50 mm each).

Oversized front

Front embroidered BEFORE cutting to 55 x 190? Yes / No. Motif 20 x 70 mm nominal.

Turning opening

45 mm gap marked on long back-panel seam; left open until turning? Yes / No.

Fabric choice

Fibre/care label _____. Floss strand count _____. Thread ends secured _____.

MAKE / MEASURE / ADJUST

Seams and turning

All perimeter seams 6 mm? _____. Corners turned with blunt tool? _____.

Opening finish

Two 6 mm folds aligned at gap; edge-stitch encloses opening _____.

Page contact

Embroidery flat? No sharp beads or loose tails? _____. Fabric dry and colourfast to your satisfaction? _____.

Repair notes

Where would you trim, secure or re-stitch? _____.

Evidence boundary

No physical bookmark fit, laundering, abrasion, page protection or dye-transfer trial was performed.