

Iona is located off the west coast of Scotland. The island is part of the Inner Hebrides and has fewer than 200 inhabitants.



Paper Love in Scotland

A BOOK IS MUCH MORE THAN ITS CONTENTS, AS RACHEL HAZELL DISCOVERED.

IT TOOK ONLY ONE BOOKBINDING WORKSHOP FOR HER TO REALIZE IT WAS WHAT

SHE WANTED TO DO. SHE BECAME A BOOKBINDER AND NOW PASSES THESE

SKILLS ON TO OTHERS, GIVING COURSES ON THE SCOTTISH ISLAND OF IONA.



Tutorial from Rachel's book



1. Fold a sheet of A4 paper in half across its width. Match the edges of the paper as precisely as possible. Fold open and smooth out.
2. Now fold the sheet in half lengthways and unfold again.
3. Now fold both short ends toward the center fold, and unfold again. You have now divided the sheet of paper into eight areas.

4. Fold the sheet in half again widthwise and cut the paper from the center of this fold to where the four fold lines meet.
5. Open the sheet of paper and fold it in half lengthways again.
6. Hold the paper firmly at both ends, with your fingers close to the vertical fold lines—make sure the fold and notch are at the top.
7. Slowly bring your hands together: the

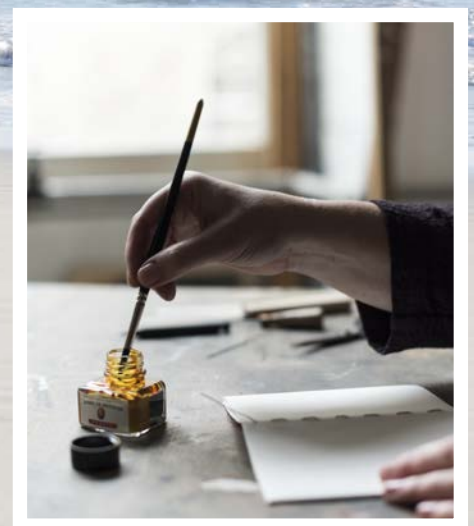
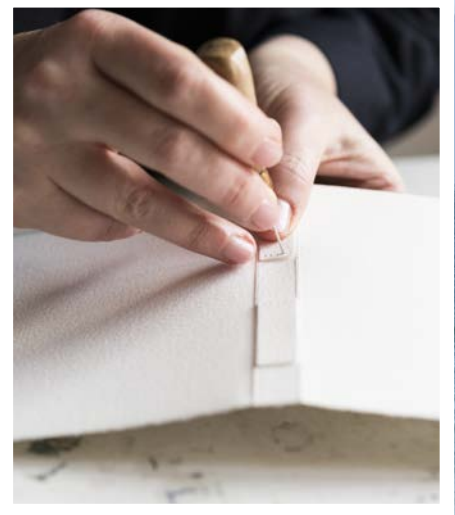
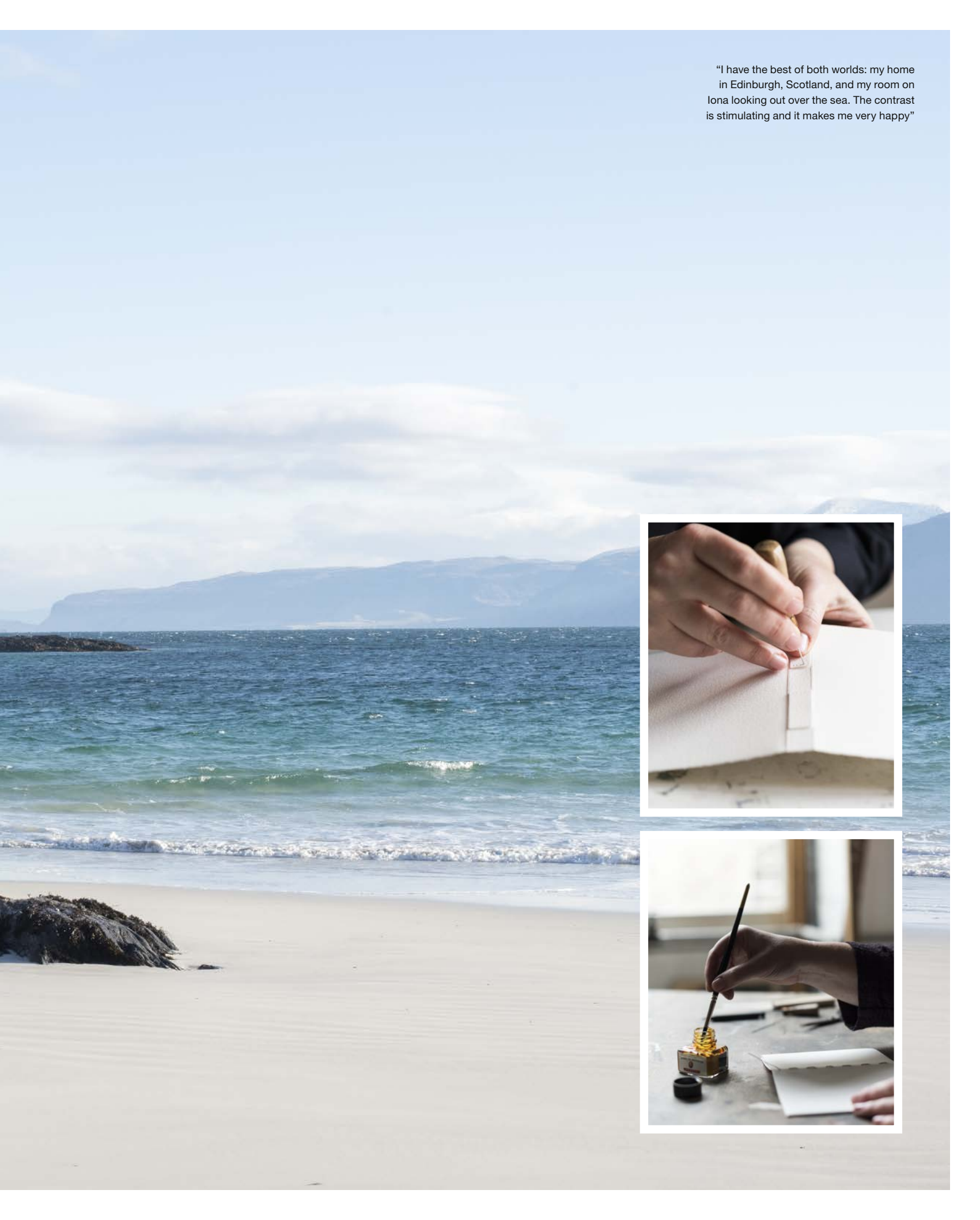
notch now becomes an opening in the paper. Keep going until you see an X shape.

8. Now carefully fold the pages into a booklet. With a bone folder, you can press into the folds to make them even sharper.
9. Decorate your cover with, for example, a brush and ink or watercolor.
10. And that's how to make a booklet from just one sheet of paper!





"I have the best of both worlds: my home in Edinburgh, Scotland, and my room on Iona looking out over the sea. The contrast is stimulating and it makes me very happy"





'The repetition and regular rhythm of the bookbinding process make it incredibly meditative and relaxing'

"As a child, I spent my pocket money on stickers and writing materials and I made little booklets that I fastened with split pens," says Scottish teacher, author and book artist Rachel Hazell. "Later, when I was studying literature, I became just as interested in what was *in* the books. When I did a bookbinding workshop, I knew I wanted to be a bookbinder. The repetitive actions involved in bookbinding—folding, cutting, gluing, folding, cutting, gluing—brought order to the chaos in my head. The repetition and regular rhythm of the process make it incredibly meditative and relaxing.

"I wanted to get to know all the old techniques of the profession, and to work with materials such as gold leaf, linen, leather and special types of paper. When I had mastered the art of bookbinding, I wanted to pass it on to others. So I started giving classes in 1998, at my home in Edinburgh, Scotland. I am convinced that everyone has a book in them, in one form or another. It is my mission to get those books out. Whether it is a book that you've written or that you're producing. The great thing is that you get results very quickly at a bookbinding course."

A UNIQUE SOUVENIR

"My home is in Edinburgh, but I spend a lot of time away from the hustle and bustle of city life on the Scottish island of Iona, where my boyfriend runs an eco-hostel. I feel very fortunate, as I

have a room for myself in the city as well as a room looking out over the sea. I'm self-employed, and that makes it perfectly possible to do my work from the island three months a year. There, with seals and sheep at close range, I also organize courses where we make books with covers made out of driftwood. I not only give workshops in Edinburgh and on Iona, but also in Amsterdam, Paris and Venice. We browse for our materials on beaches, at flea markets and in second-hand bookstores and paper stores. If you can immerse yourself in creating something, you can escape your daily life—even if only for a moment.

"Exploring the landscape is an important part of the workshop. By describing and documenting the landscape you're in, you go home with a unique souvenir. I myself once had the good fortune to be able to stay in Antarctica as an artist in residence—a very remote place full of inspiration. When I came home, I immediately started trying to figure out how to emulate ice shapes in paper. I think Iona is a similar source of inspiration. Even just the journey there—which requires two trains, two ferries and a bus—brings you into a completely different state of mind. To then be surrounded by water, the magnificent skies and expansive horizon, is a really perfect way to let your creativity naturally unfurl. You can just sit back and enjoy the process."

CREATIVE FAUCET

"The pleasure you get from making a book really does something to you. I have seen people change from feeling nervous and tentative to becoming totally consumed by their creative process. It's very special. In the twenty years that I've been doing this, I've learned a lot about what holds people back, and my aim is to encourage every student in such a way that what is inside that person comes out. Someone recently said, 'You have reopened my creative faucet'. That is the nicest compliment I can get. It's so important to have uninterrupted time to play. It's priceless and I'm so happy that I can give people the space they need for that." ●

thetravellingbookbinder.com

BOOK FOR BOOKMAKERS

Is it too much to travel by plane, train, ferry and bus to Iona to join Rachel on the island in a pair of rubber boots? You can also start bookbinding with her new book, 'Bound: 15 Beautiful Bookbinding Projects'.



