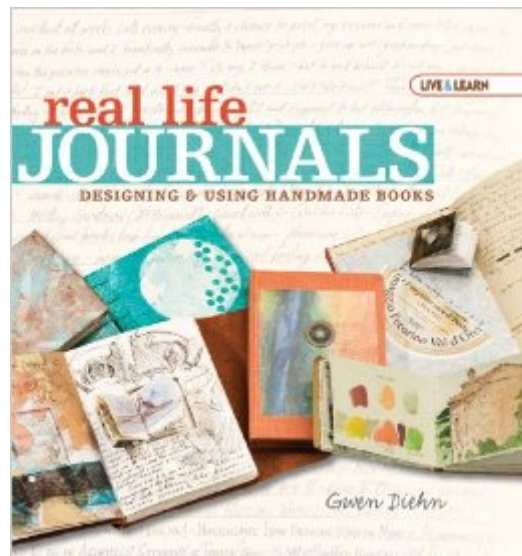


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# Live & Learn: Real Life Journals: Designing & Using Handmade Books (AARPA®)



## Synopsis

The second in AARP's Live & Learn series celebrates making and keeping journals. A custom-made journal can enrich a person's life, and this new entry in the Live & Learn series helps readers design journals that enhance the experiences they're chronicling. The unique format features an envelope attached to the inside front cover that contains a small book called Choose Your Own Bookbinding Adventure so readers can select the perfect journal for their purpose. Imagine a reader wants a travel journal that is portable and has both lined pages and blank ones to paint on. The booklet directs him or her to the instructions in the main book that explain how to make that specific design. There are instructions and beautiful illustrations for 16 kinds of books and 10 cover styles. A removable foldout found on the inside back cover explains essential bookmaking basics. People who had personalized journals made for them by the author share their process and their pages, and beautiful photos and profiles of journal keepers inspire readers to make their own and start writing and drawing.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars See all reviews (21 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

If you haven't yet made the leap into making your own books and journals to write, sketch or doodle in then this book will serve as an invaluable guide to getting started. There is so much information packed into this latest book by Gwen Diehn that no matter what your experience level with journaling or book making you're sure to find something to inspire you. This is not just a how to make a journal book. Using the central premise of designing your book from the inside out the author guides the

reader through a series of questions about what the intended use of the book is going to be before it's created. Questions such as what size book, will you use paints, pens or pencils on the pages, do you want it to lay flat, have removable or replaceable pages and others are used to help guide the reader through what Gwen calls the "design inventory". This inventory is then translated into an appropriate book design for the binding and cover using the "choose your own bookbinding adventure booklet" found in a pocket on the inside front cover of the book. Once that decision is made you'll turn to chapter 4 of the book where you'll find illustrated directions on a variety of book binding styles such as pamphlets, spiral, piano hinge, longstitch, concertina, coptic and others. Chapter 5 of the book covers a range of book cover instructions such as flexible, hardcover, glued in cover, laced in covers and others. For those not familiar with the basic tools and skills needed for book binding the pull out bookbinding essentials foldout that comes in an envelope in the back cover of the book will be a handy tool to keep on their work table.

If you're a journal-keeper--and especially if you're artistically inclined--you'll want to take a look at Gwen Diehn's latest book, *Real Life Journals: Designing & Using Handmade Books*. A unique marriage of the art of handcrafted books and the art of journaling, *Real Life Journals* offers a step-by-step program that will give you what Diehn calls a "design inventory" for the journal you want. It will help you decide what kind of journal fits your style, create a design and choose the materials for your book, and craft the journal. To illustrate the process, Diehn invited nine people to choose the kind of journal they wanted and work with her design inventory. Using their responses, she created a journal for each of them (one was a father-daughter pair, another a grandmother wanting to journal for her family). She documented all nine journals--and the journaling experience each embraced, each one different and each unique to the journal-keeper's intentions and dreams. You'll be inspired by these experiences to make your own inventory, design your own book, and begin your own journal. Throughout, *Real Life Journals* is richly illustrated, with careful descriptions of each part of the process, from bookbinding techniques, materials, and tools, to ideas for creating covers. I'm no bookmaker, but reading the instructions and studying the illustrations, I'm confident that I could attempt even the more complicated of the bindery processes Diehn describes. The text and illustrations are supplemented by a mini-book tucked inside the front cover that helps you "choose your own bookbinding adventure" and a foldout chart illustrating binding essentials inside the back cover.

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