



## INTRODUCTION TO LETTERPRESS PRINTING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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[Welcome](#) • [Executive Summary](#) • [Letterpress Printing and Printers](#) • [Internet Mailing Lists](#) • [National and Local Printing Groups](#) • [Online Resources](#) • [Print Resources](#) • [Classes and Academic Programs](#) • [Printing Museums](#) • [Letterpress Printing Manuals](#) • [Design and Book Arts Manuals](#) • [Acquiring Books and Manuals](#) • [Letterpress Equipment](#) • [Choosing a Press](#) • [Letterpress Dealers](#) • [Accessories and Supplies](#) • [Letterpress Printing Suppliers](#) • [Paper and Papermaking](#) • [Bookbinding](#) • [Printing Type](#) • [Type Casting](#) • [Links](#) • [Copyright and Permissions](#)



Letterpress printing was featured earlier this year on ABC-TV's hit show [Extreme Makeover: Home Edition](#). As part of the complete construction of a new home for a deserving family in only seven days, letterpress printers from across the country donated a complete letterpress studio to 12-year old Ariel Dore, and you can see clips from the show and [read the whole story](#) behind the show right here!.

### Welcome

...to the wonderful world of letterpress printing! To start you on your way in this exciting, challenging, rewarding and anachronistic avocation, what follows is an introduction, freshly prepared for the start of the new millennium and updated to 2005, to the people, places, and online resources that will save you a great deal of time as you embark upon your letterpress activities. At the end of the document are [links](#) to dozens of other sites, many of which themselves contain links to hundreds of additional sites related to letterpress printing.

### Executive Summary (for those who don't want to have to read this whole page)

Read Crane's quick [overview of letterpress printing](#). Join the [Letpress mailing list](#) and read the [Briar Press website](#) from top to bottom. Get a good [instruction book](#) and/or take a class at a [book arts program](#). Decide [what kind of press](#) to buy, purchase it from a [reputable dealer](#), and order your supplies from [NA Graphics](#). After you've developed some experience, apply to the [APA](#), check out some [printing museums](#) and be sure to go back and contribute to [Letpress](#). Online [links](#) for these are at the end of the Intro. As Hillel once said, "...all the rest is [commentary](#)". Now, if you still have some time left, you might want to check out the more detailed information below. Enjoy!

### Letterpress Printing and Printers

Letterpress printing from raised metal type was the primary means of mass communication for over 500 years. While no longer an economically significant segment of the printing market, letterpress continues to live on for specialized commercial applications and, perhaps more importantly, as the heart and soul of a wonderful avocational world known as the [private press movement](#). Crane, the luxury paper company, has prepared a lovely [brochure explaining letterpress](#) so that you can be an informed customer for high-quality letterpress work. If you are not interested in printing yourself, but simply want the unique look and feel that results from this classic process, many of the thousands of letterpress printers in the world would be pleased to undertake a commission for you, whether for a wedding invitation or an entire book. Links and contact information for letterpress printers are available in a [state by state directory](#) from Crane, a [nice list](#) put together by HOW magazine, and in the (comprehensive but out of date) [International Directory of Private Presses](#). If, however, you have decided to take the plunge and try your own hand at this most wonderful of artistic crafts, take heart from words of [J. Ben Lieberman](#), the father of the American Chappel movement in the late twentieth century:

**"YOU can print! You can do real printing, even if now you can't tighten a nut, can't boil water, can't tell type from tape, live in one room with three other people, and have to hoard your money... It's simple, it's fun, it's useful, and you'll have something to show!"**

Printing as a hobby (which, by the way, happens to be the name of [Lieberman's book](#)) knows no boundaries of age, language or gender. Mike O'Connor founded the Amalgamated Printers' Association when he was [only fifteen](#), and Rebecca Davidson has curated a wonderful [exhibition honoring women printers](#) through the years. So now, if you're ready to start, let's jump right in!

### Internet Mailing Lists

The very first thing to do is to [sign up for the Letpress mailing list](#), the Internet e-mail list of some 800+ helpful letterpress printers. You can also search the [archives of past Letpress messages](#) (one of the really great letterpress resources). A [detailed introduction to Letpress](#) (including an extensive section on mailing list "netiquette" that will apply to [any](#) list you might join) is posted monthly to the list and available online as well. The [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) page](#) for the list is maintained by volunteer David Macfarlane, and includes both basic information about the mailing list as well as answers to typical questions. Another good online group, remarkably comprehensive although not quite as specifically letterpress-oriented, is [Book Arts-L](#), "The Listserv for All the Book Arts". Its continually enhanced home page, the Book Arts Web at [Philobiblon](#), includes a veritable cornucopia of other related resources as well as a comprehensive list of links to other [book arts mailing lists](#).

### National and Local Printing Groups

There are a number of national associations of letterpress printers in the United States, chief among which is the [Amalgamated Printers' Association](#), organized in 1958 as a hobby printers' group so that members could improve their skills, expand their knowledge, and exchange samples of their letterpress work. Today, the APA consists of both professional and amateur letterpress printers who contribute letterpress examples to a monthly mailing which goes to all members. APA also maintains a

high-quality, private forum and e-mail list, and holds a renowned annual [Wayzgoose](#) (a three-day, traditional printers' picnic, with an auction, swap meet and banquet), in a different city each year. Membership in APA is limited to 150 printers at any given time and the group usually has a waiting list of applicants, but if you're really serious about printing, this is the heart of avocational letterpress printing in the US. For UK letterpress printers, the venerable [British Printing Society](#), founded in 1944, offers membership to all who are interested in printing, and includes those who print for pleasure or profit, typographers, teachers, clubs and private publishers. The BPS produces several interesting publications for sale, as well as a monthly magazine. Overseas members are welcome. In Canada, the [Canadian Bookbinders and Book Artists Guild](#) (CBBAG: pronounced "cabbage") was founded in 1983 by a group of professionals and amateurs from all branches of the book arts: bookbinders, calligraphers, paper makers, letterpress printers, paper marblers, and book artists, as well as archivists and conservators. Membership, currently about 500, is open to all those around the world who share their interests. CBBAG maintains a very useful web site that includes an [extensive array of printing links](#).

Depending on where you live, there may be a Chappel, Guild, printing club or other such organization near you, and these are excellent places to find fellow letterpress printers, both beginners and experts. [Boston Book Arts](#), for example, was established in 1999 by book artists who wanted to share ideas about their work and exchange information about the art of the book. A good list of these groups is maintained by the [American Amateur Press Association](#), where you will also find a wide range of letterpress links to museums, type-founders and other letterpress subjects. The AAPA is one of a number of associations of printers, small press publishers and writers who, like the APA, regularly exchange publications. Other similar groups are the [National Amateur Press Association](#) and the [United Amateur Press Association of America](#). An up-to-date [list of associations and local groups](#) can be found in the Briar Press Resource Guide, another is at the [Gothika site of the Phoenix APA](#), and the British Printing Society has an online directory of their [local chapters](#) in the UK.

Once you get bitten by the letterpress bug, you may well find yourself hungry to learn about the history of this Black Art. In the US, the [American Printing History Association](#), founded in 1974, encourages the study of printing history and its related arts and skills. It issues a regular newsletter and twice a year publishes *Printing History*, a scholarly journal which contains articles reflecting the broad range of printing history, as well as reviews and other features. It also holds an annual scholarly conference in a different city around the country. In the UK, the [Printing Historical Society](#) is a non-profit organization that fosters interest in the history of printing and encourages both the study and the preservation of printing machinery, records, and equipment of historical value. For people on both sides of the Atlantic, the [Fine Press Book Association](#) is an organization formed by individuals interested in the art of fine printing to promote printing skills and the appreciation of beautiful books. It has over 700 members, publishes a journal and organizes events for members and non-members.

### Online Resources

One of the very first stops on your letterpress journey should definitely be the [Briar Press](#) web site which is a gold mine of information and has a wonderful, illustrated [Online Museum of Letterpress](#), as well as a very active [Classified Section](#) and the definitive, up-to-date [Letterpress Directory](#), with listings of over 500 invaluable sources for active letterpress printers. In recent years, the Briar Press site (which is extremely well designed and regularly maintained) has become a critical online center for letterpress aficionados. In a somewhat more specialized vein, Gerald Lange, author of the [definitive book](#) on letterpress printing from photopolymer plates, is the moderator of the Yahoo Special Interest Group [PPLetterpress](#). This is a clearinghouse and forum for discussing studio letterpress, the photopolymer plate process, and other investigative printing and typographic techniques, and in addition to an active mailing list it includes many files and links on the subject. Another Yahoo group is [SFLetterpress](#), which covers topics related to letterpress printing on the West Coast of the United States, in an effort to keep the art and craft of letterpress printing alive and well in the San Francisco Bay Area and the West Coast through networking among local printers. Still another Yahoo group of interest is [Friends of Dard Hunter](#), an international organization whose interests center around handmade paper and related arts and crafts. For those fine printers working (or wanting to work) on classic handpresses, the acknowledged world expert on the subject, Richard-Gabriel Rummonds, maintains a beautiful and comprehensive site called [Handpress](#) which is continually updated as an accompaniment to his [definitive book](#) on hand printing. A large list of web sites [specifically pertaining to letterpress](#) is maintained by Peter Verheyen, keeper of the [Book\\_Arts-L](#) list, at the Philobiblon site which also has extensive coverage of the other Book Arts. For letterpress printers in the British Isles, David Bolton from the Alembic Press has developed a wonderful website with links to virtually the entire UK letterpress scene, called [Letterpress Alive in U.K!](#), and moving from the broad and deep to the unique and specialized, a neat resource for historically-minded Macintosh users is Michael Babcock's unique online [iCal of printer's dates](#). If you are a more visually inclined printer, you might enjoy seeing some old vocational training and educational films on typesetting and printing, which are now in the public domain. Chris Roque has graciously collected several of them from the net and is willing to send a [CD of printing-related films](#) on request. Down Under, Bill Elligett maintains [Letterpress Printing in the 1960's](#), a wonderful compilation of information from his apprenticeship days that includes a beautiful gallery of pictures and information on letterpress equipment that is changed monthly. Finally, to assist you in getting started with your press, a number of helpful people have posted personal web pages about the hobby of letterpress printing, with some very useful ones being [Bill Ricker's](#) and [Matthew McClintock's](#).

### Print Resources

If you like reading about current letterpress news in hard copy, you should definitely subscribe to the occasionally-monthly newspaper [The Printer](#), which reprints a lot of information from the Letpress list and has ads from a wide variety of letterpress vendors. (Michael and Sally Phillips Publishers, [theprinter4918@hotmail.com](mailto:theprinter4918@hotmail.com) 337 Wilson Street, Findlay, OH 45840-5931, (419) 422-4958, fax (419) 423-9222, \$25 a year; for UK subscription details, e-mail [Alembic Press](#).) For printers in the United Kingdom, the British Printing Society publishes a lovely monthly magazine entitled [Small Printer](#) (BM/ISPA, London, WC1N 3XX). In addition, Page Two, Inc. maintains a lengthy online list of other [book-arts related periodicals](#), and itself publishes the quarterly [Book Arts Classified](#), with listings for a variety of equipment, services and products related to printing and binding. Speed Gray, a respected printer and press restorer, typesets and letterpress prints the nifty [Letterpress Green Sheet](#) each month, with letterpress classifieds, resources and columns. It is distributed free to members of the APA, AAPA and NAPA, but non-members can obtain free copies as well by sending as many stamped, self-addressed, #10 envelopes as you would like issues to: Speed Gray, The Gray Quill Press, PO Box 671, Ada, MI 49301-0671. There was until recently a wonderful technical publication called [Type & Press](#) aimed at the letterpress printer, which is unfortunately no longer published since the editor passed away. However, many great [articles from past issues](#), including ones with detailed information on various presses and letterpress printing tips, can be found at the APA's useful site, and are mandatory reading for avocational letterpress printers. Over the past century there have been many wonderful periodicals produced about printing and the book arts, with some of them being stunning examples of multi-hundred-page, hardbound, letterpress printing in their own right. While the [Dolphin](#),

[Fleuron](#), [Colophon](#), [Fine Print](#) and others are long out of print, you can often find copies (or entire runs) of them online or at some of the [book dealers](#) who specialize in printing and the book arts. They may also be able to provide you with the still-in-print [Matrix](#), a legendary [annual journal](#) for printers and bibliophiles, which costs over \$200 per issue if you can get it at publication, and several times that once each one goes out of print. In the case of [Fine Print](#), a definitive [cumulative index](#) has just been published, and is an excellent reference source for material from this late, beloved publication.

## Classes and Academic Programs

There are a number of colleges and universities that offer facilities, classes—and even graduate degrees—in letterpress-related subjects. Among them are the [University of Alabama](#) where letterpress is taught in a graduate school book arts environment, with an extensive shop used by many students. Their focus is on letterpress printing, bookbinding, and the history of the book, with some hand papermaking added to the mix. More information is available from [Steve Miller](#). Other graduate programs include the [State University of New York at Purchase](#), about which more information is available from [Leonard Seastone](#); Chicago's [Columbia College for Book & Paper Arts](#) (CCBPA also offers shorter, non-degree, evening classes as well); and the Book Arts/Printmaking MFA program at Philadelphia's [University of the Arts](#), about which more information is available from [Katie Harper](#). For those not quite up to a full-time degree program, check out regional [book instruction centers](#) such as the seminal [Center for Book Arts](#) in New York, the stunning and comprehensive [Minnesota Center for Book Arts](#) (MCBA) or the more recently formed [San Francisco Center for the Book](#), [Los Angeles Book Arts Center](#), the [Book Arts League](#) in Boulder, Colorado, or the [Cincinnati Book Arts Society](#). In the UK, David and Claire Bolton of the [Alembic Press](#) offer periodic classes and workshops in letterpress printing and binding, and the [London College of Printing](#) teaches letterpress as part of the degree courses in typography and book arts. If you would like to experience Italy while learning about truly classic printing, the [Scuola Internazionale di Grafica](#) in Venice has several programs in printing and the book arts. For those with a particularly bibliographic interest in the subject, the [Rare Book School](#) at the University of Virginia offers a selection of five-day, non-credit courses on topics concerning rare books, manuscripts, the history of books and printing, taught by some of the most renowned scholars in the field, and book artists and papermakers should consider the annual (for over 20 years) [Paper & Book Intensive](#), a working week-long sabbatical for practitioners and serious students in the book arts, papermaking, and conservation. There are several places around the world offering classes in book binding, and a good list of [international study opportunities in binding](#) is maintained by [J Hewit & Sons](#) binding supply firm. Finally, for those truly dedicated letterpress aficionados who want to learn how to cast their own type, there are [two special seminars](#) described below that are given by experts on the subject.

## Printing Museums

If you are traveling, you should know that there are dozens of wonderful museums around the world specializing in printing history and technology, ranging from the extensive [Gutenberg Museum](#) in the Ur-printer's hometown of Mainz, Germany; through the time-warp experience of Antwerp's [Plantin Moretus](#) (a massive, stunning printing works in continuous use for 400 years, before it was turned over, completely intact, into a museum); to the [Mississippi Agricultural & Forestry Museum](#) in Jackson, with its working, hands-on presses and type-casters. The three largest printing museums in the US are the [Museum of Printing](#) outside of Boston, the [Museum of Printing History](#) in Houston and the [International Printing Museum](#) near Los Angeles. The Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC has a wonderful collection of [printing and graphic arts--related artifacts](#) held by the National Museum of American History, but unfortunately as of the beginning of 2004 very little of it remains on display. For learning about wood type, nothing beats the [Hamilton Wood Type and Printing Museum](#) in Wisconsin, housed in the original Hamilton type factory, and when it comes to paper, the Robert C. Williams [American Museum of Papermaking](#) in Atlanta is an internationally renowned resource on the history of paper and paper technology (in addition to more than 2,000 books, the Museum features a remarkable collection of over 10,000 watermarks, papers, tools, machines, and manuscripts.) If you are seeking online inspiration for a letterpress project, check out [An American Time Capsule: Three Centures of Broad-sides and Other Printed Ephemera](#) from the Library of Congress. A [comprehensive list of printing museums](#) is maintained by the [Association Lettres et Images](#) in Geneva, which also has a great deal of other information related to printing in Europe. An [excellent museum list](#) maintained by Dave Tribby is hosted by the AAPA, and a [far-ranging museum list](#) by Frank Granger is hosted by Virginia Tech. Still another has been compiled by [PageTwo](#).

## Letterpress Printing Manuals

Whether you are learning on your own, with a mentor or in a class, probably the most important thing you can do to further your letterpress education is to get yourself a solid instruction manual on basic letterpress printing. There are many, many books that will teach you everything you'll need to know. While very few of them are currently in print, many are widely available from used book dealers. The author of this Introduction happens to collect them as a hobby, and has several thousand which he enjoys, although many folks would consider this a rather weird form of bedtime reading. Your preferred choices (click on the title to find a new or used copy to purchase) are:

**[General Printing](#)** by **Glen U. Cleeton and Charles W. Pitkin**.: [Bloomington, Ill: McKnight & McKnight Publishing Company, 1941-1963, 195pp.] Probably the best all-around introductory book for traditional letterpress printing, this manual is profusely illustrated with detailed and useful photographs. It is the one most recommended on the Letpress list, and several members personally knew the authors. As compared to some of the other books listed below, this one is aimed at a college-level reader. Copies of the book are usually available in both paperback and hardcover from online dealers and antiquarian book sources, but recently there has been a bit of a run from people who have apparently read this page (!), so it may take a bit of patience and weekly checking. (You could also throw yourself on the mercy of the nice folks on the Letpress mailing list and beg for someone to part with one of their extra copies...but the efficacy of this generally depends on how un-pushy you are and how sincere your interest in letterpress seems to be.)

**[The Practice of Printing](#)** by **Ralph W. Polk** (in later editions, together with Edwin W. Polk) [Peoria, Illinois: The Manual Arts Press, 1937-1945; later editions Charles A. Bennett & Co., 1952-1964, 300+ pp]. The most ubiquitous letterpress printing manual of the twentieth century. This is the standard, in print for over 40 years, from which many current letterpress printers

first learned in school print shop classes, and is a good basic reference for the letterpress printer, pitched at roughly a senior high school level. Although out of print, it is readily available, in one or another of its many editions, from most book arts dealers and online sources. In later years, it was distributed by the Kelsey Co. as the advanced printing manual for their mass-market presses. By 1971 it was updated to de-emphasize handset type, and was re-issued as "The Practice of Printing: Letterpress & Offset". If you are primarily interested in letterpress printing, try to get one of the earlier editions.

**Platen Press Operation** by **George J. Mills** [Pittsburgh, Carnegie Institute of Technology, 1953, 150 p. illus.] This manual is the first choice of letterpress cognoscenti who are printing on platen presses, and serves as the missing "owner's manual" for traditional platen presses such as Chandler & Price, Gordon, Pearl and other floor-mounted job presses. It should be read in conjunction with one of the above books, which provide more thorough coverage of hand type-setting and composition. This invaluable book is still available, in a reprint of the 1959 edition, from NA Graphics.

**Printing Digital Type on the Hand-Operated Flatbed Cylinder Press** by **Gerald Lange** (Second Edition). California: Bieler Press, 2001 This is one of the few letterpress manuals currently in print, and the only one specifically addressing both **Vandercook proof presses** (the gold standard for current fine letterpress printers) and photopolymer plates. This book is the authority on the technologies of "modern" limited edition letterpress printing. Subjects covered include digital type and computer practices; letterpress configuration; photopolymer plates, flat-bases, and processing equipment; photopolymer plate-making; plate registration and travel; impression; cylinder packing and makeready; presswork; ink and inking; press operation and maintenance, as well as an updated listing of manufacturers and distributors. Newly included with **this edition** are troubleshooting guides to problems encountered during the processing and printing of photopolymer plates.

**Printing on the Iron Handpress** by **Richard-Gabriel Rummonds** is the most comprehensive book ever published on the subject, and is still in print from Oak Knoll Press. (Note that "handpress" here means **something specific** when it comes to letterpress printing, and doesn't refer to ordinary hand-operated presses such as a Kelsey or a Pilot.) Precise techniques for printing on the handpress are presented in lucid, step-by-step procedures that Rummonds perfected over a period of almost twenty-five years at his celebrated Plain Wrapper Press and Ex Ophidia. In tandem with more than 400 detailed diagrams by George Laws, Rummonds describes every procedure a printer needs to know from setting up a handpress studio to preparing books for the binder. The author also maintains a **constantly updated web-site** to accompany the book.

**Printing for Pleasure. A Practical Guide for Amateurs** by **John Ryder** [published in multiple editions from 1955-1977, in England and the US, by publishers including Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., (1977) and London: The Bodley Head (1976) This is still in print from The Bodley Head in the UK or Oak Knoll Books in North America]. A lovely, classy, little (12 mo) book, both pleasing to look at and inspirational for the novice amateur printer. This introductory work gives a light overview of the hobby of letterpress printing on both sides of the Atlantic, covering how to choose a press, type, paper and ink, as well as planning, design and production. A good place to start if you are just considering taking up this avocation, and a nice place to come back to every now and then to remind you why you are still printing.

*While the six books listed above should be your first choices (for the subjects they cover), the following books may also prove useful if you are having trouble finding the 'classics', or if you are working with younger printers who might prefer a shorter, simpler introduction to letterpress printing and some of the other book arts:*

**Printing For School And Shop** by **Frank S. Henry** [New York: John Wiley & Sons 1917, B&W photos and drwgs 318pp] Subtitled "A Textbook for Printers' Apprentices, Continuation classes, and for General Use in Schools" and updated with another edition in 1944, this was the original high school level vocational course textbook which was eventually supplanted for the most part by Polk. Nevertheless, it provides detailed technical instruction and illustrations and—particularly in the later edition—can still serve as a useful learning tool for today's printer.

**The Essentials of Printing** by **Frank S. Henry** [New York: John Wiley & Sons 1924, B&W drwgs 187pp + index] Subtitled "A Text-book for Beginners" and half the length of the preceding book. "It develops that there is an insistent demand for a shorter text, one that shall cover only the absolute essentials of printing...this volume attempts to present to the novice, in sequence, the operations necessary to the production of a piece of printed matter." Aimed at approximately a junior high school level, 'Essentials' is useful and relatively short, but now somewhat outdated (even for letterpress!).

**Printing. A Practical Introduction to the Graphic Arts** by **Hartley E. Jackson** [New York; McGraw-Hill, 1957, 8vo., 286 pages]. Organization and use of the type case, hand setting, use of the platen press, and basic binding, with short sections on linoleum blocks, silk screen and photography in this industrial arts text. Not as good as Polk, but more than acceptable as an apprentice course book, also at the high school level.

**Graphic Arts** by **Frederick D. Kagy** [Chicago: The Goodheart-Willcox Co., Inc., 1961, 8vo, 112 pps.] Another (and probably the last) of the school vocational textbooks (this one being appropriate for an upper-elementary school book), Kagy's book was designed for once-over-lightly printing classes included as part of a longer graphic arts program. This short book gives a simple but well-illustrated quickie introduction to hand type-setting and platen press printing in about twenty pages. Nowhere near as comprehensive as many of the others, but certainly better than learning through pure trial and error.

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## Design and Book Arts Manuals

Once you start letterpress printing, you may soon develop a craving to learn more about both the underlying principles of graphic and book design. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of books on graphic design with more being published each day, but some of those on the subject that are most recommended for letterpress printers include:

**Methods of Book Design: The Practice of an Industrial Craft** by **Hugh Williamson**

(An excellent book, not only for the author's typographical observations, but also as a comprehensive survey of printing at the height of letterpress.)

**The Design of Books** by **Adrian Wilson**

(A classic on the design, layout, and typography of traditional pages and books, written in 1967 by a great letterpress printer.)

**Bookmaking: Editing, Design and Production** by **Marshall Lee**

(Originally written primarily about letterpress in 1965, this 500+ page work has recently been re-issued in a greatly updated third edition for the computer era.)

**[Printing Poetry: A workbook in typographic reification](#) by Clifford Burke**

(A very informative work on this subject that also applies to other letterpress printing. Issued in an edition of only 1000.)

*While inking up the press and hand-feeding the paper to print a well-designed page may be more than enough to give you satisfaction, letterpress printers frequently become interested in many of the other crafts and avocations that fall under the general rubric of the Book Arts, such as [typography](#), [bookbinding](#), [papermaking](#), [marbling](#), [type-casting](#) and [book collecting](#). As with printing and design manuals, there are hundreds of works from which to choose, but a few in-print introductory manuals in other areas associated with letterpress printing include:*

**[A Typographic Workbook: A Primer to History, Techniques, and Artistry](#) by Kate Clair**

(A good place to start for a basic grounding in typographic design.)

**[The Elements of Typographic Style](#) by Robert Bringhurst**

(A highly acclaimed, although somewhat more advanced, standard work in the field.)

**[Hand Bookbinding: A Manual of Instruction](#) by Aldren A. Watson**

(A clear, thorough, inexpensive introduction to hand binding.)

**[The Papermaker's Companion: The Ultimate Guide to Making And Using Handmade Paper](#) by Helen Hiebert**

(Extensive step by step instructions.)

**[How to Marbleize Paper: Step-By-Step Instructions for 12 Traditional Patterns](#) by Gabriele Grunebaum**

(A slim, inexpensive, but useful paperback.)

**[Practical Typecasting](#) by Theo Rehak**

(The ultimate and definitive book on the subject, by the dean of American typefounders.)

**[Miller's Collecting Books](#) by Catherine Porter**

(A modern, illustrated guide to all aspects of book collecting)

*...and if you are thinking about helping amortize the cost of your now-expensive avocation by doing luxury letterpress printing on a commercial basis, be sure to read through::*

**[Graphic Artists Guild Handbook: Pricing & Ethical Guidelines](#) by Graphic Artists Guild**

(The 11th edition of the industry bible, containing information all printers and their clients need to buy and sell work in a totally professional manner.)

## Acquiring Books and Manuals

If you absolutely, positively can't wait to get started printing and need instant gratification, you can view and print out an [online copy of a letterpress printing manual](#), the original slim *Kelsey Printer's Guide* that came with all of the Kelsey Presses. If you like the online version, posted courtesy of Don Black Linecasting, the real thing is [still available](#) in hard-copy from NA Graphics, the current owners of the Kelsey Company, who also carry the original Kelsey Printers Course that was sent weekly to students, one lesson at a time. For those with classic presses missing the original manuals (ie, everyone!), Harold Kyle of the Boxcar Press has done a wonderful service for the letterpress world by scanning in and posting online copies of many original letterpress manuals and parts lists, at his [Flywheel & Cylinder](#) site. As the world moves increasingly online, a number of universities have begun the ambitious program of creating a Universal Library that is freely accessible over the Internet and includes complete scanned version of important books. Carnegie Mellon University has digitized [dozens of major printing manuals and books on printing history](#) and allied subjects and posted them online, to which a nice index has been supplied by Oak Knoll Books.

The manuals listed above will stand you in good stead as you start up your press, and many printers will not need anything else. After you have devoured them, however, there are many, many more excellent books available that can guide you into more detailed explorations of specific areas, such as platen press printing, hand composition, automatic press operation, layout, typography, imposition and form make up, etc. For a more complete version of the foregoing bibliography, the author has prepared a somewhat longer and more detailed [Annotated Bibliography of Printing and Typography](#). The Mother of all Printing Bibliographies is the classic *A Bibliography of Printing* by Bigmore & Wyman, originally compiled over a hundred years ago, but still the heart of any serious collection on the subject (especially in the [new edition, in print from Oak Knoll Books](#).) If you are working with children in the book arts there is a wonderful online list of [books for youthful papermakers and book artists](#) prepared by Tanya DiMaggio.

There are several [dealers around the world](#) who specialize in selling new, used and antiquarian books related to printing and the other book arts. A few of the larger ones are [Oak Knoll Books](#), [The Veatches](#), [Frances Wakeman Books](#), and [Forest Books](#). Others are listed in the Annotated Bibliography, and still others can be found through the [International League of Antiquarian Booksellers](#). The Internet explosion has made finding out-of-print books almost trivially easy these days, and consequently one of the best sources for finding out-of-print and used books is a nifty metasearch site called [BookFinder](#) which will simultaneously search dozens of online new and antiquarian book web sites listing tens of thousands of dealers' inventories. Another site with book price comparisons among 70 US and Canadian bookstores is [FetchBook.Info](#).

## Letterpress Equipment

Assuming that you've read a book or two and are ready to jump in and start printing, the next thing you'll need to do is to get yourself a press (or at least access to one). All letterpress printing shares certain similarities no matter what press you use. On the other hand, it is helpful to match the right kind of press to the particular things you plan to do with it. A rough categorization of letterpresses in no particular order, with very rough guidelines for current pricing (and with illustrations mostly from the

indispensable [Online Museum of the Briar Press](#)) might be as follows:

### Handpress

(examples: Hoe, Columbian, Albion)

These are the traditional, floor-standing, hand-operated, horizontal-bed, platen presses that are directly descended from Gutenberg's original of 1451. The old wooden presses, a la Gutenberg, remained basically unchanged for over 350 years, so that Johan could have walked into Ben Franklin's shop in 1760 and gotten straight to work. By the mid 19th century and the Industrial Revolution, improvements in engineering and metallurgy caused an explosion of new hand press designs, most of which were attempts to improve the weighting and leverage necessary to put the appropriate pressure on the form. A few (relatively speaking) of these presses from the 19th century still exist (**\$5,000 and up**), and today are [used by purists](#) for true "hand printing". If you want to go back even further, you can build or purchase a reproduction of a Common Press such as might have been used by Franklin, in which case you should take a look at Neil Giroux's [Common Press experience](#).

### Low-end Tabletop Platen

(examples: Kelsey, Baltimorean, Excel)

The opposite end of the spectrum, these inexpensive presses were first developed at the end of the 19th century for use by hobbyists and small stationers and were [broadly marketed](#) by The Kelsey Company of Meriden, CT. Their form changed very little over almost a hundred years, and they were still being advertised in the back of magazines like *Popular Mechanics* as recently as the 1970s. They are plentiful, turn up on eBay with great regularity (**\$25-\$250** or so, depending on a lot of different factors) and don't take up a lot of space. This is the way many people start out, and with practice a Kelsey [can turn out acceptable work](#). Kelseys are fully supported by [NA Graphics](#), the successor to Kelsey and the primary source for letterpress supplies. For more serious hobby work or small "professional" jobs, however, you may want to consider starting out with a Pilot instead.

### High-end Lever Press/Tabletop Platen

(examples: C&P Pilot, Craftsmen, Golding Official, Sigwalt, Hohner)

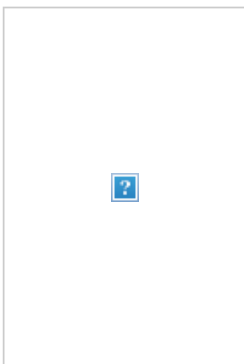
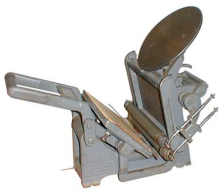
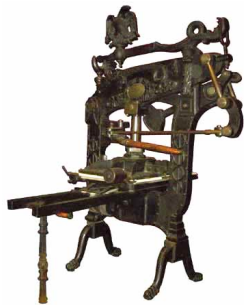
The Chandler & Price Pilot is the [definitive](#) hobbyist hand-operated, tabletop press. It was invented around 1885 and manufactured through the 1970's. Craftsmen Machinery Company is still in business and supports their version of this type of press, although they no longer manufacture it. The Pilot and its several clones are sturdy, heavy, desktop presses. Most of them can print larger areas than the smaller Kelseys, thanks to a long side arm, which provides a lot of leverage for a good impression. Smaller ones, such as the [Golding Official](#), are great for small jobs such as business cards or post cards. Pilots are also readily [available](#) (**\$250-\$1250** depending on condition and whether you buy it from a dealer or on eBay) although somewhat harder to find than Kelseys, and many a small hobby shop does excellent work using only this press. This was the press that was given to Ariel Dore on the show *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*. Your arm will get tired, however, if you plan to run hundreds of copies. A very informed discussion of just [which Tabletop Platen Press you should look for](#) was written by John Horn, the well-known printer and press collector, and is available online courtesy of Don Black Line Casting. Again, most of the supplies you might need for your tabletop press are available from [NA Graphics](#), and [Dave Churchman](#) can furnish both new and used Pilot parts.

### Full-size Platen Job Press

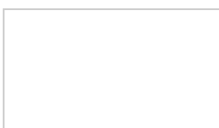
(examples: Chandler & Price, Golding Jobber, Pearl, Damon & Peets)

The floor-standing, full-size platen press was the workhorse of the printing job shop for most of the twentieth century. Originally developed shortly before the Civil War, these presses were powered by a foot-operated treadle, creating a "clamshell" action while the operator hand-fed the paper. By the early twentieth century they were updated to be turned by powered line-shafts, and later by individual motors. With the demise of commercial letterpress in the second half of the twentieth century, thousands of these presses were scrapped. Often available today from old print shops (**\$0-\$750**, depending on size, condition, location, and whether or not they are motorized) the biggest challenge and expense is moving these bulky, heavy machines. Nevertheless, they serve as the mainstay for hobbyists who do mostly longer runs (hundreds to thousands) of smaller-size jobs, as well as a few commercial printers who use them for scoring, perforating and die-cutting.

Different brands have their own adherents, from the original designs having been produced by George Gordon in 1851. A useful [buyer's guide](#) to the different models, written by the late John Harrison, was published by *Type & Press* in 1983. The most common versions around today—and the ones that were 'standard issue' in most job shops throughout the twentieth century—were the solid, dependable presses made by [Chandler & Price](#), for which there is quite a bit of information available online including comprehensive [oiling charts](#), [dimensions](#) and [parts lists](#). One of the nicest smaller presses for a hobby shop is William Golding's [Pearl](#), which came in three models, 5 x 8, 7 x 11 and 9 x 14. The two smaller sizes can actually be lifted by a couple of people, and the



Pearl Old Style





Colt's Armory

Pearl (particularly the 7 x 11) is as popular today as it was in the 1870s. Another nice line of presses was marketed by Damon & Peets. A stunning site with photographs, descriptions and histories of most of these presses is available online in the [Briar Press Museum](#), and if you would like to get the details from the horse's mouth, Dave Tribby has painstakingly scanned and reproduced online the entire [1908 Golding press catalog](#). If you are just getting started with printing, you might find that a treadle-operated press is easier to install and operate, not to mention safer, than a motorized press, although the latter is certainly better for very long runs. Many of these presses have been ill-served by the passage of time, and for a number of letterpress aficionados a lot of enjoyment can be found in [restoring these workhorses](#) to their original condition. A comprehensive selection of parts for floor model platen presses (particularly Chandler & Price versions) can be furnished by [Dave Churchman](#).

(Note that a very few specialized platen press models, such as the large, heavy duty, parallel impression [Colt's Armory](#) and the related Thomson Universal/Laureate, were the finest platen presses ever made for book work and other exacting jobs, and are highly prized even today by [certain discerning printers](#), who vie with each other to find these gems and restore them to operation. Daniel Petrzelka has posted online versions of a number of [Colt's catalogs and manuals](#) as an aid in recognizing and restoring these beauties. In good condition these relatively scarce presses can sometimes command several thousand dollars.)

### Automatic Feed Platen Job Press

(examples: Original Heidelberg, Kluge, Chandler & Price Craftsman)

With platen press drives motorized, the next logical step was automating the paper feeding. This was originally done by companies such as Rice and Brandtjen & Kluge, who created add-on feeders for popular platen presses. Eventually, presses were designed from the ground up with automatic feed units. The dominant press of this type is the [Original Heidelberg](#) (colloquially known in America, although not Europe, as the "Windmill" for its moving arms) created in pre-war Germany. It was, and remains, the epitome of automated platen press design, and is a highly versatile press that can operate almost unattended, printing up to 5000 copies an hour of anything from thin business cards to boxes on cardboard. More Original Heidebergs were sold than any other printing press in history, and it is the primary press in use today for the few remaining commercial letterpress printers (**\$2000-\$7500** for a Heidelberg, depending on model, features and condition, with the newer 'Red Ball' units somewhat more desirable; much less for other brands). If only new will do, however, [Brandtjen & Kluge](#), which continues to be run by the same family that founded the company in 1907, will still sell motorized letterpress platen presses, on a made-to-order basis (primarily for the export market) for about \$35,000.

Automatic platen presses are still sold today, not for printing, but for finishing operations that can only be done on a sheet-by-sheet basis, including die-cutting, embossing, and hot foil stamping. Attachments are available for a number of letterpresses (including Heidebergs and Kluges) that, with the rollers removed, can turn them from "inkers" to "foilers". The cost of stamping foil (available in a wide range of colors) is surprisingly low, and [M. Swift & Sons](#), one of the largest foil producers, will send you on request their booklet "A Guide to Foil Stamping". Another source for foil in small rolls is [Howard Imprinting](#) in Tampa, FL (800-33-HOWIE). A discussion of the [type for hot stamping](#) and foiling is available online as well.

### Motorized Flatbed Cylinder Press

(examples: Heidelberg KSBA, Miehle, Kelly-B, ATF Little Giant)

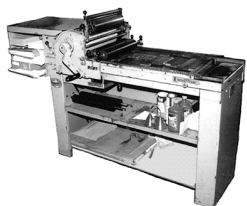
Cylinder presses can rapidly cycle through large sheets of paper on a continuous basis by automatically feeding the paper onto grippers attached to a rotating cylinder above a flat form of type that rolls back and forth underneath. While not as common in the typical job shop as a motorized platen such as the Heidelberg Windmill, these hefty (6,600-pound, 8.5-foot-long for a KSBA!) presses nevertheless found a significant role in handling large letterpress production runs. Pressmen appreciated the versatility which enabled them to run almost any kind of job work on a wide variety of paper stock, due to their small cylinders which printed only a thin line at a time as they revolved, as compared to a platen press which must print the entire form at one crunch. Cylinder presses such as the [Miehle Vertical](#) could exert about 400 pounds per square inch to the paper without embossing through the back of the sheet, and proprietors of print shops appreciated cylinder features which contributed to a minimum of non-production time in changing over from different varieties of job work. 11,000 of the [Kelly-B](#) alone were sold in the early twentieth century. A number of old-time letterpress printers still swear by them, and to quote Dan Rivers of the Indian Hill Press about their [Heidelberg KSBA](#), "*What's so special about this press? Almost everything. It is tremendously sturdy and gives perfectly even pressure with its 2,000-pound impression cylinder. It accepts a large enough sheet that we can print several pages of a book at once. It has automatic paper feeding and inking, unlike the Vandercook (our other cylinder press). And it is a Heidelberg, which means amazingly precise registration and systematic control over even the most erratic aspects of printing...Now, for the first time, nothing stands between us and a lifetime of books to come.*" Miehles, Kellys and Little Giants (**\$250-\$1500**) turn up with some regularity while Heidelberg KSBs are generally considered to be the Rolls Royce of cylinder presses (**\$4000-\$8000**).



### Simple Tabletop Proof Press

(examples: Nolan, Triumph, Morgan LinoScribe, SignPress, Sirio, Atlas)

Originally developed as "galley" proof presses to let a compositor take a quick check of his hand-set type, these small, lightweight units usually consist of a flat bed and a simple, single roller on a track above it. The galley of type was set on the bed, inked by hand with a small roller (a "brayer"), a sheet of paper laid on top, and the roller pulled across to get an impression. This was an improvement over the "proof planer" method, in which the impression is made by lightly tapping a block of felt-covered wood over the type. In the twentieth century, this sort of press found use, usually with large wood type, as an economical, in-house way of making signs for stores and showcards for theaters. Some printers find these a useful second press, as they are inexpensive, lightweight (although the larger 15 x 24 models can weigh upwards of 150 lbs.), and portable, but they are not at all suited to careful impression, precision registration, or runs of more than a few copies (**\$50-\$250**, depending on features and size).



### Precision Cylinder Proof Press

(examples: Vandercook, and imitations such as the Challenge 15MP and the Reprex)

Originally an improvement on the simple galley press, the first Vandercook press was designed in 1908, and gave rise to an increasingly more sophisticated series of precision presses that lasted into the offset era. The most popular models, the #3, #4, Universal, and SP series, (the latter two of which come in 15" and 20" wide versions, the Universal I and III, and the SP-15 and SP-20, respectively) were designed for reproduction proofing of metal type to make masters for photo-offset printing, and for testing ink, paper, color, etc. These presses are the gold standard for high-quality modern letterpress work, particularly for computer-generated material printed from photopolymer plates, and are what most "professional" letterpress art printers and private presses use. Since Vandercooks were not designed for production-quantity runs, these large, heavy presses (**\$500-\$3000** for the most common ones, depending on model, size and condition although some large, pristine, powered models have recently gone for as much as **\$5000-\$6000**) are best for runs in the hundreds of impressions. An excellent [overview of the most useful Vandercooks](#), along with their sizes, weights, etc. appeared in *Type & Press*, and is online courtesy of the APA. Vandercook, after passing through several hands, was finally acquired by [NA Graphics](#) which supports the presses and can tell you, from the serial number, who the original owner was of your specific press. Mark Wilden has brought together many of the original brochures, photographs and manuals in his comprehensive [Vandercook Reference](#) page.

A second choice (and correspondingly less expensive) cylinder proof press is the Challenge, which was a knock-off of the famous Vandercook SP-15. While many people have had good experiences with this press, others are somewhat more skeptical...and everyone would prefer a Vandercook, given the choice.

### Choosing a Press

So, what this boils down to is something like the following:

If you just want to <b>dip your toe in the letterpress waters</b> without a substantial expenditure of space, time and money	...go for a <b>Kelsey</b> or equivalent.
If you want to <b>take printing rather seriously</b> and have a few dollars, but don't have a lot of space	...go for a <b>Pilot</b> or equivalent.
If you are thinking about <b>longer runs</b> (hundreds to thousands of copies) and have space and time, and some money for movers	...get a floor model <b>C&amp;P</b> or equivalent.
If you want the <b>highest quality</b> for short runs or large sheets, and have space and a lot of money	...get a <b>Vandercook</b> .
If you only want to do <b>very short runs of large (often wood) type</b> for things like ephemeral signs, where print quality isn't particularly important, or else need a second small press for portability	...get a Nolan style tabletop <b>proof press</b> .
If you want to go into the business of <b>commercial letterpress printing</b> , foil-stamping, embossing or die-cutting	...get a <b>Heidelberg</b> .
If you want to own a <b>museum-quality antique</b> , can spend a fortune and want to go back to the pure basics	...get a <b>hand press</b> .
If you want to <b>print long, large runs, or a small newspaper</b> by letterpress	...get a <b>flatbed cylinder</b> .

Even better than looking at the pictures above, it is possible to see what many of these presses look like in operation. Veteran letterpress printer Duane C. Scott and his wife Dolly have produced a great little video about ten of the most common presses, entitled "*Ten Presses and How They Work*." It is 105 minutes long and shows the presses and comments on them. If you are interested in obtaining one, [write to Duane](#).

### Letterpress Dealers

To purchase a nice, reconditioned press such as a C&P Pilot or the equivalent (Craftsmen, Sigwalt, American, etc.) or even a Vandercook, in ready-to-go shape, visit the website of [Don Black Linecasting](#) in Toronto, Canada (known colloquially as Letterpress Heaven North). Don is a dealer in used letterpress equipment with probably the best and most organized inventory in the world. He usually has Pilots in stock, and frequently gets in Vandercooks and other goodies. The largest and best domestic source for presses, parts and other letterpress equipment is [Dave Churchman](#) in Indianapolis, whose legendary



warehouse (known to its regulars as the Boutique de Junque when not being referred to as Letterpress Heaven West) is a cross between Ali Baba's Cave and the Gutenberg Museum. On the East Coast of the US is [John Barrett](#) of Letterpress Things in Massachusetts, who has a steadily increasing and well-organized supply of equipment, supplies and material in what is virtually a letterpress supermarket. There are also smaller dealers such as American Graphics and SOS Linotype (information on them and others can be found, of course, in the Briar Press Resource Guide.) On the West Coast, Jim Heagy in San Francisco has an enormous warehouse with over a thousand cases of type and cuts that are regularly [offered on eBay](#).

While most of these dealers generally have a full array of used letterpress equipment on hand, large, floor-standing platen presses are usually best found locally (by checking the [classifieds at the Briar Press](#) or other online sites, or your local newspaper) because of the substantial cost to move, rig and ship them. And speaking of eBay, quite a few letterpresses turn up with some regularity on this large auction site, along with type, accessories and hundreds of letterpress graphic blocks, known as 'cuts'. Although it's very much a case of "buyer beware", you might find [something interesting up for bid](#) there. If at all possible you should try to have a knowledgeable mechanic or printer check out any press you are considering purchase, *before* you agree to a firm price.

Having purchased your press, you will immediately come face to face with the #2 problem that bedevils all letterpress printers (#1 is "not having enough space!"): how on earth to move the giant thing you just bought into your tiny shop. While this may sound like a small point, it is often the single biggest impediment to establishing your own shop! Your best bet if you can afford it, and the one generally recommended by more experienced printers, is to have a professional move it for you. While this may well cost more than you paid for the press, a [specialized machinery rigger](#) (not your friendly local mover!) who has specialized tools may often be the best investment you can make in setting up your letterpress shop. However, if you are determined (or financially constrained) to do it yourself, be sure to first read [Jan Adkin's](#) classic book [Moving Heavy Things](#), which will give you both basic principles of rigging and a host of neat tricks.

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### Accessories and Supplies

Once you have acquired your press, you don't have to spend a great deal more on getting ready to start printing, but you will need some basics. The exact nature of your 'start up' kit will vary, depending both on your needs and on what (if anything) happened to come along when you bought your press, but a rough guide to the essentials would be as follows:

**Type** (at the very minimum, you'll need at least one [small font of type](#), about 2-4 pounds in weight, although you'll no doubt soon find yourself forced out of your home by your ever-increasing collection), a **Type Case** (a [partitioned box](#) to separate and hold the individual letters of type, one for each font), a **Composing Stick** (the [hand-held metal tray](#) in which you assemble the pieces of type), some **Leads & Slugs** (pronounced "leds", thin strips of metal, lower than the height of the type, which go between lines to add white space), an **Imposing Surface** (a fancy name for a perfectly flat place on which to assemble the form you are going to print), a **Chase** (an iron frame, made to fit your specific press, that holds the type from which you will print), some **Furniture** (no, not tables and chairs; rather, pieces of wood or metal in varying sizes, all lower than type high, that fill up the area in your chase around the type), **Quoins** (pronounced "coins", metal wedges that employ friction to hold the type and furniture in the chase), a **Quoin Key** (a special tool used to tighten the quoins), some **Tympan Paper** (oiled sheets of hard paper that cover the *platen*, the area on which you put the sheet of paper to be printed), **Gauge Pins** (adjustable clips that you attach to or stick into the tympan on a platen press to position the paper so that image prints where you want it), **Ink** ([printing ink](#), either oil- or rubber-based, in the color(s) of your choice), a **Brayer** (a hand roller used to smooth out ink and sometimes ink type by hand), an **Ink Plate** (on which to mix and roll out the ink; an 8" square piece of glass or plexiglass will do for starters), **Rollers** (for your specific press, made of either rubber or a special printers' "composition" of glue and glycerin), **Typewash** (one of several solvents used to clean up ink from the press and type, ranging from the organically benign and FDA-approved, such as Canola oil; through mineral spirits, which are cheap, readily available and work well; to the [seriously lethal](#) and flammable), **Oil** (to lubricate every moving part on your press every time you use it), **Rags** (to use with the typewash to clean the press), a steel or plastic **Type Gauge** (a ruler that measures inches on one side and printers' points and picas on the other, often called a 'pica pole') and a **Galley** or two (a metal tray used to store type after you've set it but before you've put it back in the case). A [short overview](#) of what these kinds of things are used for has been posted by [Dave Bosshard](#), and the ever-estimable Briar Press has a wonderful, illustrated, [on-line glossary](#) where you can see beautiful photographs of most of these items.

Other things that will stand you in very good stead are a **Printer's Apron** to protect your clothes, **Hand Cleaner** formulated to remove printer's ink (although most mechanic's hand cleaners will do well), a **Safety Can** to hold your type wash and an **Oily Waste Safety Container** to hold your [solvent-filled rags](#) before you clean them, **Tying String** to [keep the type you've set](#) from falling apart during storage, a pair of surgical **Tweezers** to help [carefully!] manipulate small pieces of type, a **Magnifying Glass** or Linen Tester to closely examine your printed sheets, a **Type High Gauge** (not to be confused with the pica pole mentioned above) for confirming the correct height of type and engravings, a **Paper Cutter** for dealing with the stacks of paper you will print, and a pair of **Scissors** and a **Craft Knife** for all sorts of things, including the ever-imperative [makeready](#). Finally, to complete your outfit you will need a traditional **Printer's Hat**, which you can [make yourself](#) out of a [folded newspaper!](#) Beyond these basics, true gadget freaks can go hog wild with tools and toys, with some of the old [printers' supply catalogs](#) running to hundreds and hundreds of pages (as just one example, Sky Shipley of the [Skyline Type Foundry](#) will be pleased to create for you a very nifty, personally-labeled, custom wooden **Hell Box** to catch your damaged and discarded type.) But the items listed above will get you started, and any that didn't come along with your press should be available from the dealers and suppliers below for under \$100 or so. (At the other end of the spectrum, if you're one of those printers for whom nothing but the very best will do, you owe it to yourself to commission a **custom wooden printer's sign** to hang in front of your shop from the [Vintage Sign Company](#). Their work is so phenomenal that visitors would swear your shop has been around for over a hundred years!)

### Letterpress Printing Suppliers

For all of the above supplies that you'll need to get your new press up to speed (ink, rollers, quoins, type, scoring rule, gauge pins, furniture, parts for Vandercooks and C&Ps, and a myriad of things you never knew you needed), make a beeline for [Fritz Klinke at NA Graphics](#), God's gift to letterpress printers (P.O. 467, Silverton, CO 81433, Phone: (970)387-0212, Fax: (970) 387-0127). NAG is the successor company to many of the great letterpress names of the past, including both Kelsey and Vandercook. As such, Fritz can tell you the date of any specific Vandercook or C&P if you give him the serial number. Another source for various printing supplies is [American Printing Equipment & Supply Corp](#) in New York, which is also the successor to

the Megill company, the source for all letterpress [gauge pins](#). Letterpress printing ink in a full range of colors is available from both those companies, as well as [Valley Litho](#). Printing ink for commercial printers is usually sold in large cans, but small letterpress shops often find it easier to use ink in tubes. NA Graphics and APESC both offer some of the more popular colors of letterpress ink in tubes, but if they don't have what you need, Dave Celani has prepared a great tutorial on [filling your own tubes of ink](#). If you don't have room for a full-size imposing stone in your shop, consider instead a "machinist's surface plate", a UPS-shippable, precision ground marble plate available from places like [J & L Industrial Supply](#) (ask for part numbers BFEGP-09122D or BFEGP-12123E) or just get a small slab of perfectly smooth marble. Many of the above supply items are also available in decent used condition (often at a considerable savings) from Dave Churchman, Don Black, John Barrett, Jim Heagy and the other letterpress dealers [listed above](#).

Because letterpress printing is what is known as a "relief" process, it is possible to [print from other things](#) in addition to, or instead of, traditional metal or wooden type. As a matter of fact, you can print from just about anything that is "type high" (.918 inches from the bed of the press to the printing surface.) An excellent source for relief printmaking of all kinds is [McClain's Printmaking Supplies](#). You can cut your own design into inexpensive [linoleum blocks](#), or you can take any line art image that you can create on a computer and have a photopolymer plate made. The finished plate is then mounted temporarily (magnetically or with adhesive) to a [base](#), which is locked into the chase of the press just like type. Harold Kyle at the [Boxcar Press](#) sells a wide variety of photopolymer plates, bases and supplies from a beautifully designed web site and will make high quality photopolymer plates from your computer files or art (with online credit card payment available). Quick turnaround photopolymer plates are also available from [NA Graphics](#). Gene Becker of [Photopolymer Plates](#) sells a full range of plates and bases, and also carries an array of platemakers, exposure units, trimmers and other equipment. For top quality metal plates and cuts (copper or magnesium) as well as embossing and foil dies, the largest supplier is [Owosso Graphic Arts](#). They, too, will take your files by e-mail and offer 24 hour turnaround. Another well-regarded source is East Texas Engravers (PO Box 2038, Tyler, TX 75710, 903-597-7567). One thing that you can do on a letterpress (either platen or cylinder) that you can't do on either an offset press or a computer printer, is die cutting. A [primer on die cutting](#) has been posted by Leonard "Mo" Molberg, a highly respected commercial letterpress printer, and the consensus is that the best dies around are the custom ones made by master die maker Duane Howard, (Ozark Country Dies 3630 W Farm Rd. 76 Springfield, MO 65803 (417) 833-3530.)

Fine printing (and even mediocre printing!) requires inking rollers to be in [excellent condition](#). Traditional printers' composition rollers (which some cognoscenti insist give the best inking) for any size press can be made to order for you by [Tarheel Roller & Brayer](#) in North Carolina, and rubber rollers (more expensive but longer lasting and less susceptible to temperature and humidity) can be made to order for you by Ramco Rubber Products (241 West Allen Ave, San Dimas, CA 91773 (909) 592-1002) or Roll-Crafters (20 North Oriental Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202 (800) 627-4479 or (317) 263-5298). All three companies can also take your existing rollers or cores and cast new ones for you. In the UK, [Caslon Ltd](#) ("proudly serving the printing industry since 1720!") still supports the Adana line of small letterpresses, and actively markets foil stamping, thermographic and other printing solutions. For binding, book conservation and other book arts shop supplies, the ultimate source is [Talas](#) in New York City. If you are restoring a press, or even if you just need to find a pesky, strangely-threaded thumbscrew to replace one that fell off your press fifty years ago, check out [McMaster-Carr](#), an industrial/machinery supply company with a truly mind-boggling assortment (410,000?!) of machine parts in stock.

## Paper and Papermaking

While the letterpress printing process is capable of creating a great image on a wide variety of surfaces, it truly excels when combined with various types of special paper that are simply not available for use with digital processes. Handmade, mouldmade and other special papers are increasingly available these days from a variety of sources. You can find a gorgeous line of exquisite (and expensive) handmade papers from the [Twinrocker Mill](#), find a good range of 'standard' art papers at [ArtPaper.com](#), or browse through Sam Flax's comprehensive online [Paper Catalog](#). A wonderful online collection of a vast range of paper, card-stock, boards and other material for those in the UK is [John Purcell Paper](#). A very nice sample book of (mostly standard but relatively high priced) papers is available for purchase online from [PaperPresentation](#). Other good online sources include [ANW Crestwood](#), [Kinsella Art Papers](#) and Larry Chase at [LCI Papers](#). For those venturing to Dave Churchman's Letterpress Heaven in Indianapolis, try stopping at nearby [Dolphin Papers](#) (317-822-3846) for a wide variety of domestic and imported papers. Finally, one of the largest and best sources of handmade paper, including many historical classics that are no longer in production, is [New York Central Art Supply](#), at 62 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10003, (800) 950-6111. If you would like to try something unique that can ONLY be done on a letterpress, try printing something interesting on thick cardboard beverage coasters, from [American Coaster Company](#). They usually print themselves, but they will also sell you blank coasters.

If you are interested in making your very own handmade paper, classes are offered by a number of studios, including the seminal [Dieu Donné Papermill](#) on the East Coast, [Mission Creek Press](#) on the West Coast and world-famous [Twinrocker Mill](#) in the Midwest. A new, all-volunteer artists cooperative, the [Wisconsin Center for Book and Paper Arts](#), has recently opened in Madison.

## Bookbinding

Unless you plan to print only broadsides or fold-over cards, your letterpress work will almost inevitably lead you to multi-page projects that will need to be fastened together. The art of hand bookbinding is even older than that of printing, and mastering just a few [simple binding techniques](#) such as [single-section binding](#) and [side-stab binding](#) will add immeasurably to your printing pleasure. In addition to [Watson's book](#), other good places to start include [Books, Boxes, and Portfolios](#) by **Franz Zeier** and [Basic Bookbinding](#) by **Arthur William Lewis**. A [comprehensive bibliography of bookbinding manuals](#) has been prepared by Peter Verheyen for the ever-useful Philobiblon site, and Amazon.com carries hundreds of [in-print books on binding](#). Of course, the best way to learn is first-hand from an expert. Many of the [book arts centers](#) mentioned previously offer courses in binding, the Guild of Book Workers maintains a [Study Opportunities List](#) for private bookbinding instruction in North America, and for those down-under the [NSW Guild of Craft Bookbinders](#) offers beginners courses at Rozelle. If you can't get to a class or tutorial in person, CBBAG offers a wonderful [home study bookbinding course on video](#), which can even include critique and grading of your work for an extra fee. On the other hand, if your proclivities run solely to printing, there are many wonderful [hand book binders](#) around the world who would be delighted to undertake a commission to bind anywhere from one to thousands of copies of your letterpress magnum opus, and Talas maintains a [searchable database](#) through which you can find a particular binder by name, location or speciality.

## Printing Type

There is a plentiful amount of used type available from all the sources above (Black, Churchman, Barrett, Heagy, etc.) and type is both constantly [being listed on eBay](#) and [offered on the Briar Press classified pages](#). If you have type that you are trying to identify, the definitive reference work is [Mac McGrew's American Metal Typefaces of the Twentieth Century](#), but an even better resource will be Dave Tribby's forthcoming index to the American Type Founders and BB&S type catalogs of the past hundred and twenty years, with cross references to McGrew's reference book. You can often tell which foundry cast a particular font of type (and figure out what font it is) by checking its pinmark (a small identifying mark stamped into the side of a piece of type) in the [William H. Lokes Pinmark Reference Library](#), hosted online by the Briar Press. There are also two interactive web sites available to help you find the perfect type for your project. [Identifont@](#) is a unique font identifier that enables you to identify a typeface from a sample by answering a series of simple questions, and its sister site [Fontscape](#) lets you find faces by a dozen different categorizations, including mood, appearance, and dimensions. For free help from an expert in identifying your mystery face, check out Mike Yanega's [Font Spotting](#) site. A good source of clip art of old fonts and cuts from which you can make photopolymer plates is the [Dover Archives](#) series. And for those who develop a passion for type (whether hot, cold or tepid) there exists [The Society of Typographic Aficionados](#) which puts on the renowned, annual, three-day July extravaganza known as [TypeCon](#).

Although you should have no trouble finding used type in the second-hand market, if you can afford it you will find that nothing beats the pleasure of printing from newly cast metal type. There are a dozen or so remaining commercial type foundries around the world (although mostly in the US) which are generally maintained as laborers of love by type founders who don't want to see this unique craft fade away. The patriarch of type founders (the man who literally [wrote the book](#) on the subject, and is virtually the only one still casting on original ATF Barth foundry casters) is the former linchpin of American Type Founders, [Theo Rehak of the Dale Guild](#). For European type, the primary remaining foundry is the [Schriftenservice](#) division of the Stemple Museum, which has the original matrices from a wide array of well-known European faces. The largest in-stock selection of Monotype in the United States is probably from [M&H Type](#) in San Francisco (formerly known as Mackenzie & Harris, and now an affiliate of Andrew Hoyem's famous [Arion Press](#)). The [Sterling Type Foundry](#) in Indianapolis is, along with Quaker City Type Foundry in Pennsylvania, the oldest continually operating type foundry in the US (both were established in 1922). Sterling specializes in ornaments and decorative type revivals, and offers a bewildering array of almost 4000 different borders, ornaments and dingbats. Dave Tribby maintains a very useful list of the [six major foundries in America](#) currently casting Monotype fonts, along with a cross-referenced index to the type faces they offer. Another good source for [links to other founders](#) is the Briar Press resource guide. They include [Phil Ambrosi](#) in Canada (for strip material), [Michael & Winifred Bixler](#) in upstate New York for stunning settings of classic English Monotype book faces, [Swamp Press](#) in Massachusetts, [Skyline Type Foundry](#) in Illinois, and several others. Fritz Klinke at NA Graphics also has a very large supply of new original stock ATF foundry type in stock, as well as type from a number of foundries including Dale Guild. If you are thinking really big, and want to try your hand at printing from large wood type (think of the old "Wanted!" posters), the Hamilton Wood Type Museum offers [brand new wood type](#) both by the individual piece and in full fonts in sixteen sizes. If you have a specific text in mind to print and need to know how much type to order, Mark Wilden has created a nifty macro for Microsoft Word called [SortSnorter](#), which will automatically count all the characters in your document and tell you how many of each letter you'll need.

## Type Casting

Some hard-core letterpress enthusiasts, once they have started to master the process of printing, take the mania one step further and decide to try their hand at casting their own metal type. There are six general groups of type-casting machines: [linecasters](#) (such as the **Linotype** and **Intertype**) set and cast a whole [line of type](#) at one time from an integrated keyboard, and are the large machines that were the mainstay of newspaper production up until the late twentieth century; [composition casters](#) (primarily the **Monotype Composition Caster**) use a separate keyboard to cast and justify into lines individual pieces of type which can then be recycled for hand-setting, and were generally used for fine bookwork; [sorts casters](#) (such as the Monotype sorts caster and **Thompson** type caster, as well as the larger **Barth** foundry casters) produce streams of single letters which are then set by hand; [headline casters](#) (such as the **Ludlow Typograph** and **APL Linotype**) use [hand-set matrices](#) to set and cast single lines of (usually large) type at a time, and were generally used for headlines; and [strip casters](#) (such as the **Elrod**) produce long strips of spacing and border material such as leads, slugs and rules. The most interesting of all, however, are the [hand casters](#), which have essentially remained unchanged since the days of Gutenberg. Pricing for casters is wildly variable. Linecasters are often available for free, or close to it, if you can figure out how to move them and where to put these behemoths. Ludlows and Elrods can usually be had for the low hundreds of dollars, or less, with moving again being the challenge. If you do get a Ludlow, the very first, last and middle thing you should do is get in touch with [Dave Seat Hot Metal Services](#), to make sure that the country's best Ludlow repair expert stops by your shop on his bi-annual cross-country tours. Monotypes are getting increasingly scarce, however, and ones in top condition can sell for several thousand dollars—although it is also not unusual to see them transferred as a gift to someone interested in keeping the tradition alive. Once you bring your caster home, you'll begin a lifelong accumulation of matrices (known as "mats") for different type faces. While some may tag along with your machine, there is also a wide supply available from dealers such as [Marlboro Mats](#), [Don Black Line Casting](#) and [Skyline Type Foundry](#), each of whom have many thousands of faces.

Typecasting machines are somewhat tricky things to learn on your own, and anyone seriously interested in Monotype casting should look into "Monotype U", a biennial, week-long intensive course in casting organized by [Rich Hopkins](#) of the [Hill & Dale Press](#), who also is the founder of the American Typecasting Fellowship (PO Box 263, Terra Alta WV 26764) which produces an essential newsletter for casting aficionados. To introduce newcomers to the Monotype system, Michael Bixler and Michael Russem have made some lovely on-line videos about the [Monotype keyboard](#) and [Monotype caster](#), expertly explaining the most basic principles of the machines. Once you get a Monotype, the hard-working David Bolton of the Alembic Press has brought on-line [a great deal of reference information about Monotype casters](#). While it may still be possible to find a local retired Linotype operator to help out with your line-caster, this past year saw the introduction of "[Linotype U](#)", a week-long intensive line casting course organized by Larry Raid and modeled on *Monotype U*. In addition to learning everything about these marvelous beauties, students will get to be the engineer on Larry's full-size train on campus! For lists of Linotype serial numbers, books to read and other line-casting goodies, check out the [linotype.org](#) page, and to connect with other Linotype and Intertype fans, by all means join the friendly [slugcasters' mailing list](#). Finally, for those hardy souls interested in learning about the ancient art of casting type by hand, Neil Giroux offers more information at his [V-Nick Hand Cast Type Foundry](#), and Stan Nelson of R.S.N. ReCreations, the erstwhile Museum Specialist in the Division of Graphic Arts at the Smithsonian Institution, offers [perfectly re-created hand molds](#) for sale.

Now that you you know how to get started in letterpress, hie thyself off and start printing! When you have questions (as you surely will) or just want to warm yourself by the fire in the friendly company of fellow printers, be sure to visit the Letpress list and contribute actively. It is a very mixed bag, from a dozen different countries and with a seventy year age spread and we often digress emotionally into completely unrelated topics. However, as Winston Churchill said about democracy, "it is the worst form of government...except for all the others."

Good luck with letterpress printing (and if you have any comments, critiques, suggestions, corrections or additions that you think should be included in this Introduction, by all means please [send them along to the author](#), and they'll go into the next update!). By the way, do make it a point to stop back to this site early and often. This page is updated on a monthly basis with many new additions, link updates and other goodies, so be sure you've got the latest information.

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## Links

Following are Internet hyperlinks to all of the web sites and online resources mentioned in the foregoing text. Note that links are often highly ephemeral and subject to frequent change (or even disappearance). For the most current set of links, be sure to check out the [most recent version](#) of this Introduction, updated monthly, and if you find that any links have become invalid, please [let us know!](#)

### Letterpress Printers

Private Press movement	<a href="http://www.fiveroses.org/Letterpress.htm">http://www.fiveroses.org/Letterpress.htm</a>
Crane on Letterpress	<a href="http://www.crane.com/business/files/CranesOnLetterpress.pdf">http://www.crane.com/business/files/CranesOnLetterpress.pdf</a>
Letterpress Printers by State	<a href="http://www.crane.com/business/wheretobuy/letterpressprinters.asp">http://www.crane.com/business/wheretobuy/letterpressprinters.asp</a>
HOW Magazine's List of Printers	<a href="http://www.howdesign.com/dt/letterpressprinters.pdf">http://www.howdesign.com/dt/letterpressprinters.pdf</a>
Women Printers	<a href="http://libweb2.princeton.edu/rbsc2/ga/unseenhands/">http://libweb2.princeton.edu/rbsc2/ga/unseenhands/</a>

### Internet Mailing Lists

Introduction to the Letpress list	<a href="http://fiveroses.org/letpresslist.htm">http://fiveroses.org/letpresslist.htm</a>
Join the Letpress list	<a href="https://listserv.unb.ca/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=letpress&amp;A=1">https://listserv.unb.ca/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=letpress&amp;A=1</a>
Search the Letpress Archives	<a href="https://listserv.unb.ca/cgi-bin/wa?S1=letpress&amp;X=-">https://listserv.unb.ca/cgi-bin/wa?S1=letpress&amp;X=-</a>
Read the Letpress FAQ	<a href="http://www.greendolphinpress.com/letterpress-faq.html">http://www.greendolphinpress.com/letterpress-faq.html</a>
Visit the Book Arts-L List	<a href="http://www.philobiblon.com">http://www.philobiblon.com</a>
Find other book-related lists	<a href="http://www.philobiblon.com/lists.htm">http://www.philobiblon.com/lists.htm</a>

### National and Local Printing Groups

Amalgamated Printers' Assoc	<a href="http://www.apa-letterpress.org">http://www.apa-letterpress.org</a>
British Printing Society	<a href="http://www.bpsnet.org.uk/">http://www.bpsnet.org.uk/</a>
Boston Book Arts	<a href="http://www.bostonbookarts.org/">http://www.bostonbookarts.org/</a>
AAPA American Group List	<a href="http://members.aol.com/aapa96/local.html">http://members.aol.com/aapa96/local.html</a>
BPS British Group List	<a href="http://www.bpsnet.org.uk/page8.htm">http://www.bpsnet.org.uk/page8.htm</a>
Canadian Book Guild	<a href="http://www.cbbag.ca/">http://www.cbbag.ca/</a>
National Amateur Press Assoc	<a href="http://www.amateurpress.org/index.htm">http://www.amateurpress.org/index.htm</a>
UAPAA	<a href="http://uapaa.jarday.com/">http://uapaa.jarday.com/</a>
Gothika APA List	<a href="http://gothikapa.tripod.com/apalinks.htm">http://gothikapa.tripod.com/apalinks.htm</a>
American Printing History Assoc	<a href="http://www.printinghistory.org">http://www.printinghistory.org</a>
Printing Historical Society	<a href="http://www.printinghistoricalsociety.org.uk">http://www.printinghistoricalsociety.org.uk</a>
Fine Press Book Association	<a href="http://www.the-old-school.demon.co.uk/fpba/fpba.htm">http://www.the-old-school.demon.co.uk/fpba/fpba.htm</a>

### Online Resources

The Briar Press	<a href="http://www.briarpress.org">http://www.briarpress.org</a>
Briar Press Letterpress Directory	<a href="http://www.briarpress.org/directory/">http://www.briarpress.org/directory/</a>
PhotoPolymer Letterpress Group	<a href="http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PPLetterpress/">http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PPLetterpress/</a>
SFLetterpress Group	<a href="http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sfletterpress/">http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sfletterpress/</a>
Friends of Dard Hunter	<a href="http://groups.yahoo.com/group/dardhunter/">http://groups.yahoo.com/group/dardhunter/</a>
R-G Rummond's <i>Handpress</i>	<a href="http://letterspace.com/handpress/">http://letterspace.com/handpress/</a>
Philobiblon Letterpress Link	<a href="http://www.philobiblon.com/letprint.htm">http://www.philobiblon.com/letprint.htm</a>
Letterpress Alive in UK!	<a href="http://www.letterpressalive.co.uk/">http://www.letterpressalive.co.uk/</a>
Macintosh iCal of printer's dates	<a href="webcal://icalx.com/public/interrobang/Printing32Holidays.ics">webcal://icalx.com/public/interrobang/Printing32Holidays.ics</a>

CD of Printing-related Films	<a href="http://www.juxtapress.com/movies.htm">http://www.juxtapress.com/movies.htm</a>
Letterpress Printing in the 1960's	<a href="http://home.iprimus.com.au/billize/">http://home.iprimus.com.au/billize/</a>
Bill Ricker's Letterpress Page	<a href="http://world.std.com/~wdr/printing.html">http://world.std.com/~wdr/printing.html</a>
Matthew McClintock's Page	<a href="http://work.colum.edu/~matma/letterpress/letterpress.html">http://work.colum.edu/~matma/letterpress/letterpress.html</a>

### Print Resources

<i>The Printer</i> Newspaper	<a href="http://www.the-printer-online.com/">http://www.the-printer-online.com/</a>
<i>The Printer</i> UK subscriptions	<a href="mailto:alembicprs@aol.com">alembicprs@aol.com</a>
<i>Small Printer</i> Magazine	<a href="http://www.bpsnet.org.uk/page3.htm">http://www.bpsnet.org.uk/page3.htm</a>
Book Arts Periodicals list	<a href="http://www.bookarts.com/bad0n.htm">http://www.bookarts.com/bad0n.htm</a>
<i>Book Arts Classified</i>	<a href="http://www.bookarts.com/bac.htm">http://www.bookarts.com/bac.htm</a>
<i>Type &amp; Press</i> Back Issues	<a href="http://www.apa-letterpress.org/Files/APA/TP/TPIndexpage.html">http://www.apa-letterpress.org/Files/APA/TP/TPIndexpage.html</a>
Book Dealers in the Book Arts	<a href="http://www.fiveroses.org/bibliography.htm#Dealers">www.fiveroses.org/bibliography.htm#Dealers</a>
<i>Matrix</i>	<a href="http://www.whittingtonpress.com/#Matrix">http://www.whittingtonpress.com/#Matrix</a>

### Classes and Academic Programs

University of Alabama Book Arts	<a href="http://www.bookarts.ua.edu">http://www.bookarts.ua.edu</a>
SUNY Purchase MFA	<a href="http://www.purchase.edu/academics/artdesign/mfa.asp">http://www.purchase.edu/academics/artdesign/mfa.asp</a>
Columbia College	<a href="http://www.bookandpaper.org/home.html">http://www.bookandpaper.org/home.html</a>
Philadelphia University of the Arts	<a href="http://www.uarts.edu/text/graduate/bookprint.shtml">http://www.uarts.edu/text/graduate/bookprint.shtml</a>
Regional Book Arts Programs	<a href="http://www.philobiblon.com/programs.htm">http://www.philobiblon.com/programs.htm</a>
Center for Book Arts	<a href="http://www.centerforbookarts.org/">http://www.centerforbookarts.org/</a>
Minnesota Center for Book Arts	<a href="http://www.mnbookarts.org/">http://www.mnbookarts.org/</a>
SF Center for the Book	<a href="http://www.sfcbook.org/">http://www.sfcbook.org/</a>
LA Book Arts Center	<a href="http://www.labookarts.com/">http://www.labookarts.com/</a>
Book Arts League	<a href="http://www.bookartsleague.org/">http://www.bookartsleague.org/</a>
Cincinnati Book Arts Society	<a href="http://www.cincinnati-bookarts.org/">http://www.cincinnati-bookarts.org/</a>
Alembic Press Classes	<a href="http://members.aol.com/alembicprs/index.htm#work">http://members.aol.com/alembicprs/index.htm#work</a>
London College of Printing	<a href="http://www.lcp.linst.ac.uk/">http://www.lcp.linst.ac.uk/</a>
Scuola Internazionale di Grafica	<a href="http://www.scuolagrafica.it/">http://www.scuolagrafica.it/</a>
Rare Book School at UVA	<a href="http://www.rarebookschool.org">http://www.rarebookschool.org</a>
Paper & Book Intensive	<a href="http://www.paperbookintensive.org/">http://www.paperbookintensive.org/</a>
Binding Study Opportunities	<a href="http://www.hewitt.com/studyopps.htm">http://www.hewitt.com/studyopps.htm</a>

### Printing Museums

Gutenberg Museum	<a href="http://www.gutenberg.de/english/index.htm">http://www.gutenberg.de/english/index.htm</a>
Plantin Moretus	<a href="http://museum.antwerpen.be/plantin_moretus/index_eng.html">http://museum.antwerpen.be/plantin_moretus/index_eng.html</a>
Mississippi Ag Museum	<a href="http://www.mdac.state.ms.us/Library/BBC/AgMuseum/AgForMuseum.html">http://www.mdac.state.ms.us/Library/BBC/AgMuseum/AgForMuseum.html</a>
Museum of Printing (MA)	<a href="http://www.museumofprinting.org/">http://www.museumofprinting.org/</a>
Museum of Printing History (TX)	<a href="http://www.printingmuseum.org/">http://www.printingmuseum.org/</a>
Int'l Printing Museum (CA)	<a href="http://www.printmuseum.org/">http://www.printmuseum.org/</a>
Smithsonian Institution	<a href="http://americanhistory.si.edu/youmus/ex25prgr.htm">http://americanhistory.si.edu/youmus/ex25prgr.htm</a>
Hamilton Wood Type Museum	<a href="http://www.woodtype.org/">http://www.woodtype.org/</a>
Museum of Papermaking	<a href="http://www.ipst.gatech.edu/amp/">http://www.ipst.gatech.edu/amp/</a>
An American Time Capsule	<a href="http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/rbpehtml/pehome.html">http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/rbpehtml/pehome.html</a>
Printing Museums Worldwide	<a href="http://www.letterpress.ch/LINKS.html">http://www.letterpress.ch/LINKS.html</a>
Association Lettres & Images	<a href="http://www.letterpress.ch">http://www.letterpress.ch</a>
AAPA Museum List	<a href="http://members.aol.com/aapa96/museums.html">http://members.aol.com/aapa96/museums.html</a>
Virginia Tech Museum List	<a href="http://teched.vt.edu/gcc/PDFs/PrintingMuseumsWorld2.pdf">http://teched.vt.edu/gcc/PDFs/PrintingMuseumsWorld2.pdf</a>
PageTwo Museum List	<a href="http://www.bookarts.com/bad0l.htm">http://www.bookarts.com/bad0l.htm</a>

### Letterpress & Book Arts Manuals

Kelsey Printing Manual Online	<a href="http://www.donblack.ca/kelsey/intro.htm">http://www.donblack.ca/kelsey/intro.htm</a>
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Flywheel & Cylinder Manuals	<a href="http://www.boxcarpress.com/flywheel/">http://www.boxcarpress.com/flywheel/</a>
Carnegie Mellon Online Manuals	<a href="http://www.oakknoll.com/digitalbooks.php">http://www.oakknoll.com/digitalbooks.php</a>
Annotated Bibliography	<a href="http://www.fiveroses.org/bibliography.htm">http://www.fiveroses.org/bibliography.htm</a>
Oak Knoll Books	<a href="http://www.oakknoll.com/">http://www.oakknoll.com/</a>
The Veatchs	<a href="http://www.veatchs.com/">http://www.veatchs.com/</a>
Frances Wakeman Books	<a href="http://www.fwbooks.com/">http://www.fwbooks.com/</a>
Forest Books	<a href="http://www.forestbooks.co.uk">http://www.forestbooks.co.uk</a>
Children's Book Arts books	<a href="http://exit3.i-55.com/~anthill/bkartkid.html">http://exit3.i-55.com/~anthill/bkartkid.html</a>
Book Arts Dealers	<a href="http://www.fiveroses.org/bibliography.htm#Dealers">www.fiveroses.org/bibliography.htm#Dealers</a>
Antiquarian Book Dealers	<a href="http://www.ilab.org">http://www.ilab.org</a>
Amazon.com	<a href="http://www.amazon.com">http://www.amazon.com</a>
BookFinder.com	<a href="http://www.BookFinder.com">http://www.BookFinder.com</a>
FetchBook.Info	<a href="http://www.FetchBook.Info">http://www.FetchBook.Info</a>

### Letterpress Equipment

Briar Press Online Museum	<a href="http://www.briarpress.org/museum/">http://www.briarpress.org/museum/</a>
Common Press Experiences	<a href="http://www.neilgiroux.com/995/index.php?page=4">http://www.neilgiroux.com/995/index.php?page=4</a>
Type & Press Articles on Presses	<a href="http://www.apa-letterpress.org/Files/TP/TP_Index.html">http://www.apa-letterpress.org/Files/TP/TP_Index.html</a>
Choosing a Tabletop Platen	<a href="http://www.donblack.ca/first-press.htm">http://www.donblack.ca/first-press.htm</a>
1908 Golding Press Catalog	<a href="http://www.greenapple.com/~aapa/golding/goldingcatalog.pdf">http://www.greenapple.com/~aapa/golding/goldingcatalog.pdf</a>
C&P Press Restoration	<a href="http://www.preservation.gc.ca/facts/jack_e.asp">http://www.preservation.gc.ca/facts/jack_e.asp</a>
Colt's catalogs and manuals	<a href="http://www.petrzelka.com/letterpress/letterpress.html">http://www.petrzelka.com/letterpress/letterpress.html</a>
Brandtjen & Kluge	<a href="http://www.brandtjenandkluge.com/company.htm">http://www.brandtjenandkluge.com/company.htm</a>
M. Swift & Sons Stamping Foil	<a href="http://www.mswiftandsons.com/hotdie.html">http://www.mswiftandsons.com/hotdie.html</a>
Wilden's Vandercook Reference	<a href="http://mwilden.com/vandercook/">http://mwilden.com/vandercook/</a>
Ten Presses Video	<a href="mailto:scotfre@aol.com">scotfre@aol.com</a>

### Letterpress Dealers

Don Black Linecasting	<a href="http://www.donblack.ca/">http://www.donblack.ca/</a>
Dave Churchman	<a href="mailto:churchmans@comcast.net">churchmans@comcast.net</a>
John Barrett	<a href="mailto:Letterpressting@aol.com">Letterpressting@aol.com</a>
Jim Heagy	<a href="http://stores.ebay.com/SAN-FRANCISCO-SURPLUS_Type-letterpress">http://stores.ebay.com/SAN-FRANCISCO-SURPLUS_Type-letterpress</a>
eBay Printing Auctions	<a href="http://search.ebay.com/letterpress">http://search.ebay.com/letterpress</a>
Specialized Machinery Riggers	<a href="http://dmoz.org/Business/Industrial_Goods_and_Services/Casting,_Molding,_Machining/Machine_Shops/Millwright_and_Rigging/">http://dmoz.org/Business/Industrial_Goods_and_Services/Casting,_Molding,_Machining/Machine_Shops/Millwright_and_Rigging/</a>

### Letterpress Printing Suppliers

Briar Press Printing Glossary	<a href="http://www.oneart.com/cgi-bin/briarpress/glossary.cgi">http://www.oneart.com/cgi-bin/briarpress/glossary.cgi</a>
Overview of Printing Supplies	<a href="http://my.execpc.com/~bosshard/printing/letrprss/basictools.html">http://my.execpc.com/~bosshard/printing/letrprss/basictools.html</a>
Making a Printer's Hat	<a href="http://www.ehhs.cmich.edu/~dhavlena/pressman.gif">http://www.ehhs.cmich.edu/~dhavlena/pressman.gif</a>
Skyline Type Foundry	<a href="http://www.skylinetype.com/">http://www.skylinetype.com/</a>
Vintage Sign Company	<a href="http://www.vintagesigns.com/">http://www.vintagesigns.com/</a>
NA Graphics	<a href="mailto:nagraph@frontier.net">nagraph@frontier.net</a>
American Printing Equipment	<a href="http://www.americanprintingequipment.com/letterpresssupplies.htm">http://www.americanprintingequipment.com/letterpresssupplies.htm</a>
Valley Litho (inks)	<a href="http://www.valleylitho.com/">http://www.valleylitho.com/</a>
Dave Celani's Ink Tube Tutorial	<a href="http://www.davecelani.com/Ink.html">http://www.davecelani.com/Ink.html</a>
J & L Industrial Supply	<a href="http://www.jlindustrial.com">http://www.jlindustrial.com</a>
McClain's Printmaking Supplies	<a href="http://www.imcclains.com/">http://www.imcclains.com/</a>
Linoleum Blocks	<a href="http://www.rembrandtgraphicarts.com/02_rga_cat.html">http://www.rembrandtgraphicarts.com/02_rga_cat.html</a>
Boxcar Press	<a href="http://www.boxcarpres.com">http://www.boxcarpres.com</a>
Photopolymer Plates	<a href="http://www.photopolymerplates.com/">http://www.photopolymerplates.com/</a>
Owosso Graphic Arts	<a href="http://www.owossographic.com/">http://www.owossographic.com/</a>
Molberg's Primer on Die Cutting	<a href="http://hermes.csd.unb.ca/bin/wa?A2=ind0208&amp;L=letpress&amp;P=R852">http://hermes.csd.unb.ca/bin/wa?A2=ind0208&amp;L=letpress&amp;P=R852</a>

Tarheel Roller & Brayer	<a href="http://www4.ncsu.edu/~bdhauser/tarheelroller.htm">http://www4.ncsu.edu/~bdhauser/tarheelroller.htm</a>
Caslon Ltd.	<a href="http://www.caslon.co.uk/html/adana.html">http://www.caslon.co.uk/html/adana.html</a>
Talas	<a href="http://talasonline.net/">http://talasonline.net/</a>
McMaster-Carr	<a href="http://www.mcmaster.com/">http://www.mcmaster.com/</a>

### Paper and Papermaking

Twinrocker Mill	<a href="http://www.twinrocker.com/">http://www.twinrocker.com/</a>
ArtPaper.com	<a href="http://www.artpaper.com/">http://www.artpaper.com/</a>
Paper Catalog	<a href="http://www.thepapercatalog.com">http://www.thepapercatalog.com</a>
John Purcell Paper	<a href="http://www.johnpurcell.net/">http://www.johnpurcell.net/</a>
PaperPresentation	<a href="http://www.paperpresentation.com">http://www.paperpresentation.com</a>
ANW Crestwood	<a href="http://www.anwcrestwood.com/">http://www.anwcrestwood.com/</a>
Kinsella Art Papers	<a href="http://kinsellaartpapers.com/">http://kinsellaartpapers.com/</a>
LCI Papers	<a href="http://www.lcipaper.com/">http://www.lcipaper.com/</a>
Dolphin Papers	<a href="mailto:Dolphinpapers@SBCGlobal.net">Dolphinpapers@SBCGlobal.net</a>
New York Central Art Supply	<a href="http://www.nycentralart.com/">http://www.nycentralart.com/</a>
American Coaster Company	<a href="http://www.american-coaster.com/">http://www.american-coaster.com/</a>
Dieu Donn� Paper Mill	<a href="http://www.dieudonne.org/">http://www.dieudonne.org/</a>
Mission Creek Press	<a href="http://www.missioncreekpress.com/">http://www.missioncreekpress.com/</a>
Wisc. Center for Book & Paper	<a href="http://www.wibookandpaper.org/">http://www.wibookandpaper.org/</a>

### Bookbinding

Binding Tutorials	<a href="http://www.philobiblon.com/tutorials.htm">http://www.philobiblon.com/tutorials.htm</a>
Single-section Binding	<a href="http://www.staff.ncl.ac.uk/owen.bradford/singlesection.html">http://www.staff.ncl.ac.uk/owen.bradford/singlesection.html</a>
Side-stab Binding	<a href="http://www.sff.net/people/Brook.West/bind/bindit.html">http://www.sff.net/people/Brook.West/bind/bindit.html</a>
Bookbinding Bibliography	<a href="http://www.philobiblon.com/bibliography-bookbinding.htm">http://www.philobiblon.com/bibliography-bookbinding.htm</a>
Binding Study Opportunities	<a href="http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/byorg/gbw/studyopp.shtml">http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/byorg/gbw/studyopp.shtml</a>
NSW Guild of Craft Bookbinders	<a href="http://www.nswbookbinders.org.au">http://www.nswbookbinders.org.au</a>
Bookbinding Home Study Video	<a href="http://www.cbbag.ca/HomeStudy.htm">http://www.cbbag.ca/HomeStudy.htm</a>
Hand Book Binders	<a href="http://www.philobiblon.com/binder.htm">http://www.philobiblon.com/binder.htm</a>
Searchable Database of Binders	<a href="http://nt.bnt.com/talas/searchbusiness.html">http://nt.bnt.com/talas/searchbusiness.html</a>

### Printing Type

Index to ATF/BBS Type Catalogs	<a href="http://www.greenapple.com/~aapa/atf/">http://www.greenapple.com/~aapa/atf/</a>
Lokes Pinmark Reference Lib	<a href="http://www.briarpress.org/pinmarks/">http://www.briarpress.org/pinmarks/</a>
Identifont®	<a href="http://www.identifont.com/">http://www.identifont.com/</a>
Fontscape	<a href="http://www.fontscape.com/">http://www.fontscape.com/</a>
Font Spotting by Mike Yanega	<a href="http://bowfinprintworks.com/FontSpotting.html">http://bowfinprintworks.com/FontSpotting.html</a>
Dover Clip Art of Type & Cuts	<a href="http://store.yahoo.com/doverpublications/0486260232.html">http://store.yahoo.com/doverpublications/0486260232.html</a>
Typographic Aficionados	<a href="http://www.typesociety.org/">http://www.typesociety.org/</a>
TypeCon	<a href="http://www.typecon2003.com/">http://www.typecon2003.com/</a>
Dale Guild	<a href="http://www.daleguild.com/">http://www.daleguild.com/</a>
Schriftenservice	<a href="http://www.schriftenservice-d-stempel.de/schrift.htm">http://www.schriftenservice-d-stempel.de/schrift.htm</a>
M&H Type	<a href="http://www.arionpress.com/mandh/index.htm">http://www.arionpress.com/mandh/index.htm</a>
Sterling Type Foundry	<a href="http://www.sterlingtype.com/">http://www.sterlingtype.com/</a>
AAPA Foundry List	<a href="http://members.aol.com/aapa96/foundry.html">http://members.aol.com/aapa96/foundry.html</a>
Phil Ambrosi	<a href="mailto:ambrosi.printers@sasktel.net">ambrosi.printers@sasktel.net</a>
Michael & Winifred Bixler	<a href="http://www.mwbixler.com/">http://www.mwbixler.com/</a>
Swamp Press	<a href="mailto:ed@swamppress.com">ed@swamppress.com</a>
New Hamilton Wood Type	<a href="http://www.woodtype.org/items_for_sale.shtml">http://www.woodtype.org/items_for_sale.shtml</a>
Wilden's SortSnorter	<a href="http://mwilden.com/sortsnorter/">http://mwilden.com/sortsnorter/</a>

### Type Casting

Dave Seat Hot Metal Services	<a href="http://www.gohotmetal.com/">http://www.gohotmetal.com/</a>
Marlboro Mats	<a href="http://www.marlboromats.com/">http://www.marlboromats.com/</a>
Don Black Linecasting	<a href="http://www.donblack.ca/">http://www.donblack.ca/</a>
Skyline Type Mats	<a href="http://www.skylinetype.com/">http://www.skylinetype.com/</a>
Monotype U	<a href="mailto:wvtypenut@aol.com">wvtypenut@aol.com</a>
Monotype Keyboard Videos	<a href="http://www.katranpress.com/ephemera/index.html">http://www.katranpress.com/ephemera/index.html</a>
Monotype Caster Videos	<a href="http://www.katranpress.com/elston/index.html">http://www.katranpress.com/elston/index.html</a>
Monotype Caster References	<a href="http://members.aol.com/typecaster/mono.htm">http://members.aol.com/typecaster/mono.htm</a>
Linotype U	<a href="http://www.linotypeuniversity.com/">http://www.linotypeuniversity.com/</a>
Linotype.org	<a href="http://www.linotype.org/">http://www.linotype.org/</a>
Slugcasters' Mailing List	<a href="http://groups.yahoo.com/group/IntertypeWorld/">http://groups.yahoo.com/group/IntertypeWorld/</a>
Hand Cast Type Foundry	<a href="http://www.neilgiroux.com/995/index.php?page=3">http://www.neilgiroux.com/995/index.php?page=3</a>
Stan Nelson's hand type molds	<a href="http://www.geocities.com/rsn_website/recreations.html">http://www.geocities.com/rsn_website/recreations.html</a>

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