

Gutenberg Books

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Before the Gutenberg Press

- Before Gutenberg invented the Gutenberg Press, all books were hand done.
- This made books available only to the rich, which made everybody else illiterate.
- The Gutenberg press allowed mass production of books without a sacrifice to quality.

Gutenberg Press

- Johann Gutenberg, the inventor of the Gutenberg Press, was born around 1400 and died in 1468.
- The first book Gutenberg printed was the Bible.
- Gutenberg did not make a lot of money from his invention.

The Press

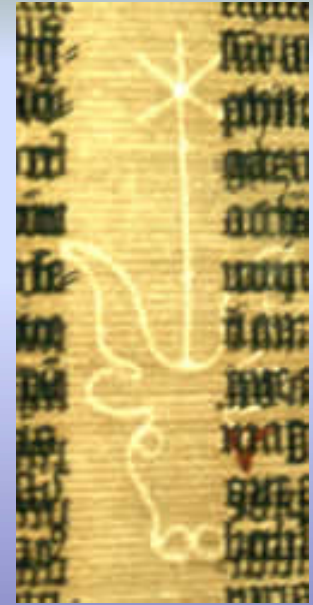
- Before Gutenberg books were made by pressing stamps onto the paper.
- Because Gutenberg was raised in a wine-producing area of Germany, he would have been familiar with the wine press.
- The printing press was essential in making the book making process fast and cheap.
- Nobody knows what the press looked like, but it was improved in the 1470s, making printing even faster.

The Ink

- Gutenberg even made a new type of ink, that was more like a varnish or paint. He had to do this because ink would just run off the press.
- Gutenberg's ink has a glittering surface. This is because the ink has a high metal content, including copper, lead and titanium.
- The printing ink was made in batches, by hand.

The Paper

- Paper is a Chinese invention.
- European paper was made with linen. The linen was soaked and beaten into a pulp, and then put in a frame that let the water dry out, leaving a thin layer on linen.
- 15th century paper is high-quality
- Paper can be identified by the watermarks. In the Gutenberg Bible, about 70% of the paper has an ox head water mark, 20% a bunch of grapes, and 10% a walking ox.



Vellum

- Before paper, books were written on specially prepared animal skins, called Vellum.
- Vellum was thought to last longer, so it was used for schoolbooks.
- Vellum was also more expensive.
- Of the 48 remaining copies of the Gutenberg Bible, 12 are printed on Vellum.

Compositors

- The compositors job was to compose type together to form words, lines, and pages.
- The compositor worked from a manuscript, so he had to be able to read.
- Experts think that there were 6 different compositors working on the Guttenberg Bible

How many Gutenberg Bibles are there?

- Reports say that Gutenberg created around 180 copies of the Bible.
- Gutenberg printed about 135 copies on paper, and 45 copies on vellum.
- There are 48 copies remaining, and not all of them are complete.
- Of the 12 vellum copies only 4 are complete, and only 12 paper copies are complete.

Facts

- Gutenberg changed plans at least three times while printing the Bible
- Gutenberg's financial backer took over the invention
- Gutenberg printed the Bible in a Latin translation from about 380AD
- It took the skin from about 170 calves to print a single Bible on calf's skin
- It is still debated how Gutenberg made his type
- Gutenberg's Bibles had to be finished by hand
- Gutenberg also printed schoolbooks
- Gutenberg experimented with making special mirrors for pilgrims

Bibliography

Almost all the information in this power point presentation came from

<http://www.bl.uk/treasures/gutenberg/homepage.html>