

# GET A GRIP WITH THE EZ BOOK CLIP

by Linda Dangelo

**A CLIP IS A CLIP IS A CLIP, YOU SAY?** Not so. Consider the ubiquitous hair clip, chip clip, binder clip, paper clip.

Florence Halstead's clever little clip may look like any other ... but looks can be deceiving.

Halstead's patented invention was the brainchild of a lost cause. The avid reader, health-care administrator (and now inventor), was simply tired of losing her place and fumbling to keep the pages of her books open. Over the years she had purchased various book and page holders, but none were small or easy enough to use on a regular basis, so, in 2000, she decided to create her own.

Halstead, of El Cerrito, Calif., manipulated a piece of coat hanger wire until



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Easy Book Clip's unique design makes it light weight and portable. Works for hardbacks, paperbacks, sheet music, cookbooks, magazines and more. Avid readers love its simplicity and ease of use.

it formed the shape she sought. "It was pretty primitive," she says, "I kept cutting and bending and trying to make it better." She turned to her friends for critical advice and, after extending the "legs" of the page holder, voila! It worked!

Really, she wasn't looking to sell her clips. At least not until people on her

morning train commute started asking where they could buy them. So, rather than miss a good opportunity, Halstead searched the yellow pages for wire manufacturers, found a local company

and discussed various options with them. After placing an initial order of 1,000 3" by 3" steel clips, Halstead

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## S U C C E S S S T O R Y

learned that she could probably have received better pricing if she looked for a manufacturer overseas. "Everyone I talked to said I needed to sell [the clips] for less than five dollars apiece, and I couldn't realize a profit if I manufactured them locally and sold them at that price," she shares. "I found an overseas manufacturer through extensive internet searching, but since learned at an inventor's meeting that I could have saved a lot of time and energy by consulting with a 'sourcing' company." Halstead offers that since attending inventors group meetings in Santa Clara and Santa Rosa (see our list of inventor organizations throughout the

country on page 50) she has gained so much knowledge about the inventing process. "Already the groups have been helpful in providing information and networking for licensing, not to mention stimulating marketing ideas."

While waiting for the book clips to be made, Halstead designed packaging and counter display boxes. "The day I got the clips back from the manufacturer," she says, "I packaged some up and took them to a local ergonomics store and made my first sale. That store continues to be my best customer!"

Today, the EZ Book Clip sells through book and ergonomic stores, in a UK catalog, *alex* ([www.serious-readers.com](http://www.serious-readers.com)), and on the Internet at [www.ezbookclip.com](http://www.ezbookclip.com) for \$4.95.

Halstead is also keeping her fingers crossed, as she is currently negotiating with two major outlets that may be interested in buying larger quantities of her product.

EZ Book Clip is finding a home with avid readers, computer users, cooks and college students. Halstead has even created a "medallion" book clip that can be personalized and used as a corporate or personal gift. "With increased interest in our book clips, and thousand of satisfied customers," she shares, "I keep a positive outlook that we will get the kind of sales that will result in an even bigger success."

And you read about it here first. 