

Level Three – Blue Rope

Level Three consists of a combination of six fishing knots that work well in monofilament fishing line, two climbing knots and two knots used to secure heavy loads. Monofilament fishing line is made from various plastics and is prone to slipping. Regular knots used on a multi-stranded ropes do not hold well in monofilament so fishermen have developed ways to handle this problem. Take special note of the comments on line size, number of turns and always remember to wet the knot (with saliva) before drawing it tight.

The instructions for tying knots use some general terms and you will see them used for the fishing knots as well. Something to realize with fishing knots is that you work with only one end of the line. The “standing part” refers to the long portion of line that goes to the fishing reel. As before, the “tag end” is just that, the end of the line.

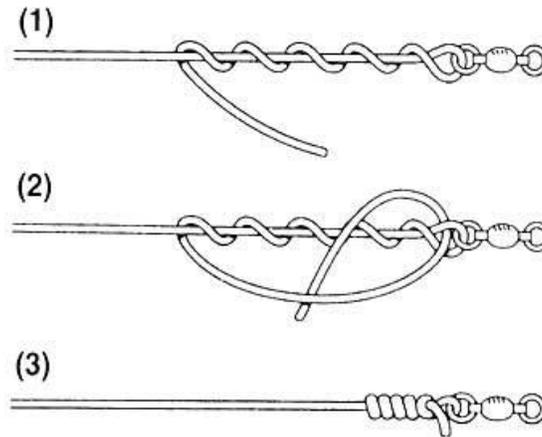
Fishermen often use a short, heavier (stronger) piece of monofilament called a leader at the end of the regular line to prevent a fish from biting through it. Other times a loop is used to tie on a lure so it moves more freely. When you start learning fishing knots you will find that there are dozens, even hundreds, of special purpose fishing knots!

When you tighten a knot tied with monofilament you typically only pull on one end (usually the standing part) and let the knot slip until it tightens up completely. At that point you can trim the tag end close to the knot. Fishermen often use a pair of common nail clippers to trim the tag end close. You need to be careful tightening fishing knots for two reasons. Monofilament can easily cut your skin. Also, more importantly, when you’re tying on a hook or a lure there’s a sharp, barbed point that doesn’t pull out of skin very easily if you get stuck with it. It’s always best to hold a hook with a pair of pliers (needle nose pliers work best) when you’re tightening the knot.

The last four knots can prove useful in various situations. The two loop knots allow you to tie a secure knot in the middle of a rope without using the ends. The two packing knots have been used to tie camping and prospecting equipment to the back of a mule or onto a pack frame, or to tie down a canoe to the top of a car.

Improved Clinch Knot

The Improved Clinch Knot is the most common way to attach a hook or swivel to monofilament. All fishing knots have to be drawn up tight to prevent them from slipping or coming undone. There’s nothing worse than after losing a fish to see a tight little curlicue of line at the tag end indicating that your knot slipped lose. Unfortunately I know this feeling from first-hand experience!

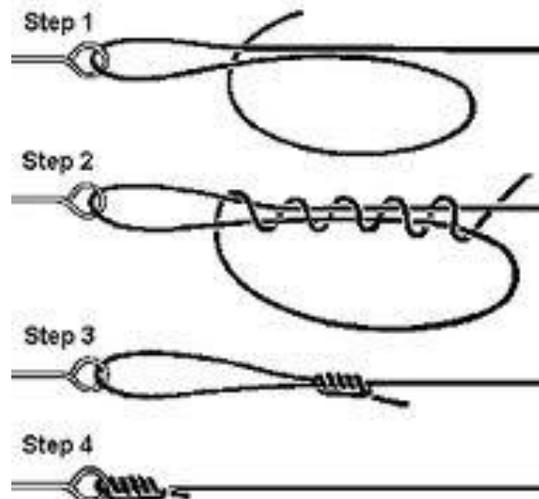


The Improved Clinch Knot is a little more difficult to tie in monofilament line in excess of 30 lb test. Five turns around the standing part are generally recommended.

Thread the tag end of the line through the eye of the hook, swivel or lure. Double back and make five or more turns around the standing part (picture 1). Bring the tag end back through the first loop formed behind the eye, and then through the big loop as shown in picture 2.

Wet the knot and pull slightly on the tag end to take up some of the slack. Pull on the standing part to form the knot with the coils all pressed neatly together. Keep pulling until the coils are pressed tight against the eye (picture 3). Clip of the tag end.

Uni Knot



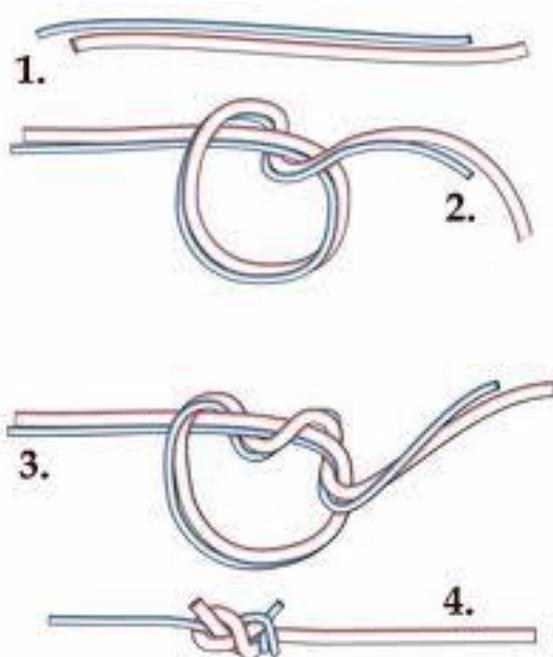
The Uni Knot is a good alternative to the Improved Clinch Knot. It's very reliable and easy to tie. This is a good knot to use when it's getting dark and you can't see as well.

Run the tag end through the eye of a hook or lure and double back parallel to the standing line. Make a loop by laying the tag end over the double line (step 1). Make six turns with the tag end around the double line and through the loop (step 2).

Moisten the lines and pull the tag end to snug up the turns (step 3). Slide the knot down tight to the eye (step 4). You can also leave a small loop if desired for better movement if you're using a lure. The loop will slip tight as soon as you set the hook.

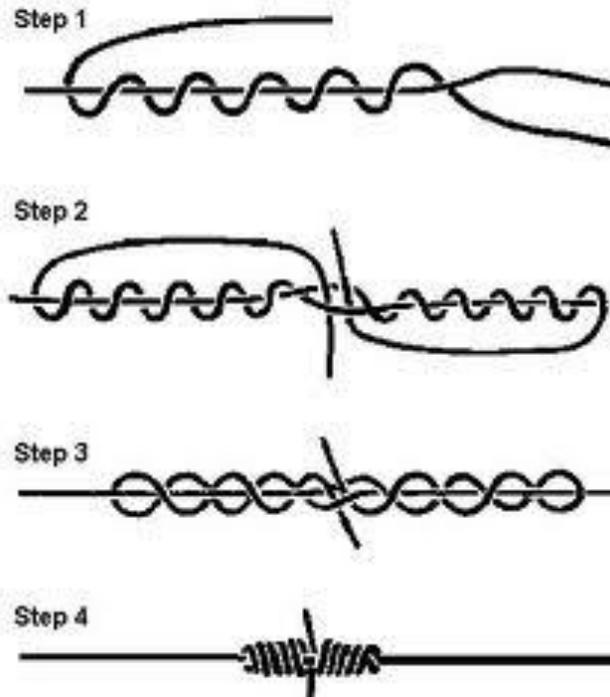
Surgeons Knot

The Surgeons Knot is one of the quickest and strongest knots for joining leader to line with unequal diameters. Don't get confused when looking at the drawings of this simple knot. The drawings do not show the full leader length. Just remember to pass the tag end of the line and the entire leader through the loop twice. Moisten the lines and pull all four ends tight.



Blood Knot

Use this knot to tie sections of leader or line together. It works best with lines of approximately equal diameter. Another words, don't use this knot to tie a 30 lb test leader to a 10 lb test line. Use the Surgeons Knot instead.



Overlap the two tag ends of the lines to be joined. Twist one around the other (it doesn't matter which one you start with) making five turns. Bring the tag end back between the two lines. Repeat with the other tag end, wrapping in the opposite direction the same number of turns. Bring the second tag end back through what is now a loop between the two lines. Make sure to bring it through in the opposite direction you used with the first line.

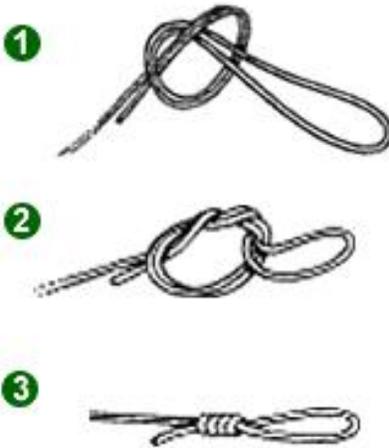
Moisten the lines and slowly pull both standing ends apart. The turns will tighten, gather together, and slide next to each other. Pull tight and clip off the tag ends closely.

Surgeons End Loop

The Surgeons End Loop is used to form a loop at the end of a line. The loop will let you quickly attach and remove a leader that has been tied with another loop. You can also use it to attach terminal tackle like a lure or swivel by pinching the loop together, sliding it through the eye, pulling out enough slack to get the loop over the lure, and tightening it back up by pulling on the standing part to draw the loop down on the eye.

This loop is easy to tie and reliable. Begin by forming a large bight to double the line. Tie a loose overhand knot. Pass the end of the loop through the overhand knot again to double it. You can even triple it but this is usually not needed.

Moisten the lines and tighten by holding the loop and pulling on the standing part. Clip off the tag end close to the knot.

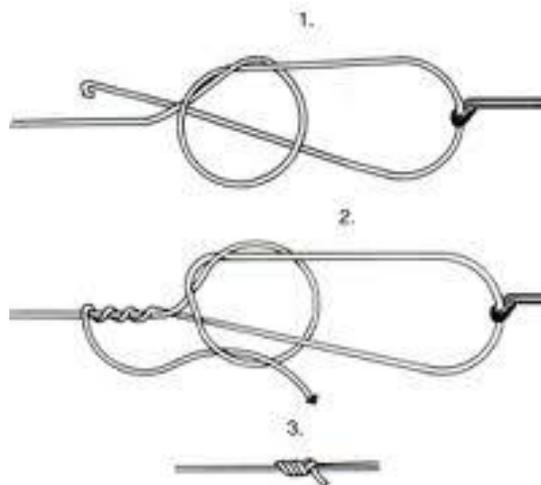


Non-Slip Mono Loop Knot

This is a great knot to use when you want to tie on a lure with a loop to give it better motion. Unlike using the Uni Knot to form a loop, this knot remains tight and won't slip.

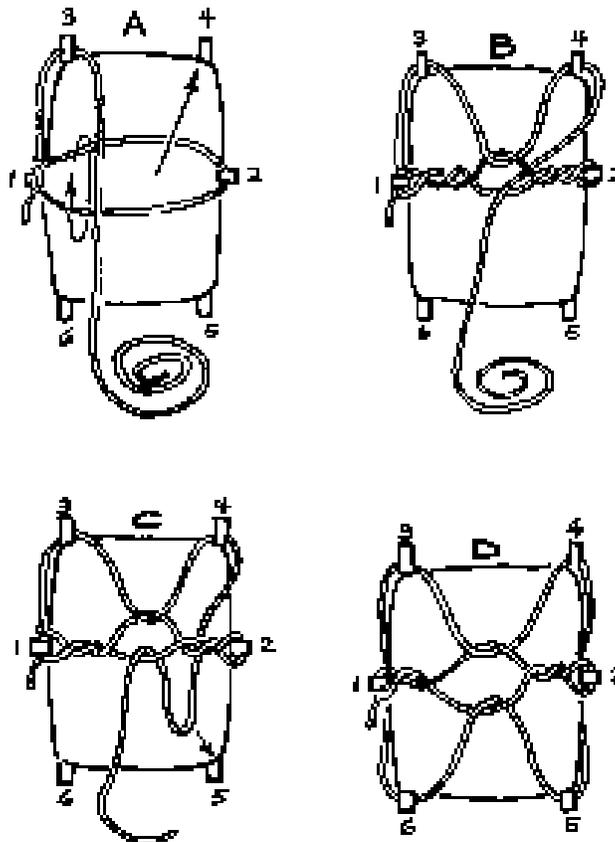
Start by making an overhand knot in the standing part about 10 – 12 inches from the tag end. Pass the tag end through the eye of the lure or hook, and back through the overhand knot. Wrap the tag end around the standing part 5 or 6 times. Bring the tag end back through the overhand knot, entering from the same side of the overhand knot that it came out from before.

Moisten the lines and pull slowly on the tag end to bring the wraps loosely together. Then pull the loop and the standing part in opposite directions to firmly seat the knot. Clip off the tag end close to the knot.

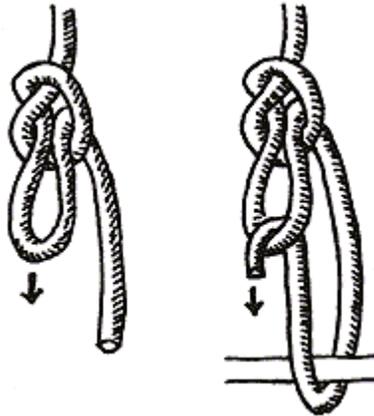


Diamond Hitch

The Diamond Hitch is a useful way to tie down a bulky load. The illustration shows a pack frame but the hitch was also used by prospectors to secure their supplies and equipment to a mule. The primary advantage to the Diamond Hitch is that the line that forms the "X" is one continuous piece, making the hitch easy to adjust and tighten.



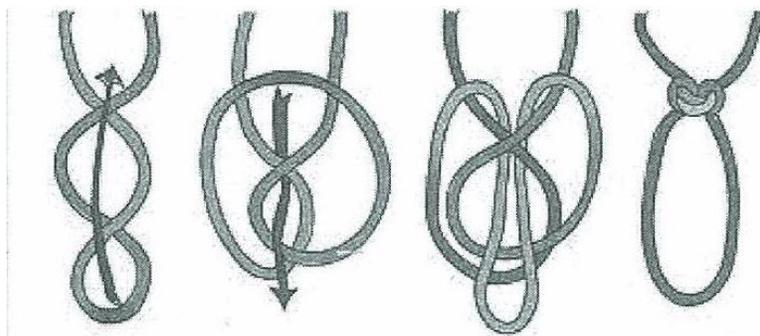
Truckers Hitch



The Trucker's Hitch has the distinctive feature of providing a three-to-one mechanical advantage (like a pulley) when being tightened. It's a valuable knot – particularly for securing loads or tarpaulins, or tying a canoe down to the top of a car.

There are several variations of the knot, all of which use a loop in the standing part of the rope as a make-shift pulley in order to obtain a three-to-one mechanical advantage. The hitch above is not as widely used today because straps and mechanical ratchets have gained in popularity. The hitch is composed of three parts: a loop, a purchase, and Two Half Hitches. An eye is formed by twisting the rope after which a loop is passed through the eye. The purchase is then created by passing the free end around the roof rack and then back through the loop. After tightening, the tag end is used to tie a Two Half Hitches below the original loop to hold everything secure.

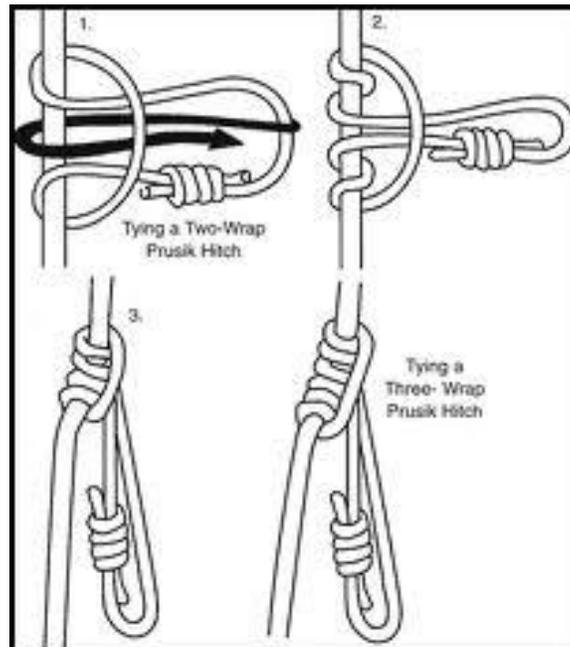
Alpine Butterfly



The Alpine Butterfly provides a secure loop in the middle of a piece of rope that won't slip. Loads can safely be applied from the loop to either end of the rope, between the two ends with the loop hanging free or, to the loop with the load spread between the two ends.

It is useful anytime a secure loop is required in the middle of a rope. A good example is when a line of hikers wish to hook on along a length of a shared rope.

Prusik Knot



At first look the Prusik Knot appears to do the same thing as the Alpine Butterfly knot but there is a major difference. The Alpine Butterfly Knot is tied in the middle of a rope using the rope itself to tie the knot. The Prusik Knot is used to tie a second rope to the main line. The Prusik Knot can also be slid or moved along the line without un-tying.

Camp Gadget

This is an opportunity to use your imagination and knot skills to create a camp gadget. Some suggestions are:

- Pack holder or pack frame
- Table
- Chair
- Camp entrance/gateway
- Paper towel holder
- Rain gage
- Flag pole
- Trash bag holder
- Chef kit (utensil) holder