

Level Four – Red Rope

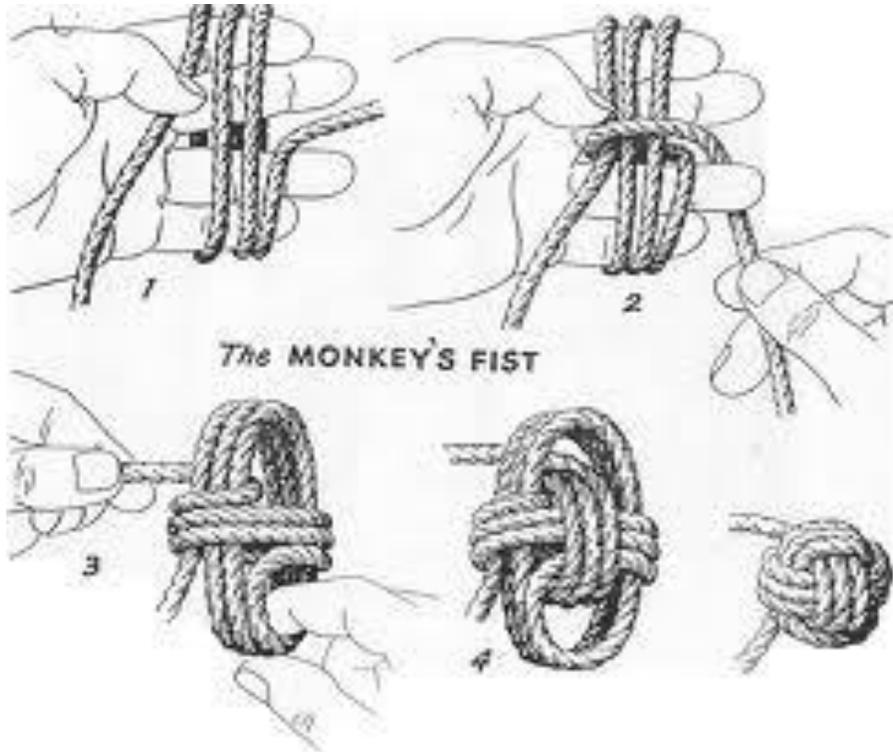
Level Four consists of a combination of more difficult, decorative and useful knots. These knots will challenge your knot tying capability and prepare you for the “Knot Master” level. The Turks Head, or “Woggle” is probably the most popular because of its use as a neckerchief slide. The Bowtie Knot is included to demonstrate some unique knots that have an interesting history.

Turks Head



Turks Head knots are often tied around cylindrical objects. To tie a Turks Head around a post of some kind, first tie a basic overhand knot around the object (picture 1). Bring the working end of the rope behind the object (to the left of the overhand knot) and around to the front at the bottom of the object. Then thread it through the overhand knot as in picture 2. Bring the working end back towards the left, over the first strand and under the second strand (picture 3). Now bring the working end behind the object (to the left of the knot) and around to the front at the bottom again, then thread it over-under-over as in picture 4. Now bring the working end behind the object (to the right of the knot) and around to the front at the bottom, and you have completed a single strand Turks Head. If you thread the working end of the rope all the way through the knot again, precisely following the original path, you will have a two strand Turks Head (picture 5). Repeat again for a three strand knot and tighten carefully by starting at the beginning and pulling out some of the slack and working all of the way through. You will probably have to do this a couple of times to get it to the size you want.

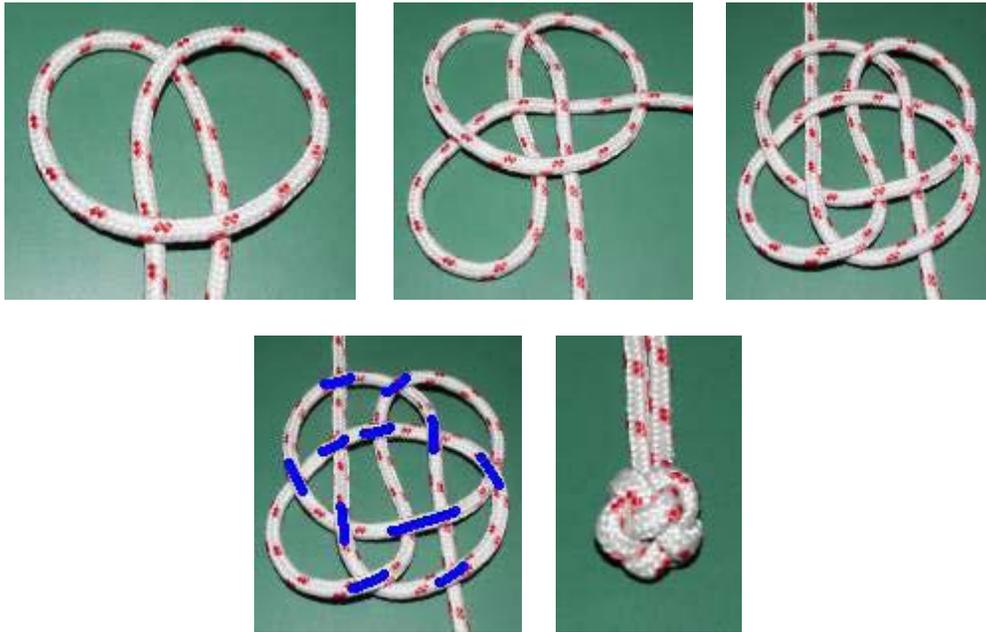
Monkey's Fist



A Monkey's Fist Knot is so named because it looks something like a small bunched fist or paw. It also looks kind of like a volleyball. It's tied at the end of a rope to serve as a weight, making it easier to throw the line, and also as an ornamental knot. This type of weighted rope was also used as an improvised weapon called a slungshot by sailors.

The knot is usually tied around a small weight, such as a stone, marble or a piece of wood. A thicker line will require a larger object in the center to hold the shape of the knot. Another variation of the Monkey's Fist Knot omits the use of an external object or weight and uses the spare end of the rope which gets tucked back into the knot. This results in a nicer looking knot of lesser weight, minimizing the potential danger of hitting someone with the knot when hauling line.

Chinese Button



This is the knot Chinese tailors traditionally used as buttons on jackets. To tie this knot, lay out the rope on a table and follow the over and under sequence exactly as in the pictures. It looks complicated, but just take it step by step. Picture 4 is identical to picture 3, but with blue lines to indicate more clearly which parts of the rope cross over other parts of the rope. After you tie the knot as in picture 3, slowly and carefully tighten the knot and work it into a button shape (picture 5).

Daisy Chain



Like the Braid Knot (next) this can be used as a decorative “pull” at the end of a rope or string, or as a “friendship braid”, or as a decorative handle. To tie this knot start somewhere in the middle of the rope by tying a Slip Knot (picture 1). Push a bight from the end of the rope through the loop of the Slip Knot (picture 2), pull tight and continue

pushing a new bight through each previous bight, working your way towards the end of the rope. Tuck the end of the rope through the final bight to “lock” the Chain Stitch (picture 3). To untie this knot simply remove the end of the rope from the final bight and pull both ends of the rope apart from each other. This will untie all of the Slip Knots. The chain looks best when all of the knots have been tightened the same amount. A variation of this knot can be used as a lanyard knot.

Braid Knot



Like the Daisy Chain (above), this can be used as a decorative “pull” at the end of a rope or string, or as a “friendship braid”, or as a decorative handle, and so on. To tie this knot start by looping the rope around twice in order to create three strands to work with (picture 1). Begin “braiding” the three strands by bringing the bottom strand over the center strand, then bringing the top strand over the new center strand (picture 2). Continue alternating in this way (picture 3) until you have braided as far as you want to go (picture 4). As you are braiding the rope, the end of the rope may become twisted and tangled (which is starting to happen in picture 2). Simply pull the end of the rope out of the tangle periodically (picture 3) to keep it untangled.

Square Sinnet



The square sinnet uses two strands of cord, like paracord (or plastic / leather lace). You can use the same color or two different colors for a combined finish.

The result is useful as a fob, or terminal end, with a squared shape. If you want to leave a small lace of paracord in the end then you should plan the length before starting the knot. You can use a small rubber band to separate the lace from the rest of the cord.

If you want to install a solid or split ring (for a keychain, etc.) you should also do it before starting the knot.

Round Sinnet



This is a variation on the square sinnet that produces a cylindrical result instead of a square, with the strands of paracord doing spiral waves.

It has a nice look when you combine strands of paracord of different colors. The procedure to create this knot is almost identical to the square sinnet but what you do in every step is slightly different, basically you cross the strands of paracord across the center instead of bending them along straight lines.

Cobra Stitch



The Cobra Stitch, also known as the Solomon Bar knot is the star of the “flat” knots. It can be used to enhance lanyards, to create fobs, bracelets, belts, straps for bags or pouches, straps for flashlights, etc. This interesting knot can also be used to “store” paracord inside the knot itself in a way that can be easily pulled out in case of need. That is why you often see bracelets or belts tied this way labeled “survival”, meaning you can use them to get to the cord in case of need. Another way to “Be Prepared”.

The Cobra Stitch can be done with a single strand of paracord, with two strands or with three strands depending on the kind of result you want. You can also leave a loop of cord outside of the Cobra Stitch to be used as an attachment point.

Bowtie Knot



The Bowtie Knot, also known as the “Tomfool Knot”, can be used as handcuffs and became famous, owing to its having baffled a number of “handcuff kings” and other performers who readily escaped from common knots and manacles. It is made like the Clove Hitch on a Bight, and then the loops are passed through the opening to form a double loop or bow. If the hands or wrists are placed within these loops, the loops

drawn tight, and the loose ends tied firmly around the central part, a wonderfully secure handcuff results.

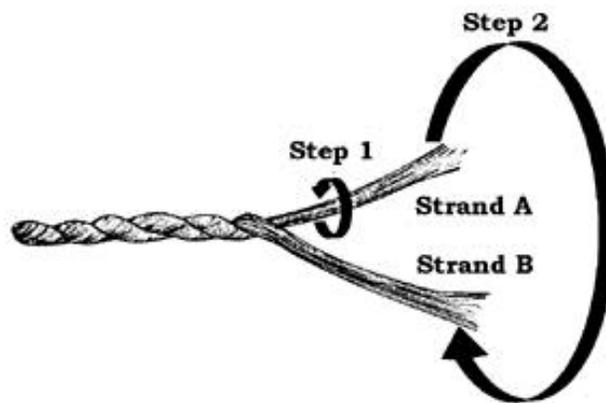
This knot is also known as a *hobble knot* for similar reasons, from the idea that the knot was sometimes used on the legs of horses to limit the distance their riders had to walk in the morning to retrieve them.

Making Rope

Of course some type of rope is necessary to tie knots in the first place. Making a 3-strand rope out of twine is pretty straight forward. It does help if you have a few tools and someone to help you.

Making rope or cordage is part of the Pioneering merit badge, so you can use the merit badge book as a reference to complete this part of the Knot Master Program. Another option is to make natural cordage.

There are numerous resources on the internet that can teach you how to make cordage out of natural materials in the wild, including several good YouTube videos. There are a wide range of materials you can use including the inner bark of several trees, milkweed, thistle, dog bane and cattail leaves to name a few. Of course it helps to be able to identify the material you plan to use in the field. While some materials are better or stronger than others, basically anything fibrous will work. Once you have gathered and prepared the material, most of the cordage making techniques use the Reverse Twist technique.



The basic idea behind the Reverse Twist is shown in the picture above. Prepare a small bundle of fibers and fold them over to double them. Hold the end of the loop in your left hand. Give Strand A half a twist in one direction (clockwise) and then pull Strand A back in the reverse direction (counter clockwise) over Strand B.

Repeat this several times and you will begin to see a section of twisted cordage forming. Add additional material as you work along and you can make your cordage as long as you like. You can also take two or three strands of your finished cordage and twist them together to form a thicker, stronger rope.