

# THE **SANE** PREPPER

*Prepared... WITHOUT the crazy!*

## **Knots: The Ten You'll Actually Need**

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# KNOTS — THE TEN YOU ACTUALLY NEED

There are hundreds of knots. You need about ten. Learn these ten well — know them by feel in the dark — and you have all the knot knowledge required for practical preparedness, camping, and emergency use.

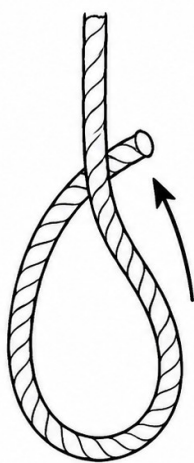
Each knot has specific applications. Using the right knot for the job makes the difference between a connection that holds under load and one that slips, jams, or fails.

**The ten essential knots:**

## 1. Bowline:

Creates a fixed loop at the end of a rope that won't slip under load and can be untied even after heavy loading. Often called the king of knots. Used for: rescue loops, securing lines to fixed points, creating a loop to clip a carabiner through. Memory device: the rabbit comes out of the hole, goes around the tree, and back down the hole.

### BOWLINE KNOT



1.

Form a loop with the rope. Bring the working end behind the standing part.



2.

Pass the working end up through the loop.



3.

Pass it around the standing part behind the rope.



4.

Bring the working end back down through the loop.



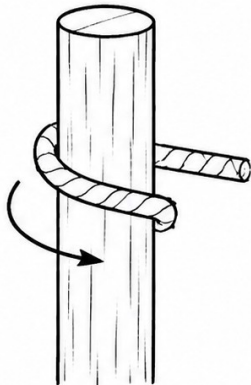
**FINISHED BOWLINE**

The knot is secure and will not slip. It is easy to untie even after heavy loads.

## 2. Clove Hitch:

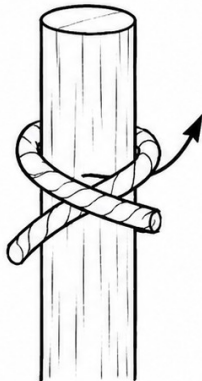
Two half hitches around a post or rail. Quick to tie, adjustable, easily released. Used for: starting lashings, temporarily securing a line to a post, securing a boat to a dock cleat.

### CLOVE HITCH



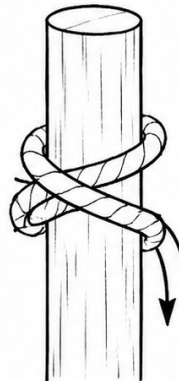
**1.**

Wrap the rope around the post or support.



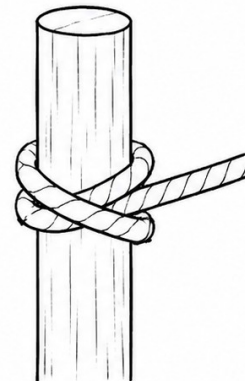
**2.**

Bring the working end across the front, over the standing part.



**3.**

Tuck the working end back under the second turn.



**4.**

Pull both ends to tighten. The hitch will hold the rope to the post.

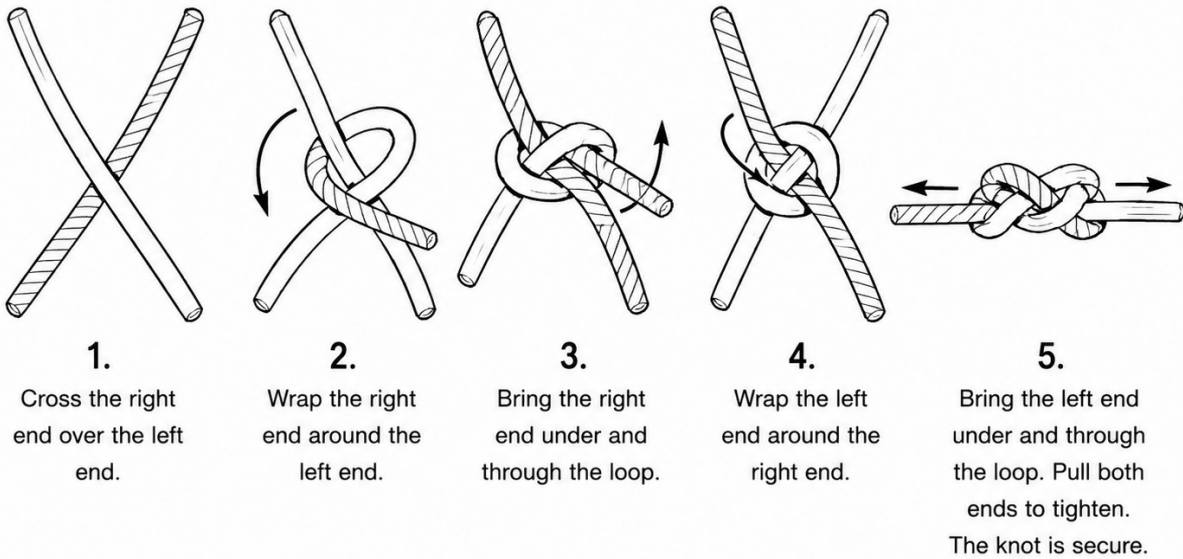
**USES:** Securing rope to a post, pole, or tree. Good for temporary tie-offs.

**NOTE:** Not recommended for high-load or critical applications.

### 3. Square Knot (reef knot):

Joins two ends of the same rope to close a bundle. Simple, flat, and secure for this purpose. Not reliable for joining two different ropes under load. Used for: bandages, closing bundles, joining the same line.

## THE SQUARE KNOT



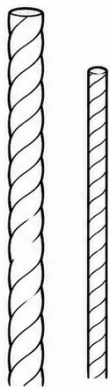
**USES:** Joining two ropes of the same diameter. Securing bundles.

**NOTE:** Use only with ropes of similar size and material. Not recommended for critical loads or safety applications.

## 4. Sheet Bend:

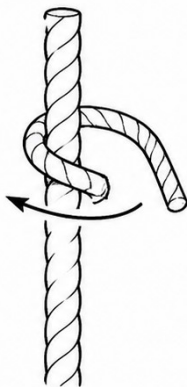
Joins two ropes of different diameters reliably. What the square knot can't do. Used for: joining paracord to a heavier line, connecting two ropes of different sizes.

### THE SHEET BEND



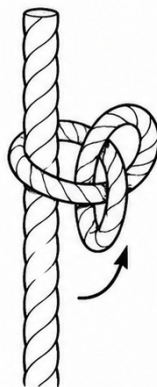
**1.**

Place the working end (thinner rope) alongside the standing line (thicker rope).



**2.**

Wrap the working end around the standing line.



**3.**

Pass the working end back through the loop.



**4.**

Pull both ends in opposite directions to tighten.



**5.**

The knot should draw tight and lie neat. The working end will be on the same side as the standing line.



**6.**

Trim the ends if necessary. The sheet bend is secure and easy to untie.

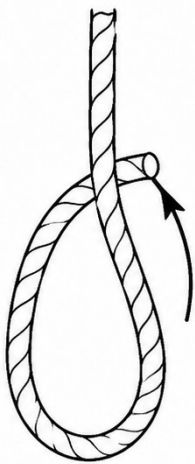
**USES:** Joining two ropes of different diameters or different materials.

**NOTE:** Not recommended for ropes of similar size or for heavy loads.

## 5. Figure-Eight:

A stopper knot that prevents a rope from pulling through a hole or fitting. The fundamental stopper in climbing and rigging. Used for: preventing rope ends from pulling through pulleys, the basis for the figure-eight follow-through used in climbing harness attachment.

### FIGURE-8 KNOT



1.

Form a loop with the rope. Bring the working end behind the standing part.



2.

Bring the working end around the standing part and back down through the loop.



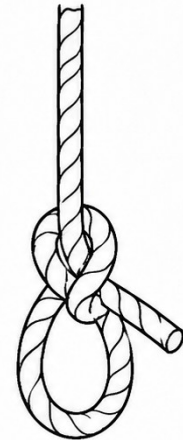
3.

Pass the working end down through the loop.



4.

Tighten the knot by pulling both the standing part and the working end.



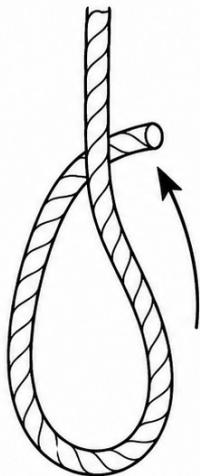
FINISHED FIGURE-8 KNOT

The knot is secure and will not slip under tension. It is commonly used as a stopper knot.

## 6. Figure-eight Follow-Through:

Ties a secure loop around any object by threading the rope through the object and retracing the figure-eight. The standard method for attaching a climbing rope to a harness. Used for: attaching a rope directly to a fixed point, creating a loop around an anchor.

### FIGURE-EIGHT FOLLOW-THROUGH



1.

Form a loop with the rope. Bring the working end behind the standing part.



2.

Pass the working end around the standing part and down through the loop.



3.

Pull the working end all the way through, forming a figure-eight knot.



4.

Bring the working end back up through the knot, following the path of the rope.



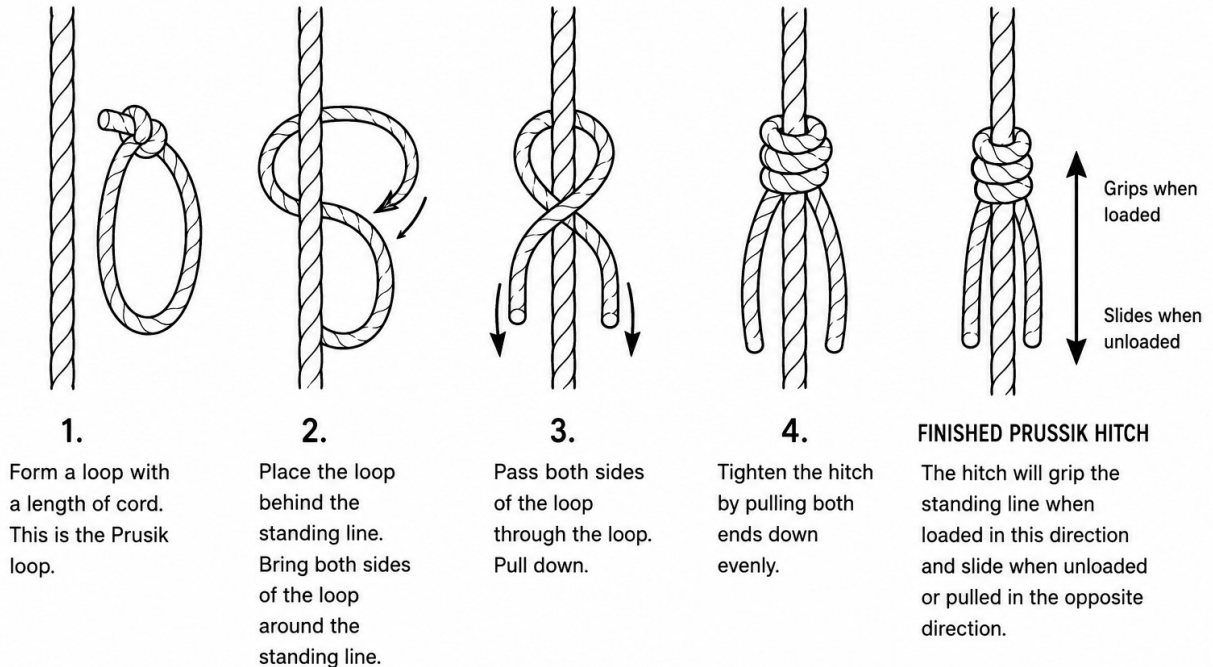
#### **FINISHED FIGURE-EIGHT FOLLOW-THROUGH**

The knot is secure and will not slip. It is commonly used to secure the end of a rope.

## 7. Prussik Hitch:

A friction hitch that grips tightly under load but slides freely when unloaded. Used for: ascending a fixed rope, creating a backup on a rappel, improvised rope ascenders.

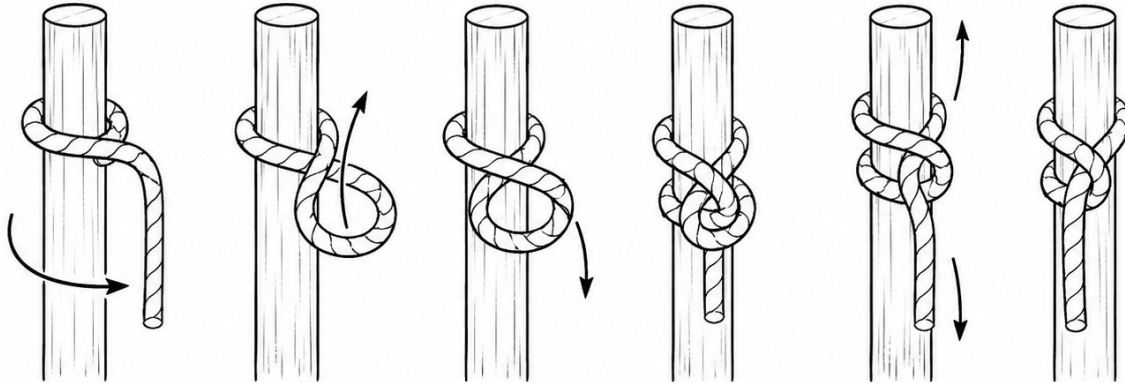
### PRUSSIK HITCH



## 8. Trucker's Hitch:

Creates a mechanical advantage (3:1) for tensioning a line — useful for securing loads, tensioning tent guy lines, and lashing gear. The go-to knot for securing cargo.

### THE TRUCKER'S HITCH



1.

Wrap the rope around the anchor object.  
Bring the working end back around behind the standing part.

2.

Bring the working end up through the loop.

3.

Pass the working end over the standing part.

4.

Pass the working end back down through the loop.

5.

Pull the standing part up and the working end down to tighten the hitch.

6.

The hitch will lock under load and can be released by pulling the free end.

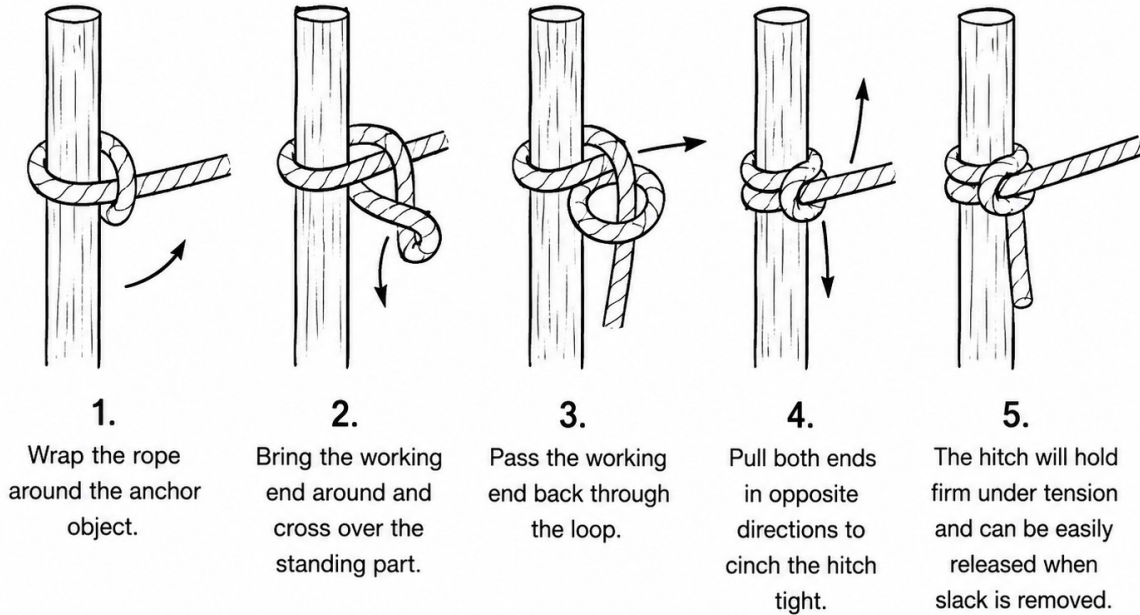
**USES:** Tightening loads, securing tarps, tying down gear.

**NOTE:** The hitch grips under tension. Use with synthetic or low-stretch rope for best results.

## 9. Taut-line Hitch:

An adjustable loop that slides but holds under tension. Used for: tent guy lines that need adjustment, any situation where you need to adjust tension without untying.

### TAUT-LINE HITCH



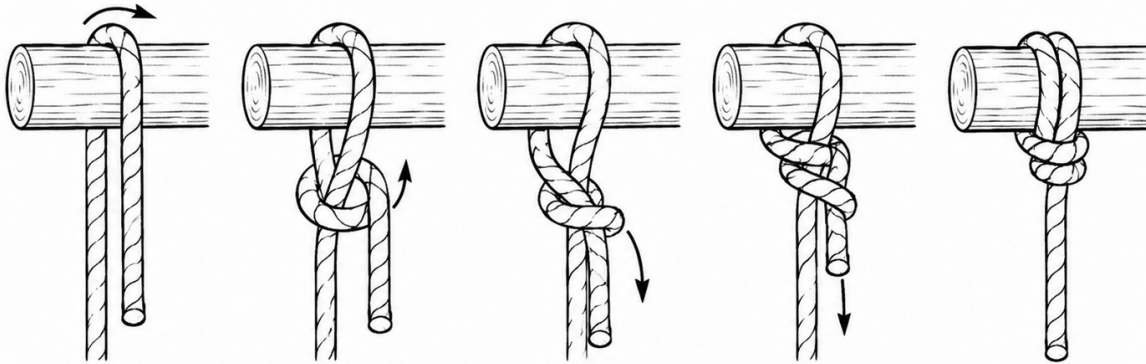
**USES:** Tightening guy lines, tent lines, clotheslines, and tarps.

**NOTE:** The hitch grips under tension but can be released and re-tied easily.

## 10. Timber hitch:

Used to drag a log or attach a rope to a cylindrical object. The more tension applied, the tighter it grips. Used for: dragging timber, attaching a tow line to a log or post.

### THE TIMBER HITCH



**1.**

Pass the rope over the log or spar, creating a bight.

**2.**

Wrap the working end around behind the standing part and bring it back through the bight.

**3.**

Wrap the working end around the standing part once more.

**4.**

Tuck the working end down through the loop beside the wraps.

**5.**

Pull tight on the standing part. The hitch will clamp and hold under load.

**USES:** Dragging logs, bundling poles, securing to round objects. Easy to tie and untie.

**NOTE:** The more the load pulls, the tighter it grips. Use with low-stretch rope for best holding power.

## **How to learn them:**

Each knot takes about twenty minutes to learn from a diagram and about five practice sessions spread over a week to truly internalize. YouTube videos are excellent for learning knots because you can see the motion in real time. Practice with actual rope, not just by watching. Tie each knot ten times until the motion is automatic. Review them periodically — knot knowledge is perishable.

Keep a short length of paracord in your pocket or bag specifically for practice.