

MySurvivalAlliance



BASIC KNOTS: THE TEN MOST IMPORTANT TO LEARN

1. The Bowline
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WILDERNESS SURVIVAL WITH SOME BASIC KNOTS

One of the best ways to survive in the wilderness is to be proficient with a few basic knots. You may have learned them in scouting or similar activities. Since two of the three knots explained here belong to the four basic nautical knots, sailors are usually proficient with them. One thing about knots is that when you do not practice making them, you get rusty.

Use a thin cotton cord for practice. Heavier rope is bulky and does not always show the result properly. When you see that your knot looks right, you will feel better about all the practice. If you have children, encourage them to practice with you. Providing your family with survival skills is one of the best lessons you can teach.

Bowline Knot

The bowline knot is a good knot to know for wilderness survival, camping, mountain climbing,

nautical use and even lifesaving events. The result is quite strong and the weight placed against the knot is well- balanced, giving a lot of security for a relatively uncomplicated knot. It is easy to untie, a definite asset because when most knots pull tight, it is difficult to loosen them.

The bowline does tend to loosen if a load shifts or depletes, and that is why you often see truckers out checking bindings. Once proficient, you can make this knot quickly. Like all knots, everyone improves with practice. Start out with a two-foot length of cord and a flat area to work on. Match the ends of the rope and set it down flat. Smooth the rope out so you have room to work.

Make a small loop in the center of the rope. Some people like to pick up one part of the rope and loop it to make the circle sitting on top. Others just pull a section of the rope under the other part. Both are

right, so choose the style best for you.

Take one end of the rope through the loop, around the main line of the rope and down into the loop. The result resembles a cursive capital O.

Bring the edge of the rope back up and around the other part of the rope and down under the original circle. Then pull the main rope away from the loop to tighten. You end up with a long length of rope and a big loop.

Square Knot

The square knot is also one of the best knots to know. It allows two pieces of rope to join securely. In emergencies, such as wilderness survival, you may end up making bandages from strips of cloth and the square knot is what a person should use to bind them. Make a secure handle on a heavy box or container to send something safely over the river to the other shore.

Put the ropes close to each other in a parallel fashion so the top of each rope is straight across from each other. Pick up a piece in each hand and tie an overhand knot (similar to tying your shoes).

Tie another overhand knot and put the left end under and over the right side of the rope. The ends will be looking at opposite directions. Pull tight. You have just completed a knot that will get you through many emergencies, including tying down tarp and making hanging water jugs. Safe and dry with plenty of water is a critical step in wilderness survival.

Clove Hitch

The clove hitch is also one of the four basic nautical knots. Use to fasten a rope securely to something solid, like a beam or pole. The clove hitch is also the knot that lets you make secure starts and finishes to lashings. Practice on wood running horizontally, such as a low branch or a board between fence posts.

Bring the rope over the pole and under. The end will be above the top of the post. Take the rope and bring it around one more time. Cross over the first wrap to make an X. The top end should be standing straight up at this point and the rope wraps will be spread part. Bring the rope around one more time and draw it through the center of the X.

Tighten the clove hitch by pulling the top end straight up until the X unites.

Continue to practice these three knots so they are automatic when needed.

Pat Fisher - Introduced to preparedness, he began learning as much as he could, and now shares that information with you at wilderness survival [<http://wildernesssurvivalblog.net/>]

Canning Blueberry Pie Filling

Ingredients modified from Canning USA (makes approximately 1 quart)

- 5 cups blueberries
- ¾ cup sugar
- 3 tbsp Clear Jel (NOT Sure Jel)
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 tbsp lemon juice

Preparations:

1. Add the Clear Jel, sugar, water, and lemon juice to a large sauce pot. Bring the mixture to a boil while stirring constantly with a wooden spoon

2. Add the blueberries to the boiling mixture. Gently stir constantly. Once the jel comes back to a simmer the blueberry pie filling will thicken. Continue to cook the blueberry pie filling until it is thick and gooey.

3. Ladle the hot blueberry pie filling into a quart jar. Leave 1 inch headspace. Process in a boiling water canner for 30 minutes.

BASIC KNOTS: THE TEN MOST IMPORTANT TO LEARN

One thing that often gets overlooked in a person's quest for preparedness is a working knowledge of basic knots. Knot tying is one of the most primitive tools (yes tools) that a man can use. Knowing how to tie knots not only increases the fun you can have in a wilderness situation, it can also mean the difference between life and death in a survival situation. Catching animals in a snare or on a fishing line can be hard enough. Imagine the disappointment you would feel if you managed to catch an animal, only to have your knot fail or the line break at the knot. What if you had to strap important gear to your back and travel quickly over rugged terrain but you kept losing items because you could not properly secure them? Like many survival tools, "you don't need them until you need them" but you should consider a knowledge of knots as fundamental as your knowledge of fire starting.

There are hundreds of knots for almost as many purposes and it would be nearly impossible to memorize all of them (not to mention totally unnecessary). Luckily for you, with minimal time investment and a bit of practice every once in a while, you can commit to memory the most important knots.

Before we get into the knots, remember this: Knots weaken rope. A segment of rope is strong because it distributes the load evenly on each of the fibers and stresses them equally. Therefore, when you introduce bends (knots) you are creating areas of uneven stress. That is why knowing what knots (tied correctly) are best for which purpose is key.

(In No Particular Order)

1. **The Bowline:** Sometimes called the King of Knots, it is a very dependable knot used to make a non-slip loop at the end

of a rope. There are several variations of this knot as it is easy to tie and useful in so many circumstances.

2. **The Square Knot:** Also known as the Reef Knot, this knot is used to tie two ends of rope together. It is useful for securing bundles of firewood and securing bandages over an injured area. This is not an extremely secure knot, so use accordingly.



3. **The Sheet Bend:** This knot is recommended for tying two pieces of rope together. Like most knots, there are many variations of this but the basic form is very valuable to know.
4. **The Overhand:** This is one of the most basic knots and many other knots incorporate this one. The overhand is a stopper knot and can be used to keep the end of the rope from fraying.



5. **Slip Knot:** Also called a Running Knot, this is loop knot that can be tied in the middle of a line. Excellent for hanging things to dry and it is also easy to untie.

6. **Clove Hitch:** Also considered one of the essential knots, this is typically tied around a fixed object (tree) and allows the user to adjust the length of rope on either end. You need to have tension on both ends of the rope for this knot to be effective.



7. **Noose:** This knot creates a loop at the end of the rope that tightens when you pull it.
8. **Palomar Knot:** This is a strong and reliable knot and is often used to tie a fishing line to a lure or hook or a fly to a leader or tippet.
9. **Sheepshank:** This is not one of the more popular knots but it is extremely useful for when you have too much rope for a job but don't want to cut the rope into smaller pieces (I try to never do this).
10. **Square Lashing:** Used to tie poles together in the shape of a cross, the square lashing is extremely useful when you are building shelters or litters to carry people or materials. If you learn the Square Lash, you should be able to adapt it to the diagonal lash or as a shear lash.

It will take some practice to get familiar with tying these knots and once you think you know them, it is a good idea to refresh your technique every once in a while when practicing your other survival skills.

Instead of watching mind-numbing TV shows in the evening, grab two lengths of rope and start

practicing. It won't take long to learn the basic knots and you can move on from there. You never know, it may just save your life.

Mark Kuta is an avid outdoors man who not only camps, hikes, fishes and hunts, but he also likes to grow his own food and has great respect for the environment and nature. When not outdoors he can be found at his Off The Grid Survival community website writing about his adventures and experiences and answering questions from the community

Canning Ground Cherry Pie Filling

Ingredients (makes approximately 4 half pint jars or 1 quart jar; a quart jar will make one 9 inch pie)

- 5 cups ground cherries, fully ripened and husks removed
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- 3 tbsp Clear Jel (NOT Sure Jel)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water
- 2 tbsp lemon juice

Preparations:

1. Add the Clear Jel, sugar, water, and lemon juice to a large sauce pot. Bring the mixture to a boil while stirring constantly with a wooden spoon

2. Add the ground cherries to the boiling mixture. Gently stir constantly. Once the jel comes back to a simmer the ground cherry pie filling will thicken. Continue to cook the ground cherry pie filling until it is thick and goeey.

3. Ladle the ground cherry pie filling into four half pint jars. Leaving 1 inch headspace. Process in a boiling water canner for 30 minutes.

UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF A TIGHTLY SECURED ROPE BEFORE CLIMBING

A climbing rope is the first requirement for any climber and can be used successfully to save lives during an emergency. Rescue workers, climbers and arborists are familiar with the various forms of climbing knots. The chain of climbing starts with your climbing rope and as such is the most important link in scaling heights.

Correct anchoring and tying is important not just for the mountaineers but is also essential to carry a lot of other vital essentials during expedition. While some knots are essential to join others help you to anchor securely.

There are different ways to tie climbing knots, but while some may be known only to advanced and experienced climbers, others are equally essential for beginners. The strength of the climbing rope can be greatly reduced if you have not taken time to do the knot correctly. This fact may reduce the chances of survival in case of an emergency. Just looking at a way and thinking that you have mastered it, is not enough you have to practice it to perfection.

Single loop and double loop knots are most commonly used and they may be combined with other kinds according to the climber's need. The Stopper knot for instance, is used in conjunction with other knots to prevent the rope from untying or becoming loose due to the friction.

Bends is an excellent manner to make a long rope by joining two smaller ropes securely. Just learning various forms of climber knot is not sufficient; you also need to be familiar when to use them.

Ropes tied through correct climbing knots [<http://climbingknots.org>] can be immensely helpful during any climbing adventure. Along with the knowledge of various kinds, it is also essential to be familiar with respective use of each kind of knot.

PARACORD BELTS MAKE VERSATILE SURVIVAL TOOLS

Paracord Belts are a popular paracord item and it is easy to understand why. Where some paracord items aren't for everyone, such as a bracelet, just about everyone wears a belt on occasion. Paracord belts can be worn for a casual stylish look and can also be worn when going camping, hiking, rock climbing, cycling, or on many other adventures. This double duty feature makes the belts a versatile and a top-selling item.

Because belts are much longer than bracelets or most other paracord items, there is a lot more cord to use if you get in to a situation where you need to construct a survival tool. Bracelets can certainly be useful, but you are limited in what you can do with the cord. Belts can provide up to 100 feet of cord, or even more depending on the size of the belt.

Paracord Rescue Belts have two main components and both can be found in multiple colors and styles. The first component, the buckle, can be found in everything from traditional styles to nickel to D-rings to one that doubles as a high decibel whistle.

In just a few seconds a properly made rescue belt can be unraveled. And when an emergency presents itself, time is extremely important! To take even quicker action, you can get a side release buckle so that you'll be able to easily remove the belt. The weave of the belt can make a difference in how quickly you can unravel the cord, so you might want to get one such as the mock cobra weave that will come apart very quickly without having to untie knots.

You'll usually get about 3 feet of cord for each inch of the belt. So for a 34 inch belt you should have around 100 feet of cord to work with. Something else to consider is to add 3 or 4 paracord belt loops to your belt, then you can use your belt loops to attach gear and it can provide a pretty strong anchor.

Popular Colors include black, brown, white, desert, camouflage, olive, neon green, orange, blue, purple, yellow, reflective colors, combinations of colors, and just about any color you can imagine.

Availability is very wide so you can decide whether to make or buy your paracord belt. Even when you buy you can often still customize your belt. Always be sure to read order forms carefully because some will ask for the belt size, others will ask for the belt length. Whatever you decide, once you have a paracord belt you'll have one of the most versatile paracord items and be better prepared for many situations.

Griffin Morgan is a leisure writer who specializes in subjects that can help people in their everyday lives. You can check out his latest website at [Paracord Projects](#), where he provides more helpful information about using paracord for survival tools, including Paracord Belts.