

What 'knot' to do? - Knots for kites



Learning objectives will vary for different stages and ages:

- Develop hand-eye co-ordination
- Application of skill to do a job or solve a problem.
- Identify the characteristics of a good knot
- Identify some common knots and learn their uses
- Be able to tie a string on a gift, laces on shoes, line onto a kite
- Understand and follow simple instructions

Provide a variety of rope, string, shoelaces, cotton thread, wool for children to practice with – in short and long lengths. Also provide pencils or other objects to tie the string to. The back or the leg of a chair might provide a good anchor.

What makes a good knot?

Well it depends on what job it has to do.

- A good knot is often described as something that is easy to tie and easy to untie. But sometimes you don't ever need to untie it so you will tie it down tight and maybe glue it in place – then untying is not important.
- A tight knot is a good knot because it is less likely to come undone and to have any slippage. But a tight knot is not so good if you need to get it undone again! And maybe you were looking for a knot that would slide and get tighter.
- A good knot is the right knot for the job – what's good for one job is not necessarily a good knot for another job.

Some reasons for using knots – what might you need a knot for?

Tying a line to your kite, Tying a tie,
Tying a carabiner to a rope, Tying on a rope for climbing,
Tying a hook to your fishing line, Tying your boat up,
Tying something onto something else – eg a ladder onto a roof rack,
Hoisting something up on a pulley or setting up a tightrope to walk on.

Some useful terms: The main parts of a rope are called:

Working end, or running end - The end of the rope you are using to tie a knot;

Standing end - The rest of the rope, or the end of the rope opposite to that being used to tie the knot;

Standing part - Any part between the two ends. It can be a part of the rope already used in the knot;

Loop - A loop made by turning the rope back on itself and crossing the standing part;

Bight - A loop made by turning the rope back on itself without crossing the standing part.

Some other useful definitions

A bend - This is a knot which is used for tying one rope to another.

A hitch - This is used for fastening a rope to another object such as a post, spar, pole, log and so on. It is tied without using a full knot, and makes use of the tension on the rope, the direction of the pull.

Some of the best/easiest knots for kites are shown overleaf.

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Some useful knots to try

give verbal instructions, show photos or drawings or make an example.

Sewing or dressmaker's knot

This is used in hand sewing to lock the running end of the thread and stop it pulling through the fabric. Wrap the thread or string around your finger and roll it off the finger – this causes a few twists and forms a knot at the end of the thread. Often used to tie the two ends of thread together when sewing.



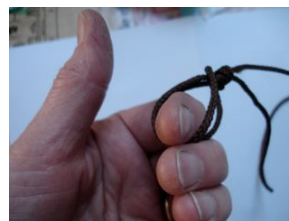
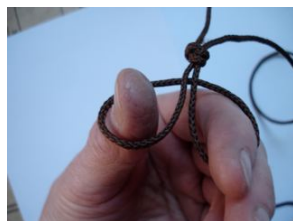
Pull through looped knot (overhand Knot)

To create a pull through looped knot, start by turning the end of the line back on itself – a few inches or more depending on what you need. Then holding this loop you tie a simple knot leaving the loop now forming the end of the line and the knot not too close to the loose end. When you've pulled this tight it's a good idea to tie the loose end around the base of the knot in a single knot for security.



Larkshead knot – ties one line onto another and can be released

This is commonly used by kitefliers to attach a kite's bridle line to a flying line in a way that allows you to remove it later, and with a knot that can't come apart when under tension. Start with a pull through looped knot and follow the pictures till you have created another loop away from the main part of the rope. Place this loop over a knotted rope end (ie the rope you are fixing to must have a knot probably an overhand knot close to its end.) and pull tight. As you pull and as this knot is pulled during use – it can only get tighter and yet when you need to release it and separate the two ropes again – its not too difficult. (In fact you can make it even easier to release by tying another overhand knot at the top of the pull through looped knot before you start)



Granny knot

An easy knot to tie – but not as efficient as a reef knot or square knot. You start with two pieces of line and cross one over the other- not minding which, then do the same again, - you end up with a slightly cock-eyed knot which can slip apart. Usually people do three or more granny knots to make it more secure. This works but it's messy and if your life depended on it – you wouldn't use a granny knot – you'd use a better knot – suited to it's purpose.

A 'figure 8 on a bight' is a variation on the pull through loop which is used in climbing and is easier to undo after use.

