

How to Tie 3 Important Sailing Knots

1. Bowline

The bowline is the king of sailing knots. It has been in use by sailors continuously for at least 500 years. Simply put, the bowline is way of turning the end of your line into a loop. Why is this useful? You can tie it around a post or other fixed object to make the line fast, or on smaller boats it is used fasten the halyard to the sail. It can also be used to tie two lines together. It has a number of practical uses as well, such as hanging a hammock. Under pressure the bowline tightens, so it won't give way. However, note that it's impossible to untie while bearing a load!

HOW TO TIE IT:

Step 1: Form a loop near the end of the line. (How much of the line you leave will depend on how big you want the final knot to be.)

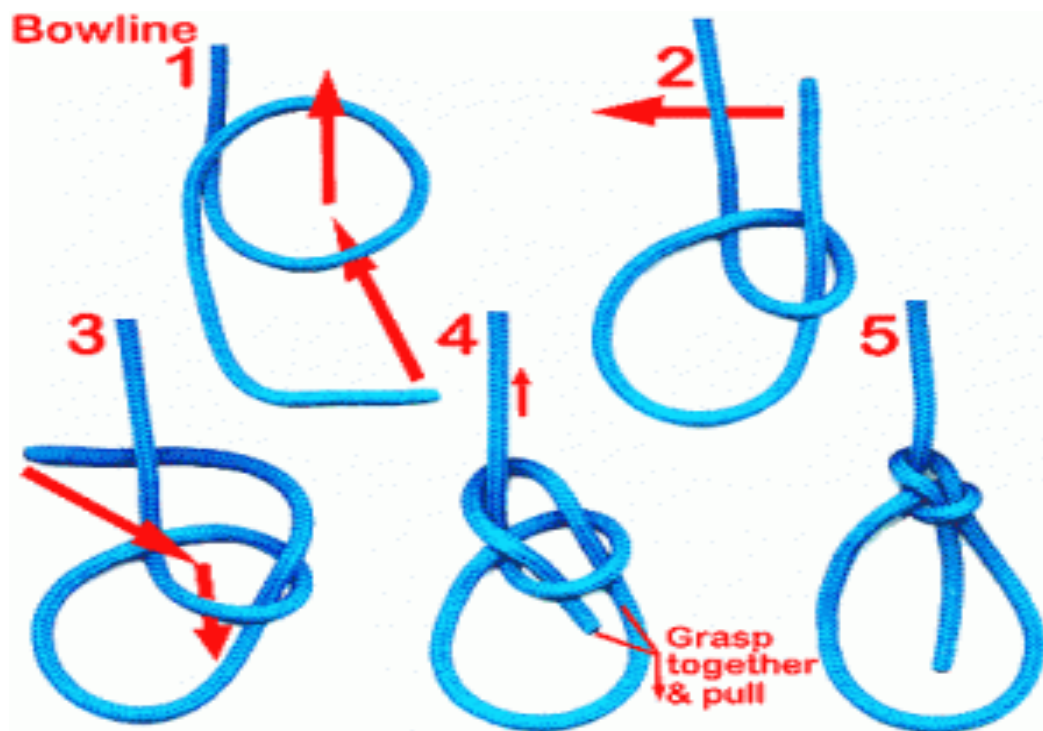
Step 2: Run the end of the line back through that loop.

Step 3: Next, run the line around the standing end and back through the small loop.

Step 4: Now grasp the end and pull the knot tight.

Step 5: You should have a large loop now!

Congratulations, you've tied a bowline.



2. Clove Hitch

A clove hitch is an extremely useful and quick knot. It has the advantage of being very quick to tie and untie, but it doesn't hold nearly as well as the bowline. On sailboats, one of its most common uses is hanging the fenders over the side as you come in to dock.

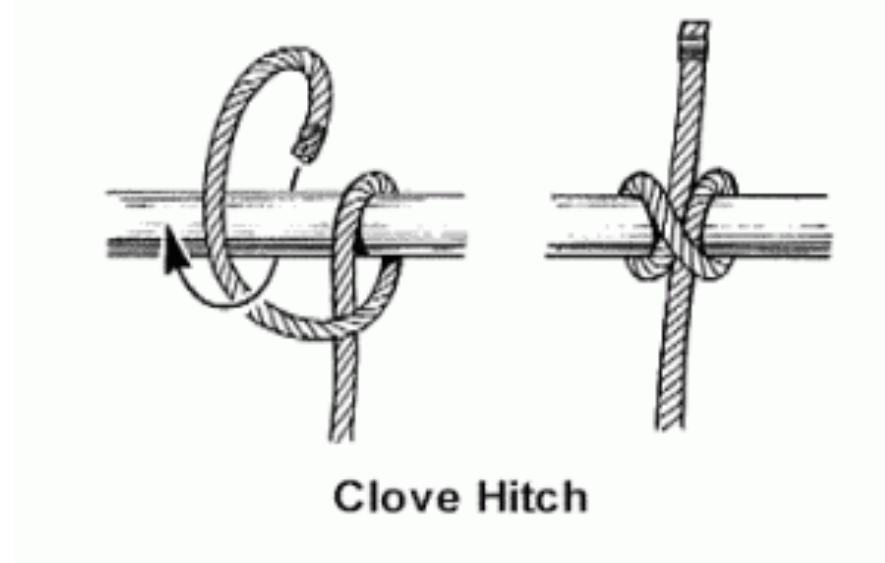
HOW TO TIE IT:

Step 1: Wrap the end of the line around the post (or whatever you're attaching it to)

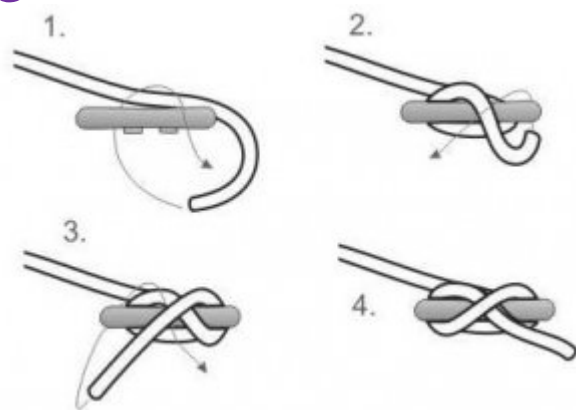
Step 2: Cross the line over itself and wrap it around the post again.

Step 3: Loosen the last wrap slightly and slip the end under, then pull it taut. This is a way of "locking" the knot.

Step 4: Give it a few tugs to make sure it's secure, and you're done!



3. Cleat Hitch



This type of knot is designed especially for one purpose, and I bet you can guess what that is. If you said, "Making the line fast to a cleat," you were correct. As you might imagine, this is used all the time on a sailboat, whether you're docking, towing a dinghy, or rigging a preventer. Knowing how to do it will make you a much handier sailing companion!

HOW TO TIE IT:

Step 1: Make a wrap around the base of the cleat. Begin your wrap on the edge furthest away from where the line originates.

Step 2: Make a figure 8 on the cleat. If the line is going to be under a lot of pressure, and the cleat is big enough, repeat this two or three times.

Step 3: Add a hitch to the final turn to lock it. Do this by making a loop with the tail end underneath, hook it around the cleat, and pull taut. The tail end should be pointing away from the line's origin.



|My attempts at doing Clove knots



My attempts at doing bowline knots



We didn't have a cleat for this knot so instead
This an example of one.