

KNIT KNITES

Basic Bits -

The basic characteristics of a useful knot are generally considered to be:

- a. Easy to Tie
- b. Easy to untie
- c. Secure under load

Some other points to consider -

1. General

a. Most knots can be tied in more than one way. Therefore one method is no more right than the

other as long as the end results are the same.

b. Most symmetrical knots have merit.

c. Left-hand or Right-hand knots (i.e. mirror image) are usually equally strong versions of the same knot. Use the one that is easiest for you to tie.

d. Many knots are relatives to each other. For example the bowline is a loop version of the sheet bend. Considering that, we can derive many loops from bends and vice versa.

e. Extra half hitches or turns help in many cases. For example, three inside hitches (instead of two) help to secure a tautline in slippery material.

f. A library of 10 or so knots will serve most purposes if you are creative in their use. Add others as need arises.

g. A knot is most useful when it can be tied easily and without much effort. The only way to achieve this result is practice, practice, and more practice. Can you do them with your eyes closed?

h. Knowledge of strength of ropes is essential where safety is a consideration. Add at least one book that addresses this subject to

your library.

II. Teaching

- a. Competence by the teacher inspires student confidence that it can be done.
- b. Knots are best observed if the student can observe from the tier's perspective. Therefore, is best for the student to look over the teachers shoulder or some similar perspective rather than straight on.
- c. When possible using two cords different colors helps the student see the structure of the knot.
- d. If teaching a group, use the largest rope practical in order to be easily seen.
- e. A small piece of cord in the pocket can provides the opportunity for learning and teaching. It can also provide entertainment in slow moments. I call it a "pet rope".
- f. Spaghetti. I know you are not supposed to play with your food but this is an interesting media for knot cards and boards. There are competitive possibilities as well.
- g. Think of brief verbal clues that aid in remembering the knot. For example, for the bowline, " The rabbit comes out of the hole, around the tree, and back into the hole." Silly but memorable.
- h. Use your knots in the outdoor program. Example is the best incentive and teacher for the boys. Emphasize practical uses.
- i The more you know, the better teacher you can be.

