

The Top 5 Survival Knots Worth Mastering

Figure Eight Knot

Survival Uses

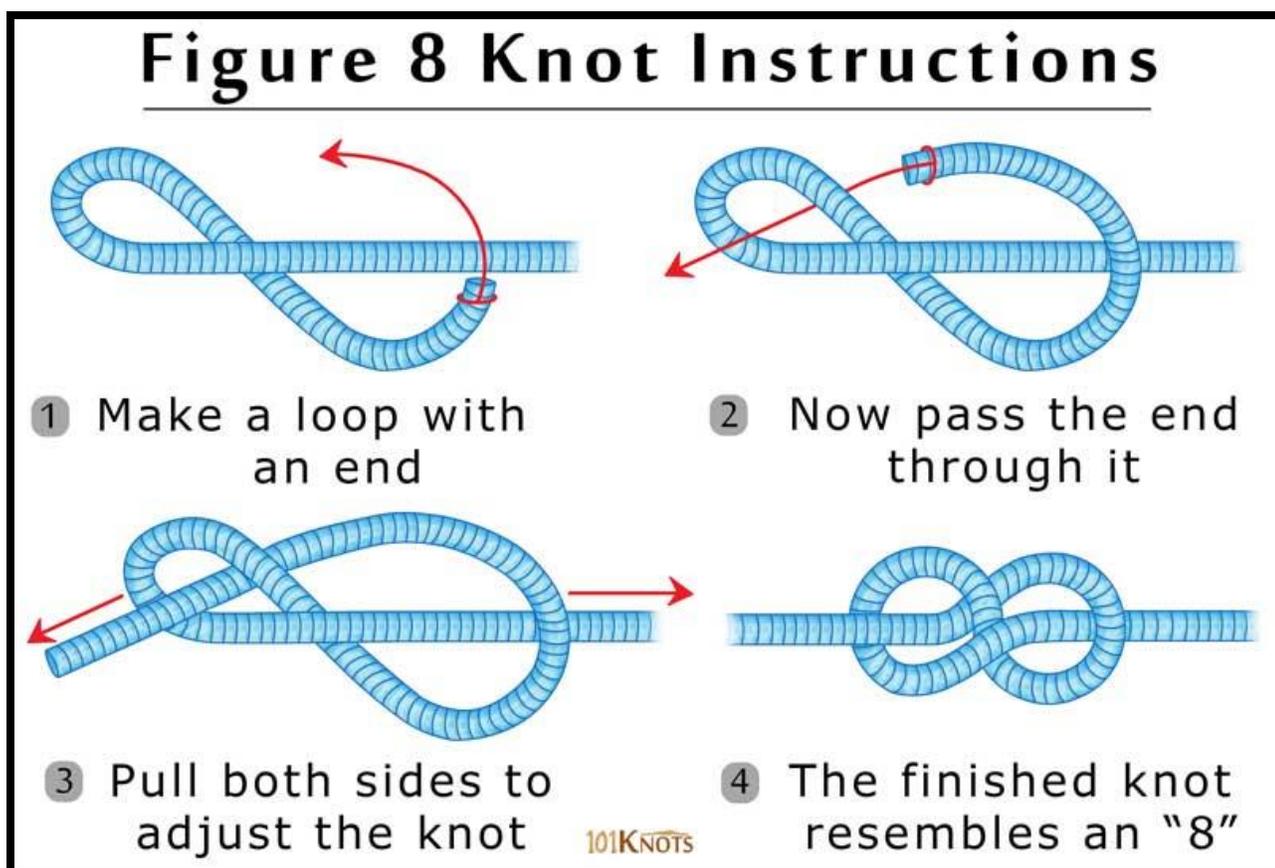
In its simplest form, a figure eight knot at the end of a rope can keep you from sliding off it. It's secure and won't come undone because of pressure. You can also create knots along a rope that stay in place and are large enough to grab onto when climbing.

The figure eight follow-through is one of the most useful types of knots for climbing. One reason is that you can make a secure loop at the end of a rope with it, an advantage when someone needs to be hauled up safely.

And it can also be used as a foothold when grabbing onto the rope is difficult because of weather conditions.

Drawbacks

The biggest drawback of using the figure eight knot is that it can be extremely hard to untie. This is especially the case if it has been used over and over again. It also uses a lot of the rope length. On the other hand, it's easy to tell if you've tied it the wrong way with a quick examination.



Bowline Knot

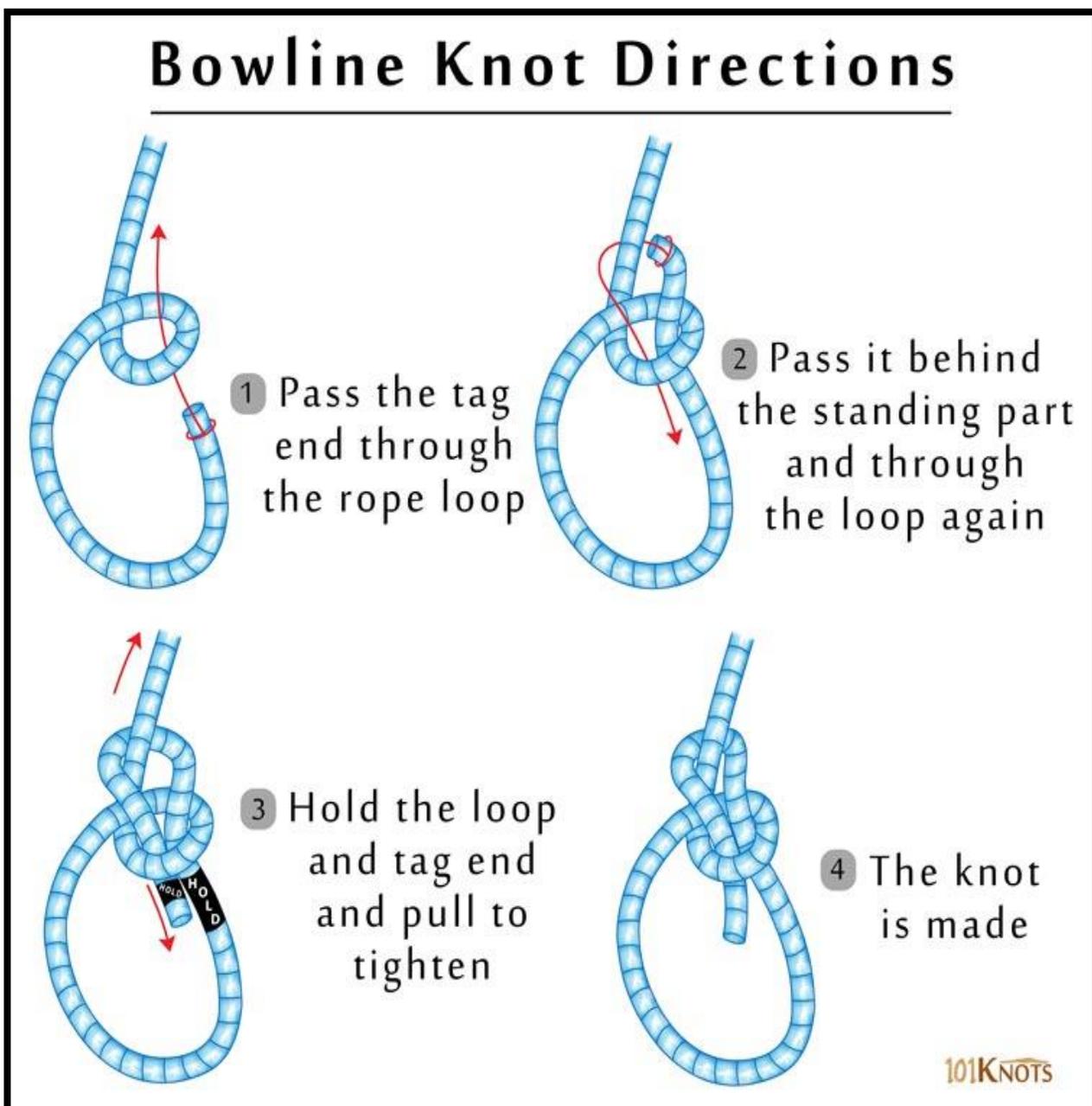
Survival Uses

You can tie the bowline around things or through them, and tie it around yourself (*even one-handed*). Being able to tie it with just one hand can be a boon when you need to tie a knot in an emergency.

A bowline knot forms a loop in the end of a rope, and the knot tightens more with any increase in pressure on the loop. That's why it's useful for hanging items from tree limbs, like food and survival gear.

Drawbacks

The bowline can't be depended on when climbing, in part due to human error. It's not terribly difficult to use the bowline incorrectly. If the loop is pulled in a sideways direction, it's possible for the knot to come untied.



Clove Hitch

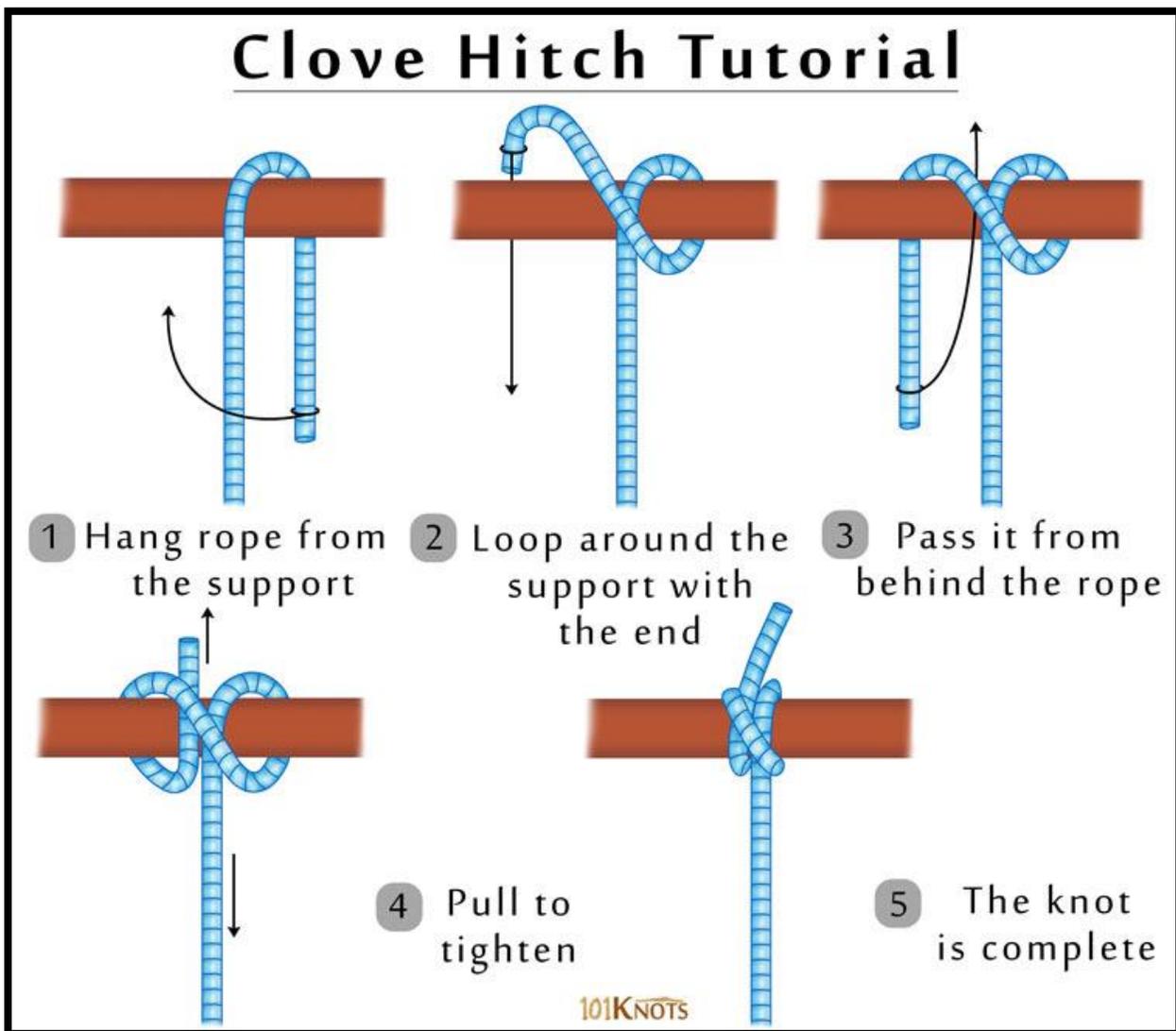
Survival Uses

A clove hitch isn't as strong as the figure eight or bowline knots, but it's a good knot to use for anchoring. It will help you fasten together a shelter because it stays tight and doesn't usually slip or loosen.

The clove hitch allows the rope to adjust without untying the knot, making it useful for lowering heavy objects or moving them to a higher spot.

Drawbacks

Constant movement, like the kind caused by a fierce wind, will eventually loosen the knots, causing a shelter to become unstable. Checking the knots frequently will allow you to adjust and tighten them.



Sheet Bend

Survival Uses

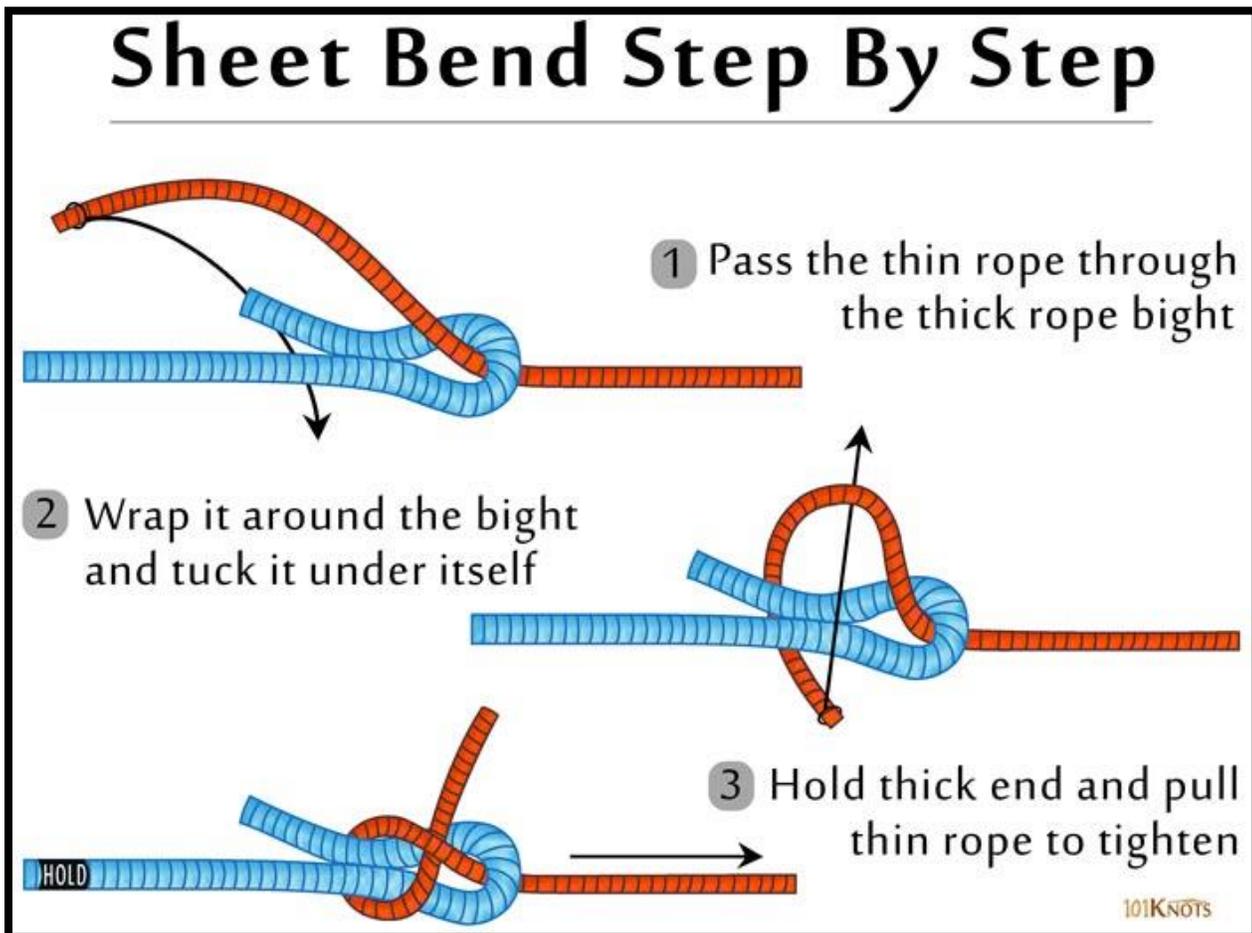
Any method of using rope for survival can benefit from the sheet bend. It's a way to put every scrap of rope or paracord to good use.

It's also an efficient way to tie together several short strands of cord to make a cargo net if you don't have enough longer rope to use.

And cargo nets are a basic building block in the making of hammocks, stretchers, snowshoes, and fishnets.

Drawbacks

The sheet bend isn't a very strong knot, coming in at a breaking strength of 55 percent. It can also come loose if the rope is particularly smooth or if there isn't much pressure on the knot.



Taut-Line Hitch

Survival Uses

A taut-line hitch is what you use when sheltering under a tarp.

Stringing a rope between two trees and laying your tarp over it is the first step in creating a buffer between you and the elements. To make the tarp into a shelter, you need a firm, tightrope to hang it from.

The taut-line allows your loop to slide and grip which makes it much easier to stake in a large waterproof survival tarp.

Drawbacks

The taut-line hitch won't work for getting a rope tight and keeping it that way. It's best for easy duty and it must be adjusted often.

Taut Line Hitch Instructions

- 1 Loop around the support and wrap the end around the standing part
- 2 Wrap it once more and bring it out of the loop
- 3 Wrap it again
- 4 Hold and pull to tighten
- 5 Slide to adjust the tension

101KNOTS