

LBSC 708n Design Workout #2: Visual Translation

Sarah Webster

ASSIGNMENT

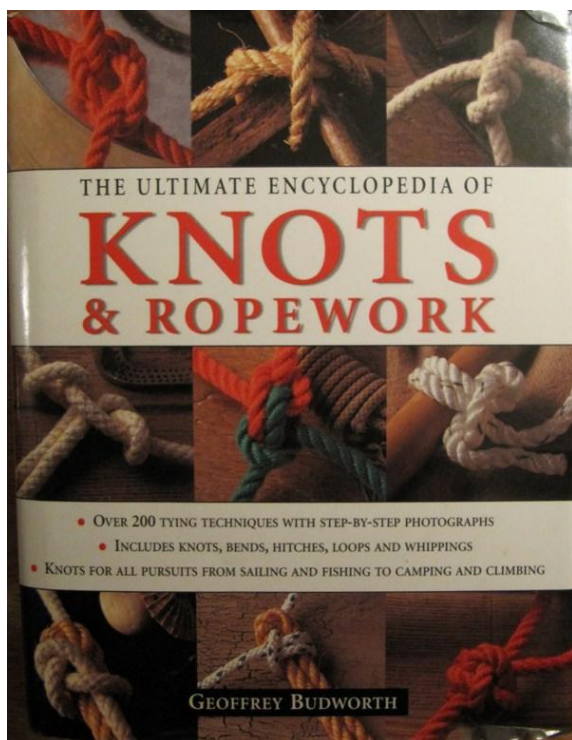
VISUAL TRANSLATION: Find a print book and visually redesign 5 of its spreads for a website. Explain why you have made the visual design choices you did. Describe the user needs you are addressing with your visual translation to a new technology.

INTRODUCTION

For this exercise, I chose to translate five spreads from the book *The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Knots & Ropework*.

I will first discuss my process and lessons learned in this exercise. Then I will look in more detail at some of the visual design choices that went into the new designs and the user needs that these choices attempt to address.

Finally, I provide screenshots of the original and re-designed spreads as well as links to full-screen versions of the spreads.



PROCESS & LESSONS LEARNED

I chose to do the Visual Translation exercise, because I do not have a background in visual design, and I wanted to apply the design ideas we have been discussing in class. In addition to the discussion of design choices below, I will discuss the items that I feel could be improved upon further and those that were design challenges for me as a beginner.

In order to complete this exercise, I downloaded the trial of Adobe Fireworks C5. Learning to use this tool took quite a bit of time, but it was a valuable outcome of this exercise for me. I like the software a lot and will use it for design activities moving forward. The ability to build background layers (for header, footer, etc) and then use them across all pages is very useful.

I also consulted two books to help me structure my thinking on how to approach a design project: *Graphic Design for Non-Designers*, and *Layout Essentials: 100 Design Principles for Using Grids*.

In my opinion, the book I chose to translate is visually well-designed already. It also contains numerous photos to illustrate the knot tying steps. One reason that I chose the book was that I thought the photos would translate well into the new web medium.

I learned that the task of moving layout elements around and lining elements up on the grid is very time consuming. Especially given the number of images I captured, processed, imported and arranged to complete my layout. In the future I will have a better understanding of how to anticipate the scale of work involved in a selection choice such as this one.

VISUAL DESIGN CHOICES & AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Font Style

For this website I chose the Garamond font. I wanted to use a serif font, because, as we discussed during class, the serif fonts tend to look less modern and more rustic. I felt that the topic of knot tying has rustic associations with things like boats and rock climbing. I chose the Garamond font specifically because it was highlighted in the book *Graphic Design for Non-Designers* and I liked the way it looked the most compared to the other fonts I tried.

Font Size

For the text, I chose a font size 14. For the page title, I chose a font size of 36. For the page title, I chose a combination of font sizes 24 and 48. After completing the design, I have determined that the font size 14 could be increased a little to improve readability. I like the way the combination of font sizes 24 and 48 looks in the site header.

Color

The main color element in the website is in the header bar. I chose a rustic brownish/green color that I associate with outdoor activities, since I associate the content of knot tying with outdoor activities such as boating and rock climbing. I also wanted a subdued color that was not too distracting from the content of the site. The images I used contain many colors, so I felt that additional color elements in the layout would result in too much color overall.

Style and Page Elements

I attempted to create a simple design style for this website. I used relatively few elements beyond the ones originally taken from the book spread. I added a header bar, and some structural lines to give the page some structure. I added a knot image in the upper left hand corner to balance the page title. It was my intention that the inward curving of this image would keep the user's eye from leaving the page due to its shape and orientation.

Grid Layout and White Space

I kept a number of elements uniform across pages including the header bar, header image, the website title, and the page title. I kept the upper left corner of the central knot images consistent, though I allowed the size of the individual images to vary.

I struggled a lot with white space and laying out an appealing arrangement of shapes. There are still a number of places where the lines don't work visually in my opinion. One constraint that I faced was that I was working with a number of image elements in each page, and the images needed to be presented in a sequential order. This made it hard to break away from a standard checkerboard pattern.

I used the "guides" feature of Adobe Fireworks to create a grid structure of 14 columns. In most of the pages, I stuck to a layout with rows and columns of images. On the Six Strand page, I experimented with a more creative layout. I attempted to make the flow of the images reference the shape of the rope in the main image. I drew three temporary angled lines and used them to align the corners of the images in this layout. I left this page because I thought it was an interesting attempt, but I do not think it is a successful design.

I referenced the book *Layout Essentials: 100 Design Principles for Using Grids* to help think about various grid layout options. However, I feel that this is the element of the design that is most in need of additional improvement.

USER NEEDS

It was my intention to address the following user needs with this design:

Quick Reference

I feel that a website can be a better place to quickly reference the instructions for knot tying, especially via a smart phone. By choosing to translate a book with knot tying instructions, I intended to meeting a user need for a quick reference guide that could be accessed anytime without requiring access to a book.

Consistency

I used a consistent layout between pages and a straightforward layout of the content in order to make the site accessible to anyone without prior knowledge of the site conventions

Readability

I chose a clean design and layout to make the site easier and more enjoyable for the user to view. I also chose simple colors to create a design without too much activity beyond the content images

Visually Instructive

I chose to keep all of the original images illustrating the knot tying steps because I felt they were very useful to the learning process.

REFERENCES

The book that was re-designed:

- Budworth, G. (2002). *The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Knots & Ropework*. London, UK: Hermes House Publishing.

Other books that I used the during the process of creating these spreads:

- Tondreau, B. (2009). *Layout Essentials: 100 Design Principles for Using Grids*. Beverly, MA: Rockport Publishers.
- Seddon, T; Waterhouse, J. (2009). *Graphic Design for Non-Designers*. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books.

SPREADS

On the following pages, I present the original book spreads and the re-designed web spreads.

The re-designed web spreads can also be viewed in full size at the following links:

Contents page: <http://terpconnect.umd.edu/~websters/Workout2.html>

Spread 1: <http://terpconnect.umd.edu/~websters/1-TermsAndTechniques.pdf>

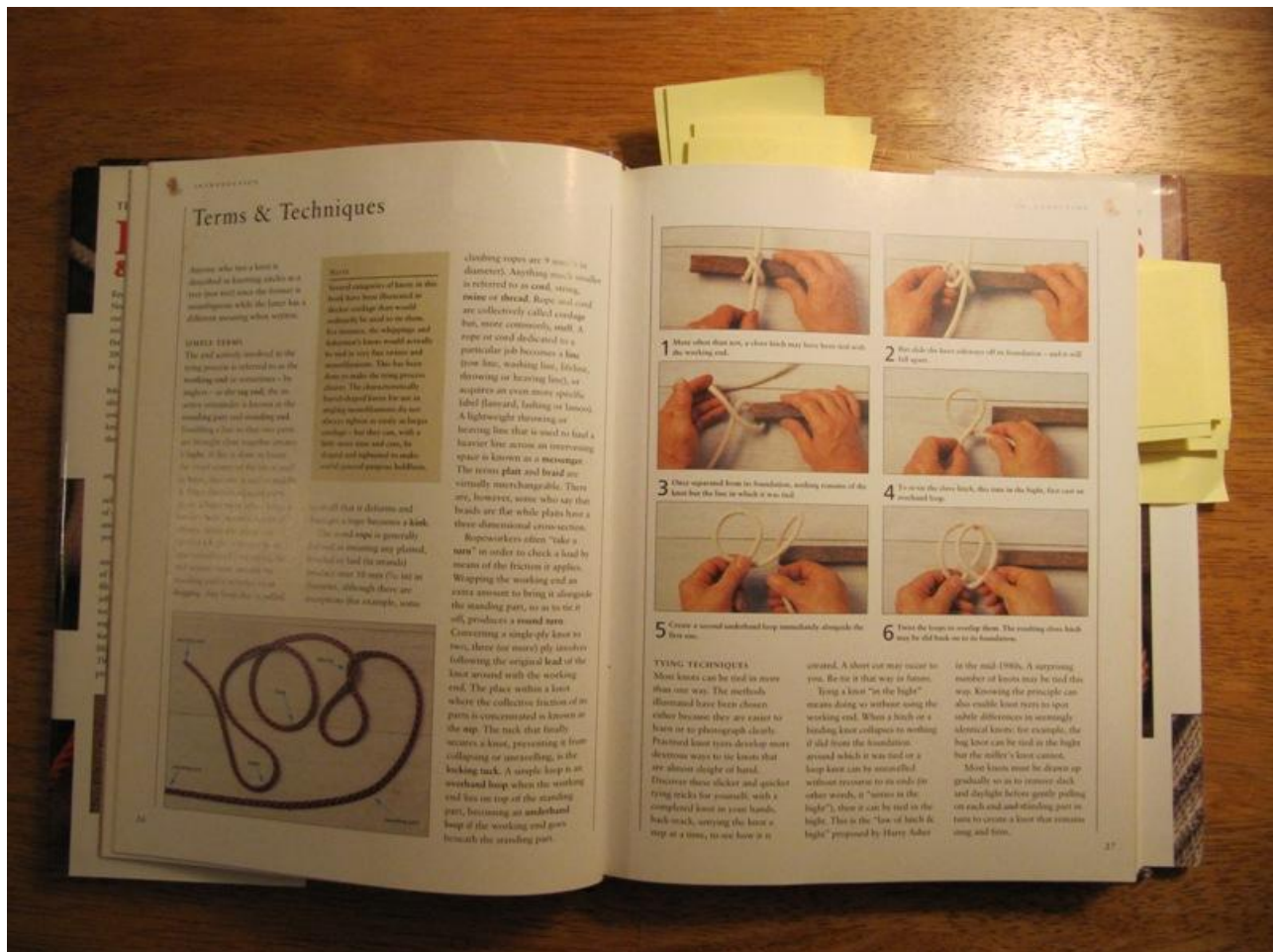
Spread 2: <http://terpconnect.umd.edu/~websters/2-Six-Strand.pdf>

Spread 3: <http://terpconnect.umd.edu/~websters/3-GoodLuck.pdf>

Spread 4: <http://terpconnect.umd.edu/~websters/4-Hangman.pdf>

Spread 5: <http://terpconnect.umd.edu/~websters/5-Monkey.pdf>

Spread 1 – Original Book Spread



Spread 1 – Re-Designed Web Spread

View fullscreen at: <http://terpconnect.umd.edu/~websters/1-TermsAndTechniques.pdf>



The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Knots and Ropework

Terms & Techniques

Anyone who ties a knot is described in knotting circles as a **tyer** (not **tier**) since the former is unambiguous while the latter has a different meaning when written.

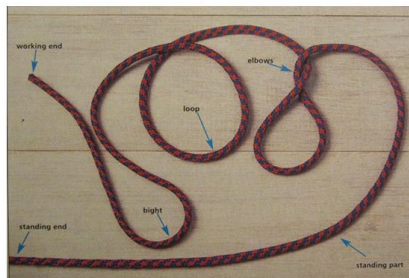
SIMPLE TERMS

The end actively involved in the tying process is referred to as the **working end** or *surcunettes* - by anglers - as the **tag end**, the inactive remainder is known as the **standing part** and **standing end**. Doubling a line so that two parts are brought close together creates a **bight**. If this is done to locate the exact centre of the bit of stuff in hand, then one is said to **middle** it. Once the two adjacent parts cross, a bight turns into a loop; a further twist creates a couple of **elbows**, while the process of turning a bight or loop into an improvised eye by wrapping the end several times around the standing part is referred to as **doggie**. Any loop that is pulled so small that it deforms and damages a rope becomes a **kink**.

The word **rope** is generally defined as meaning any plaited, braided, or laid (in strands) product over 10 mm (5/12 in) in diameter, although there are exceptions (for example, some climbing ropes are 9mm or 3/8 in diameter). Anything much smaller is referred to as **cord**, **string**, **twine**, or **thread**. Rope and cord are collectively called **cordage** but, more commonly, **stuff**. A rope or cord dedicated to a particular job becomes a **line** (toss line, washing line, lifeline, throwing or heaving line), or acquires an even more specific label (lanyard, lashing, or lasso). A lightweight throwing or heaving line that is used to haul a heavier line across an intervening space is known as a **messeuger**. The terms **plait** and **braid** are virtually interchangeable. There are, however, some who say that braids are flat while plaits have a three-dimensional cross-section.

Ropeworkers often "take a **turn**" in order to check a load by means of the friction it applies. Wrapping the working end an extra amount to bring it alongside the standing part, so as the tie it off produces a **round turn**.

Converting a single-ply knot to two, three, or more ply involves following the original **lead** of the knot around with the working end. The place within a knot where the collective friction of its parts is concentrated is known as the **nip**. The tuck that finally secures a knot, preventing it from collapsing or unraveling, is the **locking tuck**. A simple loop is an **overhand loop** when the working end lies on top of the standing part, becoming an **underhand loop** if the working end goes beneath the standing part.



TYING TECHNIQUES

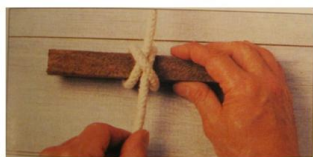
Most knots can be tied in more than one way. The methods illustrated have been chosen either because they are easier to learn or to photograph clearly. Practiced knot tyers develop more dextrous ways to tie knots that are almost sleight of hand. Discover these slicker and quicker tying tricks for yourself: with a completed knot in your hands back-track, untying the knot a step at a time, to see how it is created. A short cut may occur to you. Re-tie it that way in future.

Tying a knot "in the bight" means doing so without using the working end. When a hitch or a binding knot collapses to nothing if slid from the foundation around which it was tied or a loop knot can be unraveled without recourse to its ends (in other words, it "unrins in the bight"), then it can be tied in the bight. This is the "law of hitch & bight" proposed by Harry Asher in the mid-1980s. A surprising number of knots may be tied this way. Knowing the principle can also enable knot tyers to spot subtle differences in seemingly identical knots: for example, the bag knot can be tied in the bight but the miller's knot cannot.

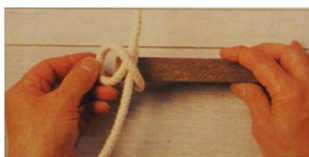
Most knots must be drawn up gradually so as to remove slack and daylight before gently pulling on each end and standing part in turn to create a knot that remains snug and firm.

NOTES

Several categories of knots in this book have been illustrated in thicker cordage than would ordinarily be used to tie them. For instance, the whippings and fishermen's knots would actually be tied in very fine reines and monofilaments. This has been done to make the tying process clearer. The characteristically barrel-shaped knots for use in angling monofilaments do not always tighten as easily in larger cordage - but they can, with a little more time and care, be shaped and tightened to make useful general purpose holdfasts.



1. More often than not, a dove hitch may have been tied with the working end.



2. But slide the knot sideways off its foundation - and it will fall apart.



3. Once separated from its foundation, nothing remains of the knot but the line in which it was tied.



4. To re-tie the dove hitch, this time in the bight, first cast an overhand loop.

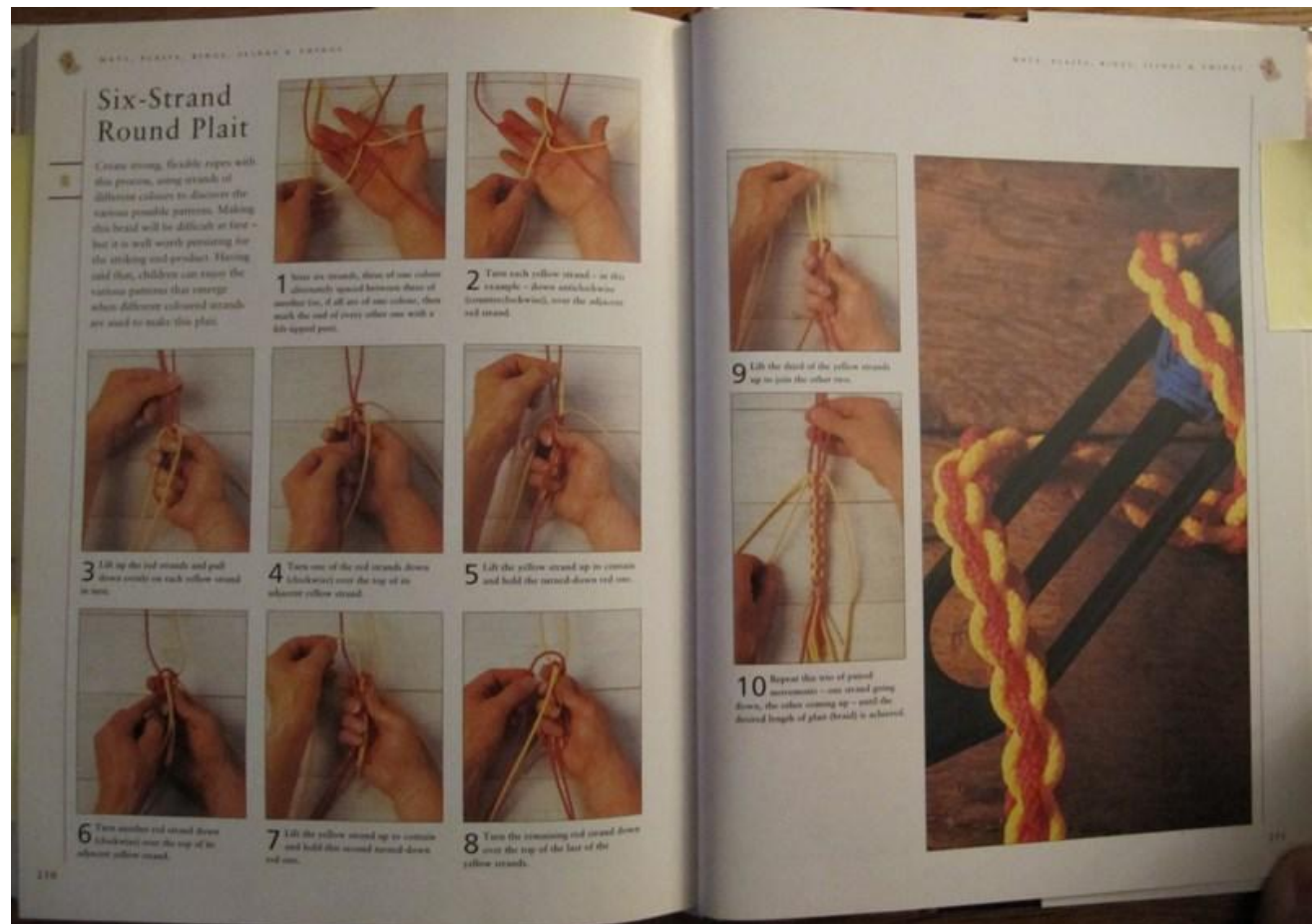


5. Create a second underhand loop immediately alongside the first one.



6. Twist the loops to overlap them. The resulting dove hitch may be slid back on to its foundation.

Spread 2 - Original Book Spread



Spread 2 - Re-Designed Web Spread

View fullscreen at: <http://terpconnect.umd.edu/~websters/2-Six-Strand.pdf>



The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Knots and Ropework

Six-Strand Round Plait

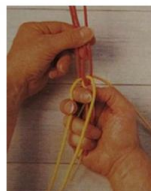
Create strong, flexible ropes with this process, using strands of different colours to discover the various possible patterns. Making this braid will be difficult at first - but it is well worth persisting for the striking end-product. Having said that, children can enjoy the various patterns that emerge when different coloured strands are used to make this plait.



1. Sort six strands, three of one colour alternately spaced between three of another (or, if all are of one colour, then mark the end of every other one with a felt-tipped pen).



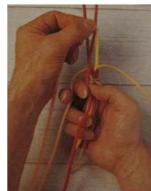
2. Turn each yellow strand - in this example - down anticlockwise (counterclockwise), over the adjacent red strand.



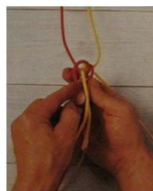
3. Lift up the red strands and pull down evenly on each yellow strand in turn.



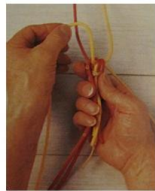
4. Turn one of the red strands down (clockwise) over the top of its adjacent yellow strand.



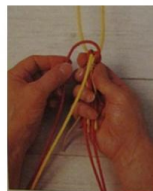
5. Lift the yellow strand up to contain and hold the turned-down red one.



6. Turn another red strand down (clockwise) over the top of its adjacent yellow strand.



7. Lift the yellow strand up to contain and hold this second turned-down red one.



8. Turn the remaining red strand down over the top of the last of the yellow strands.

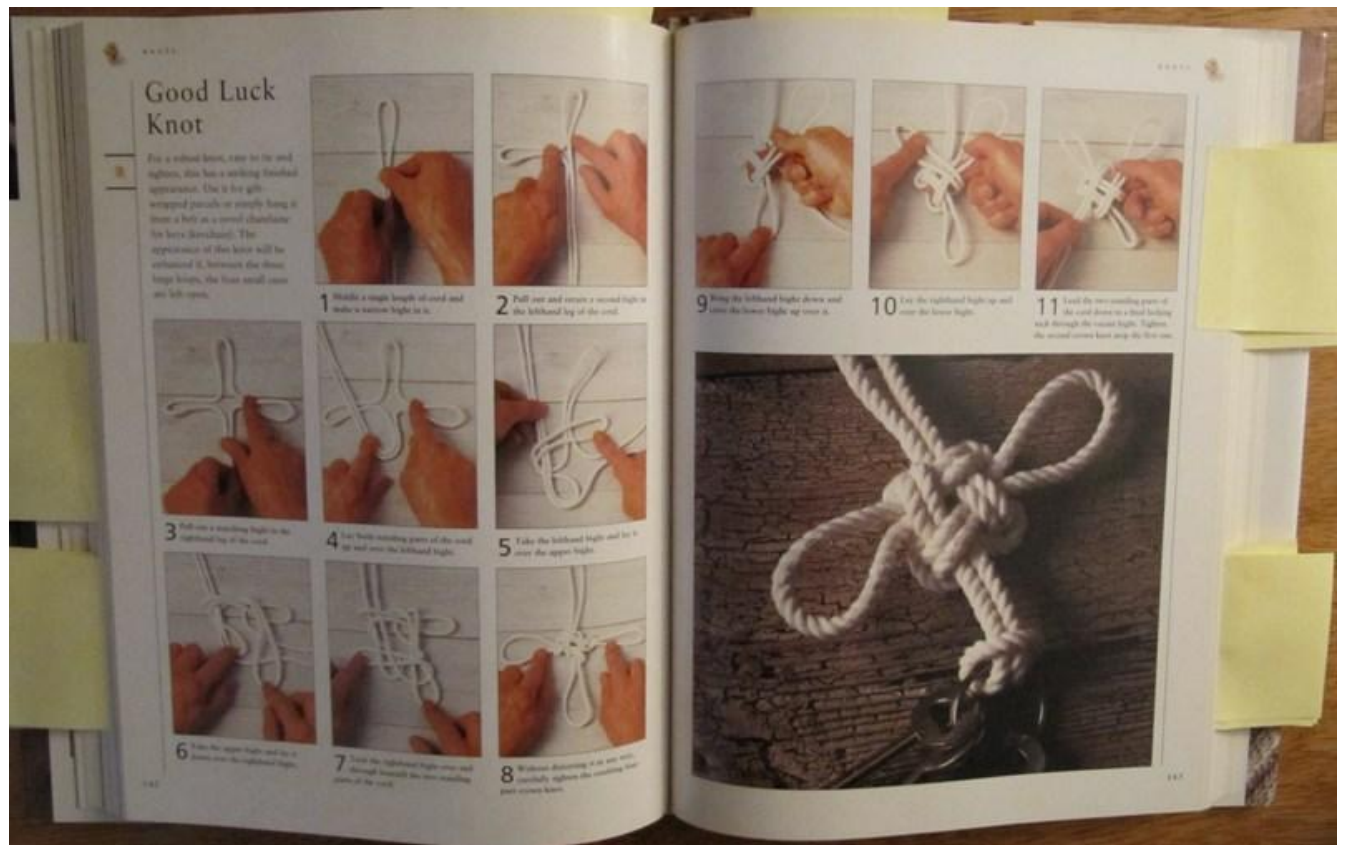


9. Lift the third of the yellow strands up to join the other two.




10. Repeat this trio of paired movements - one strand going down, the other coming up - until the desired length of plait (braid) is achieved.

Spread 3 - Original Book Spread



Spread 3 - Re-Designed Web Spread


View fullscreen at: <http://terpconnect.umd.edu/~websters/3-GoodLuck.pdf>




The Ultimate Encyclopedia of
Knots and Ropework


Good Luck Knot

For a robust knot, easy to tie and tighten, this has a striking finished appearance. Use it for gift-wrapped parcels or simply hang it from a belt as a novel chatelaine for keys (keychain). The appearance of this knot will be enhanced if, between the three large loops, the four small ones are left open.

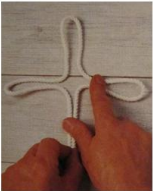





1. Middle a single length of cord and make a narrow bight in it.




2. Pull out and retain a second bight in the left-hand leg of the cord.




3. Pull out a matching bight in the right-hand leg of the cord.



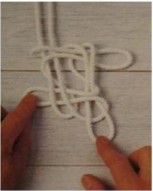
4. Lay both standing parts of the cord up and over the left-hand bight.




5. Take the left-hand bight and lay it over the upper bight.




6. Take the upper bight and lay it down over the right-hand bight.




7. Tuck the right-hand bight over and through beneath the two standing parts of the cord.




8. Without distorting it in any way, carefully tighten the resulting four-part crown knot.



9. Bring the left-hand bight down and cross the lower bight up over it.



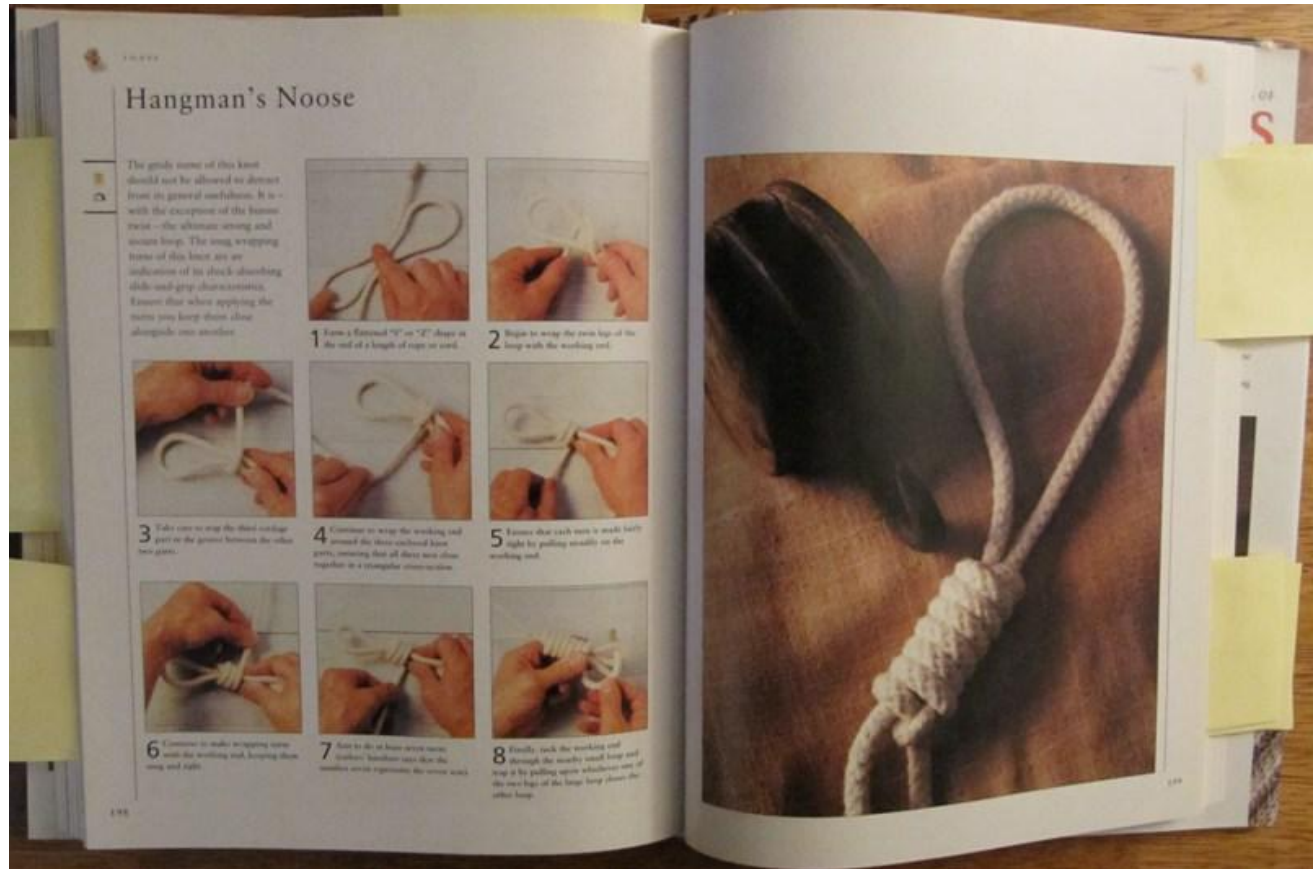
10. Lay the right-hand bight up and over the lower bight.



11. Lead the two standing parts of the cord down in a final locking tuck through the vacant bight. Tighten the second crown knot atop the first one.

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Spread 4 - Original Book Spread



Spread 4 - Re-Designed Web Spread

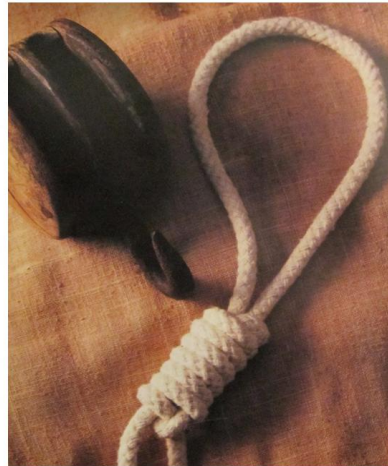
View fullscreen at: <http://terpconnect.umd.edu/~websters/4-Hangman.pdf>



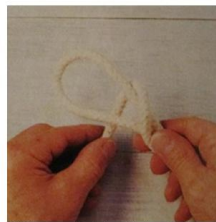
The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Knots and Ropework

Hangman's Noose

The grisly name of this knot should not be allowed to detract from its general usefulness. It is - with the exception of the human noose - the ultimate strong and secure loop. The snug wrapping turns of this knot are an indication of its shock-absorbing slide-and-grip characteristics. Ensure that when applying the turns you keep them close alongside one another.



1. Form a flattened "S" or "Z" shape in the end of a length of rope or cord.



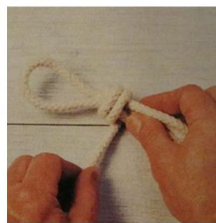
2. Begin to wrap the two legs of the loop with the working end.



3. Take care to trap the third roadway part in the groove between the other two parts.



4. Continue to wrap the working end around the three enclosed knot parts, ensuring that all three nest close together in a triangular cross-section.



5. Ensure that each turn is made fairly tight by pulling steadily on the working end.



6. Continue to make wrapping turns with the working end, keeping them snug and tight.

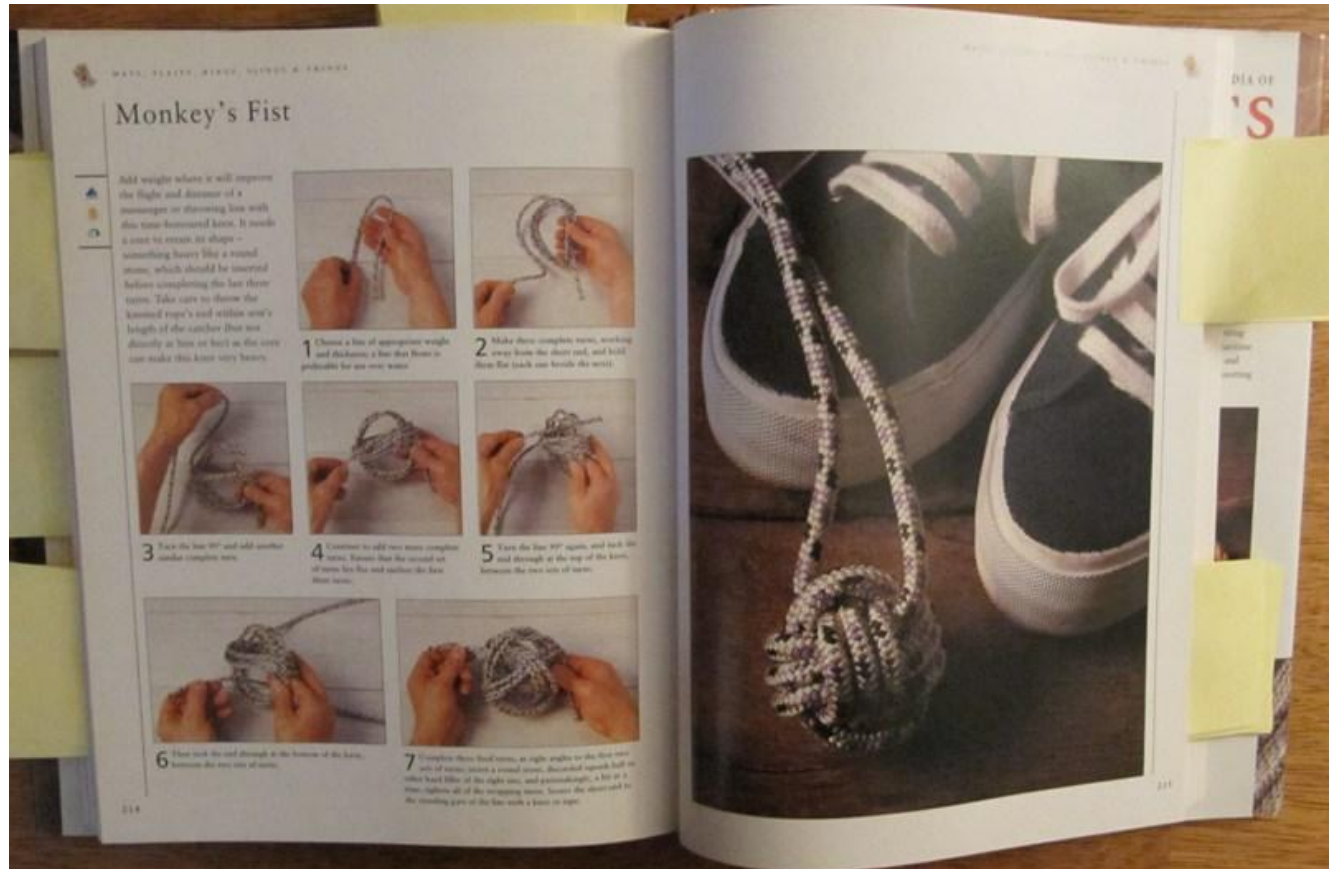


7. Aim to do at least seven turns (sailor's knowledge says that the number seven represents the seven seas).



8. Finally, tuck the working end through the nearby small loop and trap it by pulling upon whichever one of the two legs of the large loop closes the other loop.

Spread 5 - Original Book Spread



Spread 5 - Re-Designed Web Spread

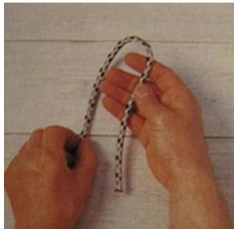
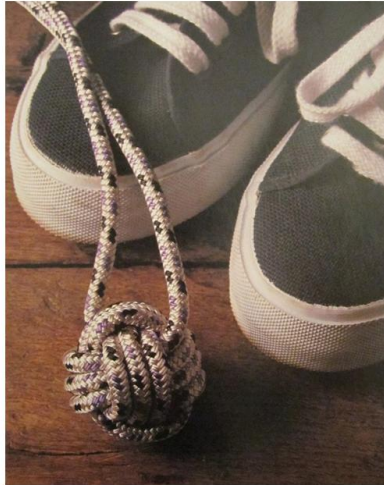
View fullscreen at: <http://terpconnect.umd.edu/~websters/5-Monkey.pdf>



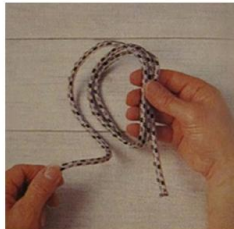
The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Knots and Ropework

Monkey's Fist

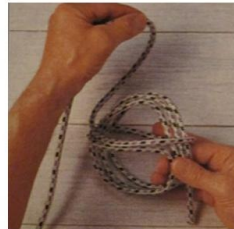
Add weight where it will improve the flight and distance of a messenger or throwing line with this time-honoured knot. It needs a core to retain its shape - something heavy like a round stone, which should be inserted before completing the last three turns. Take care to throw the knotted rope's end within arm's length of the catcher (but not directly at him or her) as the core can make this knot very heavy.



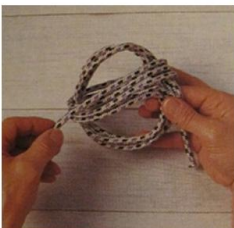
1. Choose a line of appropriate weight and thickness; a line that floats is preferable for use over water.



2. Make three complete turns, working away from the short end, and hold them flat (each beside the next).



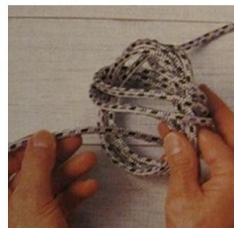
3. Turn the line 90 degrees and add another similar complete turn.



4. Continue to add two more complete turns. Ensure that the second set of turns lies flat and encloses the first three turns.



5. Turn the line 90 degrees again, and tuck the end through at the top of the knot between the two sets of turns.



6. Then tuck the end through at the bottom of the knot between the two sets of turns.



7. Complete three final turns, at right angles to the first two sets of turns; insert a round stone, disinfected squash ball, or other hard filler of the right size, and painstakingly, a bit at a time, tighten all of the wrapping turns. Secure the short end to the standing part of the line with a knot or tape.