



# 7 Basic Knots

Knowing a few knots well and how to handle lines, makes sailing easier and safer.

## Basic Guidelines For All Knots

### A Parsimonious Knot

- Does the job.
- Stays tied.
- Unties easily.

**Dressing a Knot** arranges the components of the knot to optimize security and strength. Practice dressing a knot by its look and then by its feel.

## THE SEVEN BASIC KNOTS



Overhand Knot

1-Overhand knot: The simplest knot. A quick stopper knot.



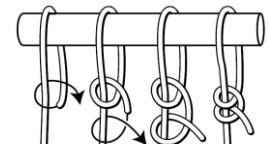
Figure 8 Knot

2-Figure Eight: The simplest good stopper knot on the end of a line. Good because it unties easier than an overhand knot.



Half Hitch

3-Half Hitch: Simplest hitch. A building block. Its cousin is a double half hitch. Holds pretty well, Tends to jam under load.



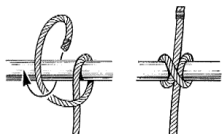
Square Knot

4-Square Knot: At sea it is a reefing knot. The first part of the knot holds while you tie the second. When the 2<sup>nd</sup> part is a bow, it ties your shoes. Do not confuse with the much weaker Granny knot\*.



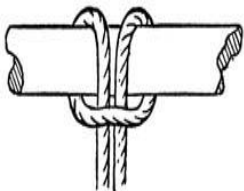
Bowline

5-Bowline: Essential. The best loop. Two can join two lines. Very secure as tension tightens its grip. Can be untied after it is loaded. Learn to tie it around your leg and around a post.



Clove Hitch

6-Clove Hitch: Secures fenders. Easy to adjust. There are 8 ways to tie it. Learn a few\*. Also learn its cousin the constrictor knot\*.



7-Cow Hitch: Simple way to loop a line of a coiled line on a pulpit or life line.

- *The BEST way to learn these and dozens more knots is to download [AnimatedKnots](#) by Grog. Its free. It shows step by step how to tie. It is the source of colored knot pictures used here.*