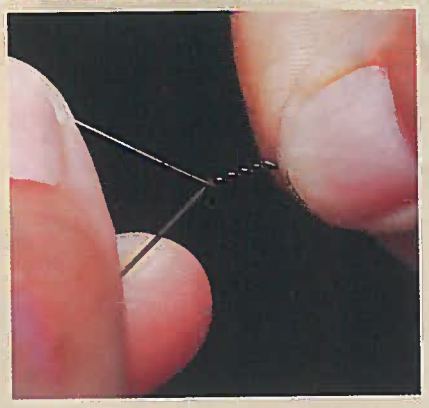
HERE'S HOW TO MAKE A PERFECT HAYWIRE TWIST:

Step 1

Pass the wire through the eye of the hook and gently fold back six inches of wire, making sure not to kink it at the bend. Lay the tag end over the standing wire and firmly hold the crossing point of the wires between your thumb and index finger.

NOTE: The size (diameter) of the loop at the end of the leader – or that containing the hook or swivel – can be determined by shortening or expanding the point where the wires initially intersect. Keep this in mind prior to making that first wrap.



Step 2

Begin a series of haywire twists. First make sure the tag end and standing wire are nearly parallel to each other, yet slightly and evenly spread apart. Next, simultaneously twist the wire tag and standing wire while firmly holding the point where the two strands initially intersect. As the twists progress, slide your fingers closer to the wraps and continue the pressure. A tight grip close to the twists makes it easier to twist the wire, helps keep it straight and prevents kinking.

Step 3

After about a half-dozen twists, begin a series of barrel wraps by first bending the tag end of the wire at a 90-degree angle to the twists. Then, make a series of tight wraps against the twists.

Step 4

After making four or five barrel wraps, form a "crank handle" in the wire tag by bending an inch or so of its tip at a 90-degree angle to the main loop in the wire. Work the wire tag back and forth between the main loop in the leader and the standing wire. After a few series of half-rotations, the wire tag will break free at the base of the barrel wrap, leaving a smooth finish.

BAD TIES

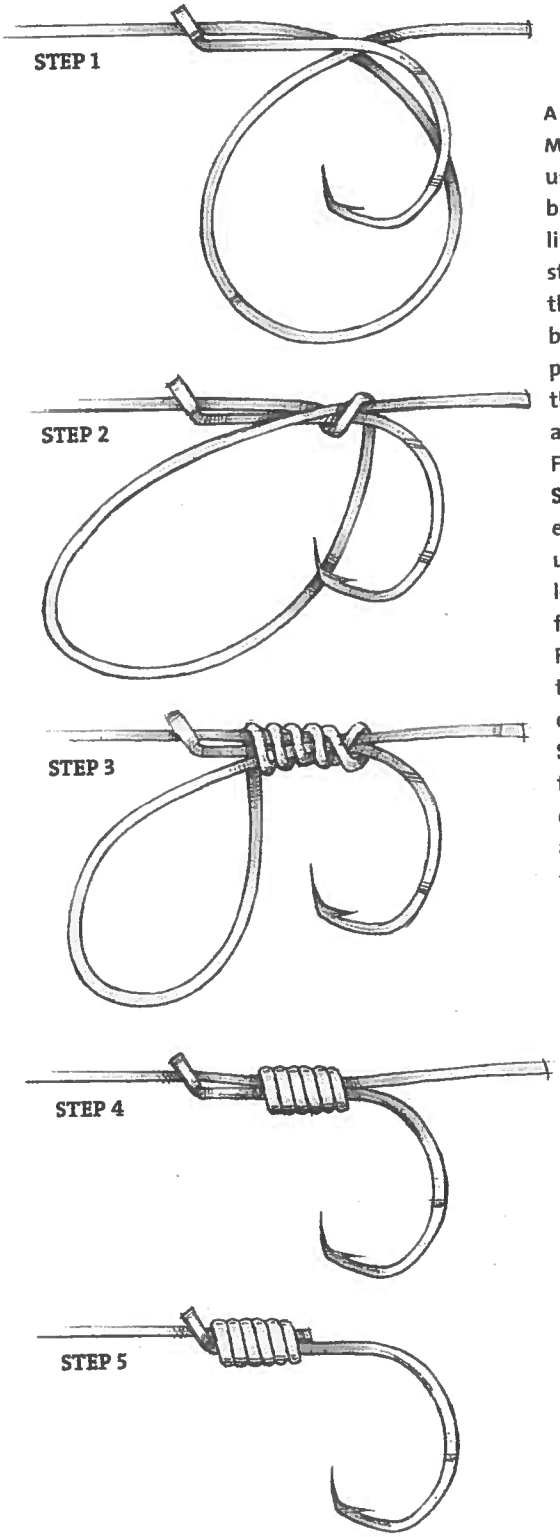
I learned the importance of mastering the haywire twist early in my fishing career. I was in my late teens and trolling off Key Largo with a friend. We put out a spread of ballyhoo and one swimming mullet with a chin weight. I had rigged all the baits on wire. Unfortunately, my twists were far from perfect, as I was just learning how to make them. In fact, they resembled more of a loose barrel wrap.

Well, something big hit that mullet that day and screamed off a lot of 50-pound-test line. Looking back today, my guess would be a tuna. However, as I clutched the rod and eagerly awaited the fish to slow down, the line suddenly went slack! I reeled up only to notice that my wraps which secured the hook to my wire leader unraveled under the pressure. After that trip, I learned the twist perfectly. Had I done it earlier, we just may have boated that fish.

Faulty haywires like these will cost you fish.

THE BITTER END

NOW WE'VE COME TO THE END — literally. It's time to finish off with the hook or artificial of your choice. There are a number of options in this area, but the Fast Snell and Non-Slip Loop cover almost any fishing situation that might arise. They're simple, quick and easy to master.



Fast Snell

A NUMBER OF FISHERMEN (particularly when using live or dead bait with circle hooks) like to have a direct, straight connection to the hook. There's no better way to accomplish this than by using this Fast Snell — actually a variation of the Fast Nail Knot.

STEP 1: Insert the tag end through the hook's upturned eye (or parallel to the shank if it features a straight eye). Form a loop with the tag trailing off the back of the hook.

STEP 2: Take the end of the loop near the bend of the hook and wrap around the shank and tag end once.

STEP 3: Continue wrapping forward five more times, passing the bend of the hook and the tag through the loop with each turn. Lay the wraps as closely together as possible.

STEP 4: Slowly pull the tag end and close the snell around the hook shank, making sure to clear the hook point. Do not overtighten.

STEP 5: Pull the main line to snug the knot up against the hook eye. Once in position, tighten by applying pressure to both the tag and main line, and trim.

The Non-Slip Loop

WHEN BOTTOM FISHING, jigging or using plugs and other artificals, a knot that cinches down negates strike-triggering action. For that reason, it's a good idea to have at least one loop knot in the arsenal to account for this. This is my favorite because it lets you predetermine the size of the resulting loop.

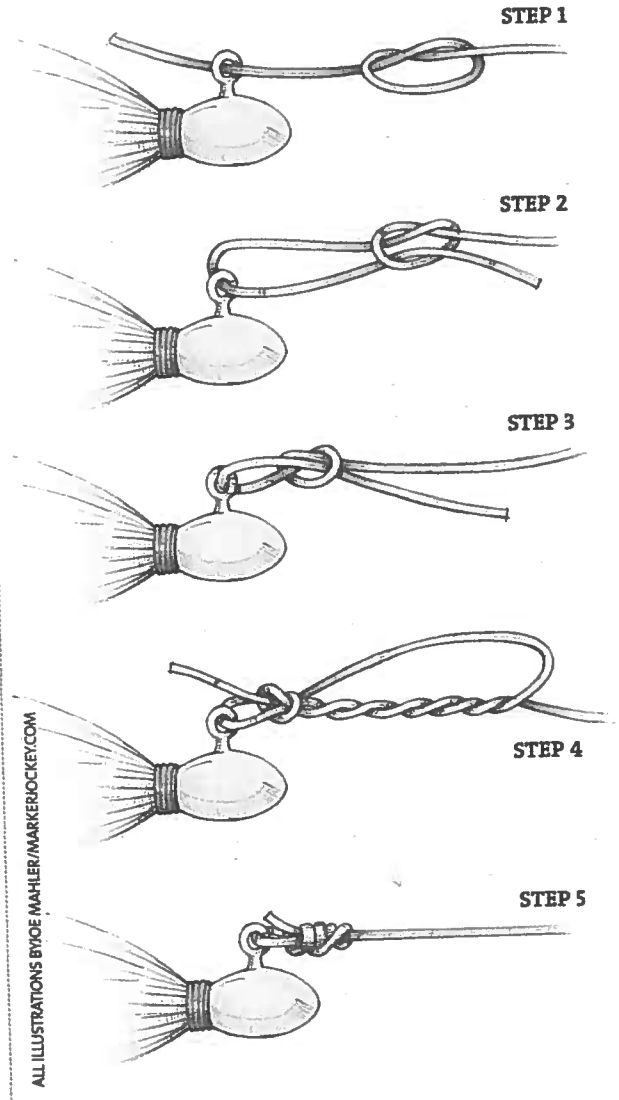
STEP 1: Form an overhand knot in the end of your leader, leaving a tag about 6 inches in length.

STEP 2: Pass the tag through the eye of the hook and then back through the overhand knot in the same direction that the line leaves the knot.

STEP 3: Adjust the size of the loops; for the overhand, draw down by pulling the main line. To adjust the size of the terminal loop, pull on the tag.

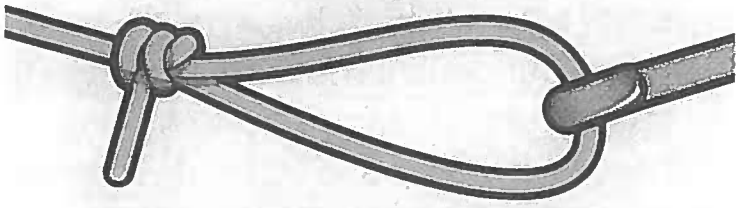
STEP 4: Make five turns with the tag end around the main line and then return the tag through the center of the overhand knot.

STEP 5: Lubricate and snug the knot by pulling on the tag end. Trim. The tag end will face in line with the main line, making it virtually weedproof.

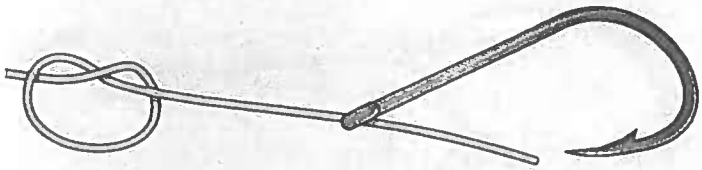


ALL ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOE MAHLER/MARKERJOCKEY.COM

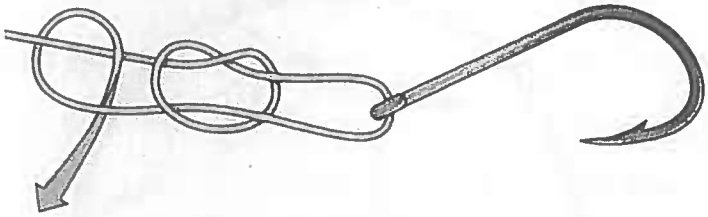
The Loop Knot



The completed loop knot

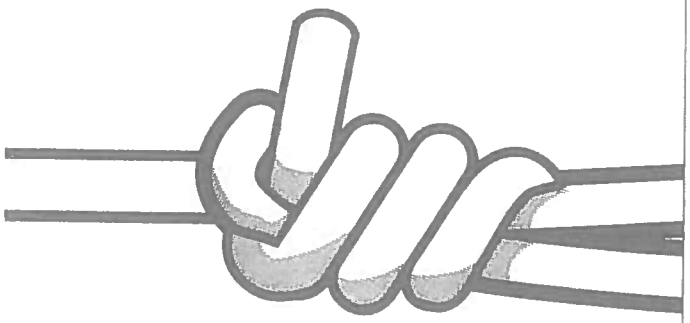


STEP 1 Tie a simple overhand loop in the leader and pass the tag end through the eye of the hook or lure.

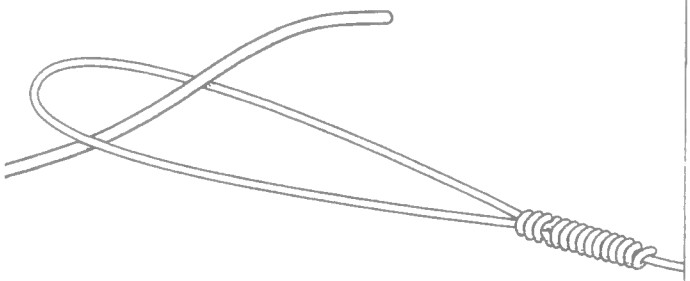


STEP 2 Bring the tag end back through the overhand loop. Then use the tag end to make a turn around the standing part of the line, tying a half hitch above the overhand loop. Before snugging down the half hitch, gently pull on both the tag end and standing line to form the size of finished loop you want. Tighten the knot by first pulling firmly on the standing line and then the tag end. Trim the tag end close to the knot.

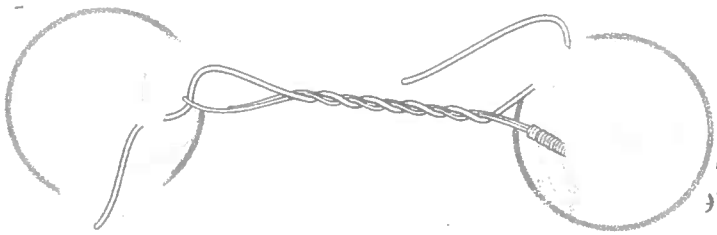
BRISTOL KNOT



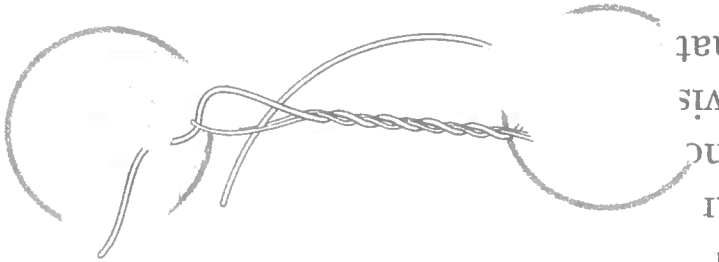
The completed Bristol knot



STEP 1 Pass the leader through the loop of the doubled main line.



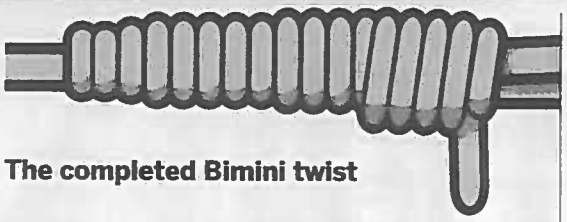
STEP 2 Put your index finger between the leader and doubled line. Wrap the leader around the doubled line five to eight times.



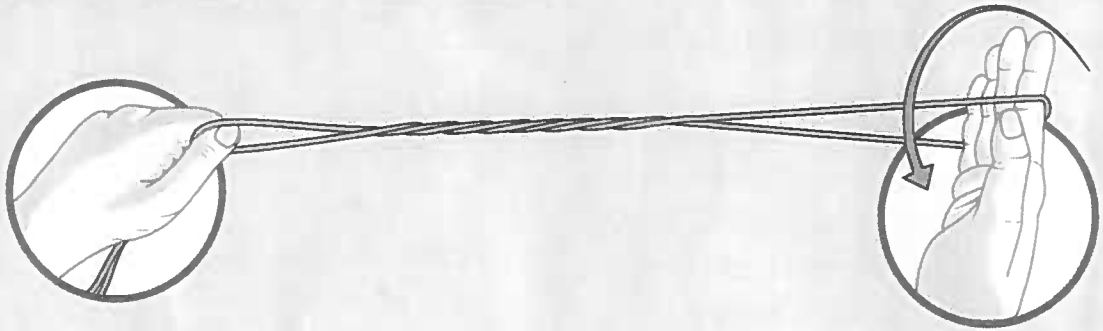
STEP 3 Pass the tag end of the leader back through the loop of the doubled line from where it came. Moisten the connection and cinch down the knot by pulling slowly and firmly on the leader and the doubled line. Trim the tag end, which ought to stand at a 90-degree angle to the line.

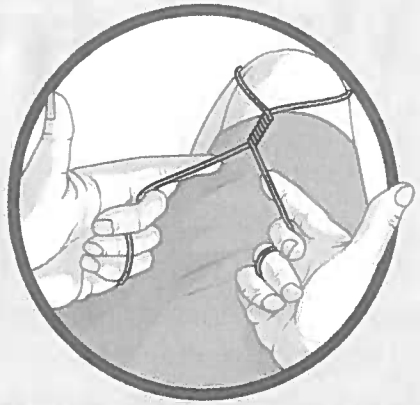
The Bimini Twist

STEP 1 Double back twice the length you'll want your double line to end up. Hold the tag end and standing line firmly with one hand and make 18 to 20 twists by rotating the end of the loop with the other hand.

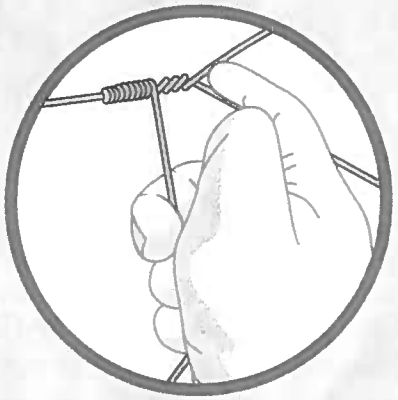


The completed Bimini twist

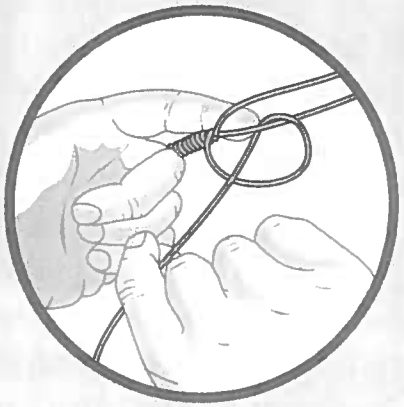




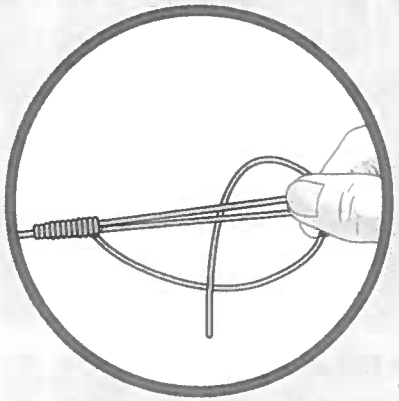
STEP 2 Keep tension on the fishing line (it's easiest to put the outfit in a rod holder) and spread the loop by placing it over your knee or foot. Tighten the twists by spreading the main line and tag at 90 degrees.



STEP 3 Keep the line tight. Pull the tag end out at a 90-degree angle to the twists. Maintain tension on the standing line and tag end, then slowly let off some pressure on the tag, allowing it to spiral tightly over the twists to the base of the loop.



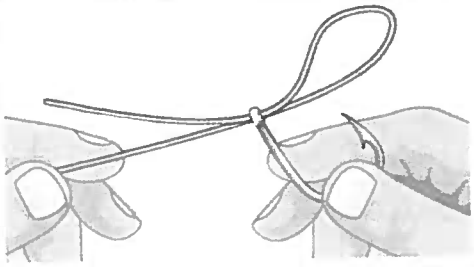
STEP 4 With the tag end, make a half-hitch around one leg of the loop, locking the wraps.



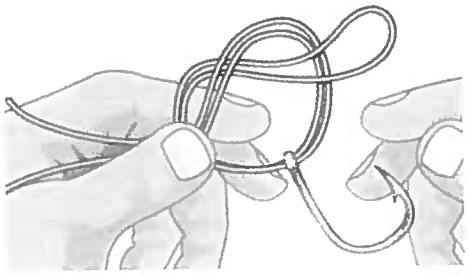
STEP 5 Then, make a half-hitch around both legs of the loop. I make a couple more half hitches around both legs and trim the tag end close. Other anglers finish their Biminis with clinches or plaits—none are incorrect if the knot does not slip.

The Palomar Knot

The Palomar knot is very easy to tie and very strong, delivering close to 100 percent of the line's breaking strength. It can be used in a variety of situations, such as when tying on hooks, swivels and lures. It's also a good knot to use with braided line. Its major drawback is that it requires more line to tie than most other knots, and can therefore reduce the length of a leader.

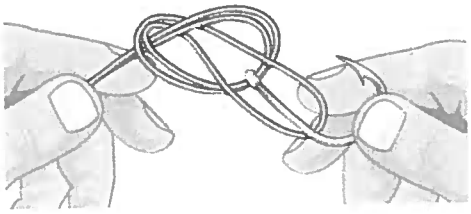


Step 1 Double four to six inches of line to form a loop that will fit over the object being tied on.

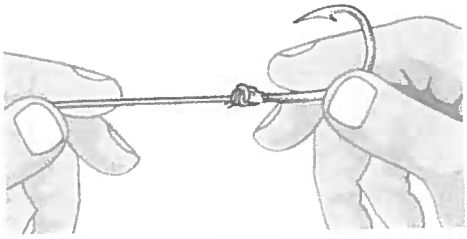


Step 2 Form an overhand knot in the loop.

Step 3 Pass the lure, swivel, hook or other object being tied on through the loop while holding the tag and standing parts of the line.

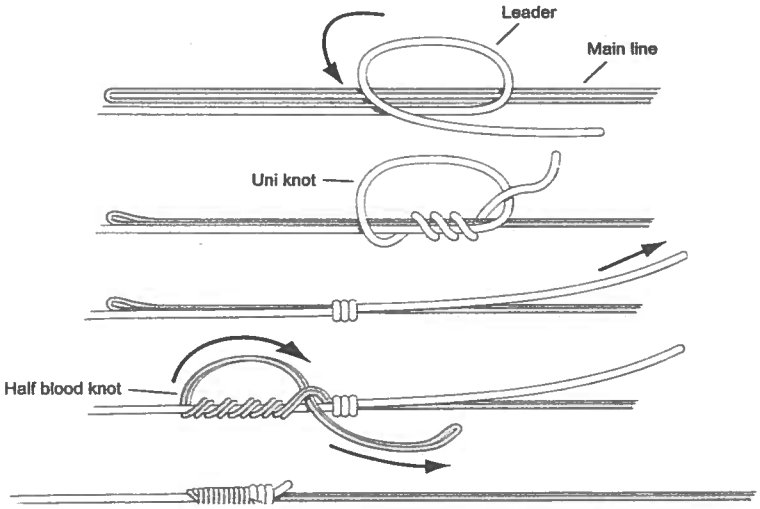


Step 4 Pull on both ends of line to draw the knot tight. (Tip: wet the knot with saliva before tightening to assure it seats properly.)



Marcus Parker

Captain Bouncer's Uni-Blood Knot Connection



MARC E. PARKER

The No-Name Knot

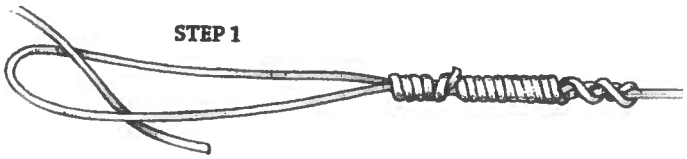
ALSO REFERRED TO AS THE BRISTOL, Yucatan or Mexican Mate's knot, the No-Name is quick and dirty. Used in conjunction with a Bimini or Triple Surgeon's, you'll be hard-pressed to find a slicker-traveling connection.

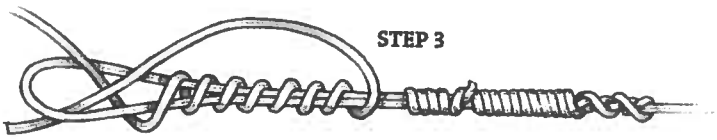
STEP 1: Take about 10 inches of leader and place it through the loop formed by your double line.

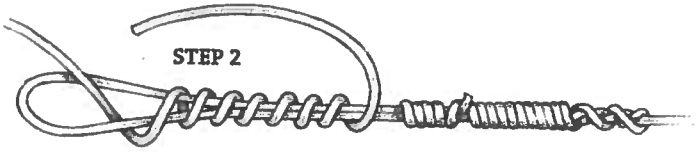
STEP 2: Pinch the leader and double line with your thumb and index finger and wrap the leader up the double line five to seven times.

STEP 3: Bring the tag end back down and then place it through the loop formed by the double line, exiting on the opposite side from where the leader entered the double line.

STEP 4: Lubricate and grasp the double line and leader, and snug firmly. The tag end should stick out at a 90-degree angle from the leader. Trim the tag end closely.







Uni-to-Uni

THIS IS A GREAT KNOT for making connections; many offshore anglers use it to connect topshots to backing on conventional reels, and it is also ideal for connecting leader material to braided main line. The Uni-Knot is an old standard for terminal connections, so if you've mastered that version, this one is a snap.

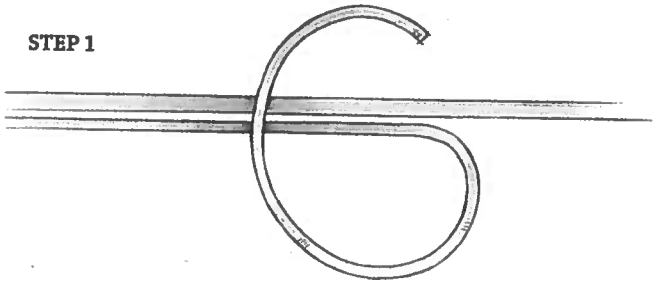
STEP 1: Lay the tag ends of each line next to each other, in opposing directions. With the tag end of the main line, form a loop.

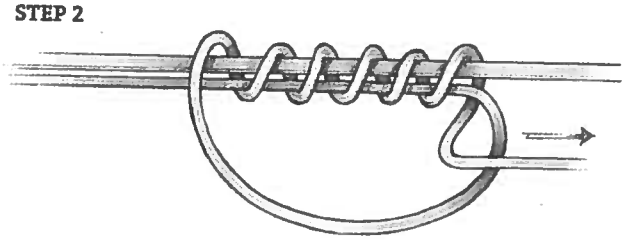
STEP 2: Take the tag end and wrap around the leader and through the main line loop. Repeat five times (a total of six).

STEP 3: Lubricate and snug the knot into position (be careful not to tighten too much).

STEP 4: Repeat steps 2 and 3 with the tag end of the leader material. With leader heavier than 40-pound, decrease the number of turns to four.

STEP 5: Pull on the standing portions of each line, sliding the two knots together. Snug them into place with even pressure on all four sides, and trim.





challenging for most anglers. But here are two simple connections that will keep you hooked up when targeting toothy creatures from bluefish and sharks to mackerel and wahoo. Both can be used not only to attach hooks and lures, but also swivels and other terminal hardware.

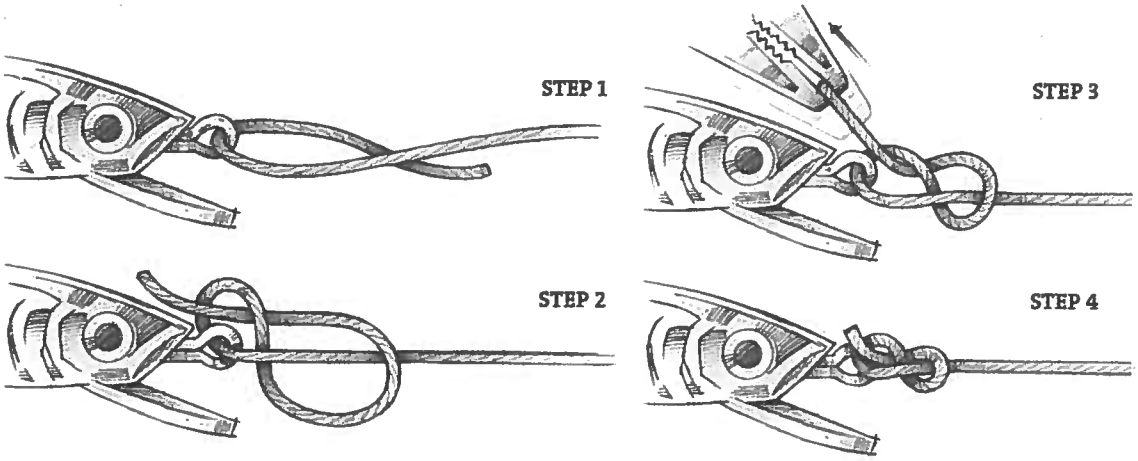
This is the connection of choice when making the link to hooks or lures on light tackle, particularly for small, toothy species.

STEP 1: Insert the braided wire

STEP 2: Wrap the tag over the main strand and back through the loop that goes through the eye or split ring (at this point, the knot should resemble a numeral 8).

failure to do so allows kinked wire from inside the knot to be drawn in front of the knot.

STEP 4: Trim the tag end close to the knot.



The Haywire Twist (for single-strand hard wire)

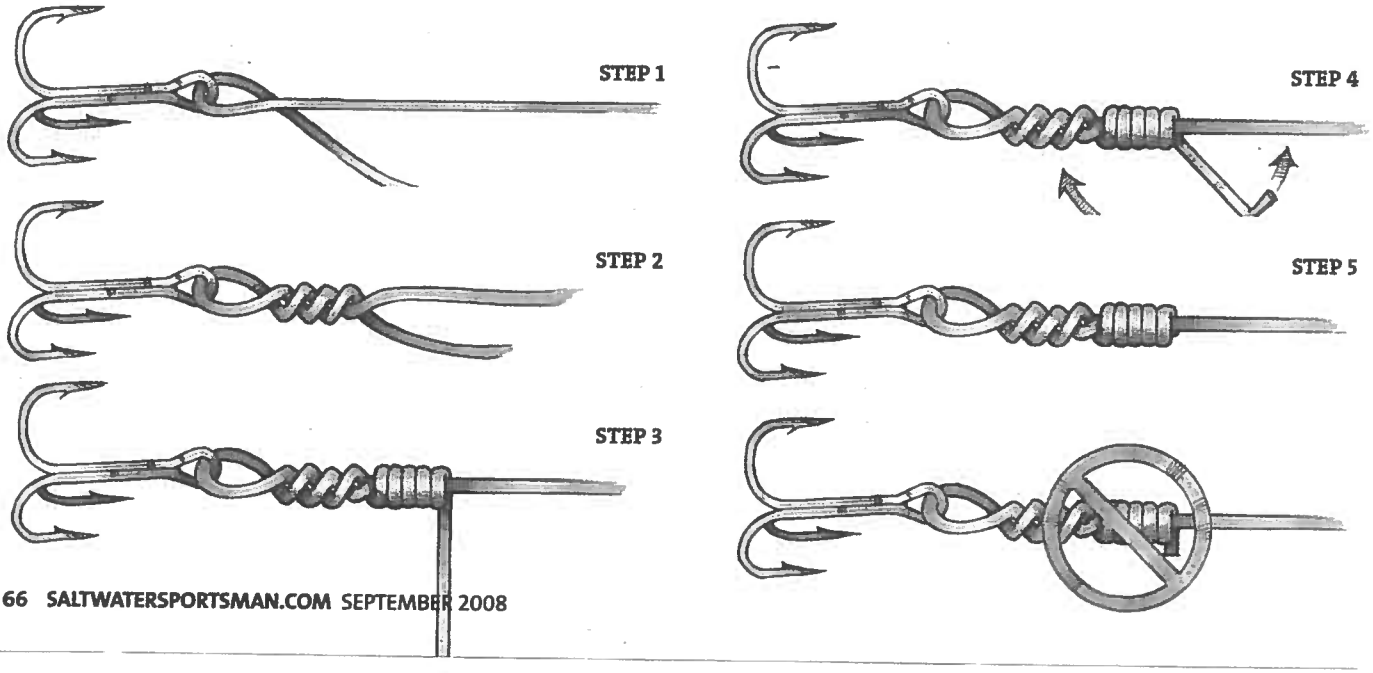
STEP 1: Place the tag end of the wire through the hook eye. Double back 6 inches, crossing the tag over the main strand, forming an X. Pinch with your thumb and forefinger to keep in place.

STEP 2: Firmly hold the wire and make a half-turn with the main strand and the tag at right angles to each other, forming a tight X. The tag and main strand must be held so that such an X forms each time a half-turn is completed. Make 31/2 turns. Now the main strand should be straight, and the tag end should be perpendicular to it.

STEP 3: Make three or four sequential wraps around the main line with tag end.

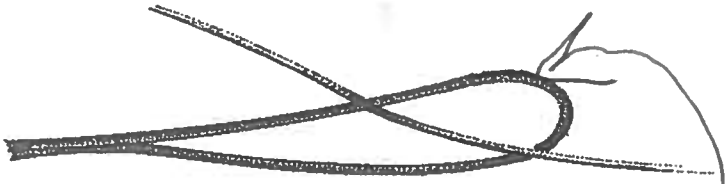
STEP 4: Take the end of the tag and form a small handle at a 90-degree angle to the knot. Grasp and work the handle back and forth in a parallel motion to the main strand, breaking the wire flush to the last wrap.

STEP 5: Make sure the wire breaks cleanly. If not, cut it off and twist the wire again. NEVER trim the tag with cutters; this will result in a small, sharp tag protruding and can result in injury.

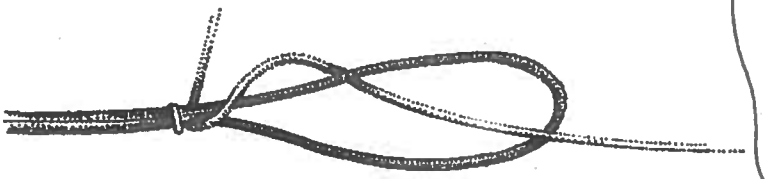


Great Wire to Mono Leader!

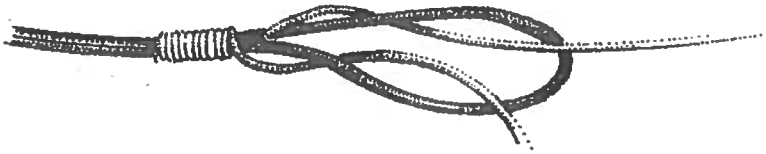
Tying the
Modified Albright Knot



STEP ONE: Double back two or three inches of wire and pinch loop with pliers to narrow. Run tag end of mono through loop.



STEP TWO: Use thumb and index finger of left hand to hold mono against wire at base of loop. Begin wrapping mono tag over both wire legs and standing leg of mono, working to the right.



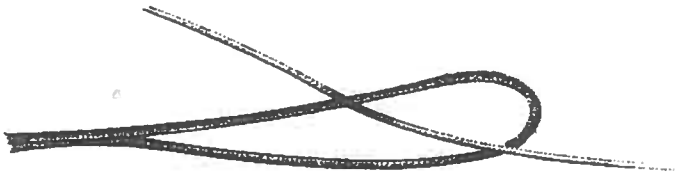
STEP THREE: Make 10 to 15 tight wraps with mono tag and pass tag through loop on same side it entered.

STEP FOUR: Moisten knot and tighten by holding both ends of wire in one hand and alternately pulling on standing and tag ends of mono until mono wraps snug up tightly against end of loop. If necessary, use fingers to slide mono wraps toward end of loop as knot tightens.

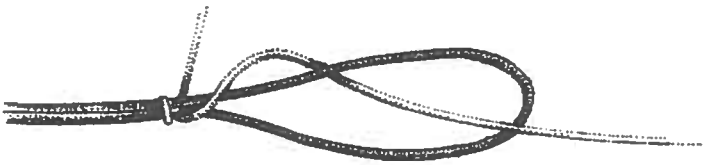
Make Haywire Loop first

STEP FIVE: At this point, both tag ends can be trimmed close to the knot. However, for extra strength, form a haywire twist/barrel wrap with the wire tag.

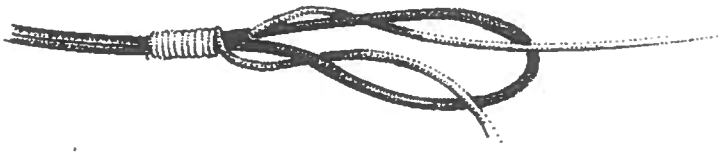
Tying the
Modified Albright Knot



STEP ONE: Double back two or three inches of wire and pinch loop with pliers to narrow. Run tag end of mono through loop.



STEP TWO: Use thumb and index finger of left hand to hold mono against wire at base of loop. Begin wrapping mono tag over both wire legs and standing leg of mono, working to the right.

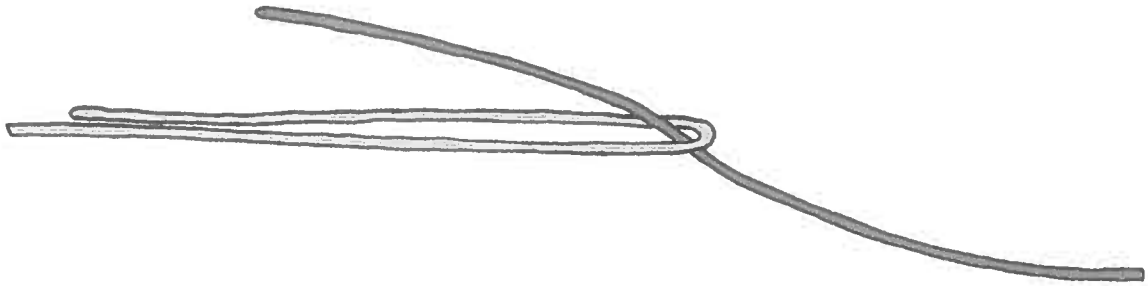


STEP THREE: Make 10 to 15 tight wraps with mono tag and pass tag through loop on same side it entered.

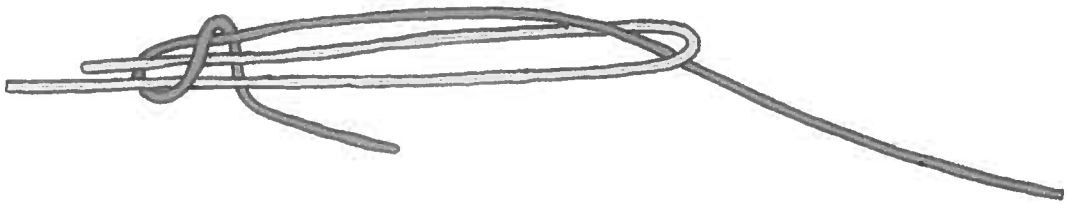
STEP FOUR: Moisten knot and tighten by holding both ends of wire in one hand and alternately pulling on standing and tag ends of mono until mono wraps snug up tightly against end of loop. If necessary, use fingers to slide mono wraps toward end of loop as knot tightens.

STEP FIVE: At this point, both tag ends can be trimmed close to the knot. However, for extra strength, form a hay-wire twist/barrel wrap with the wire tag.

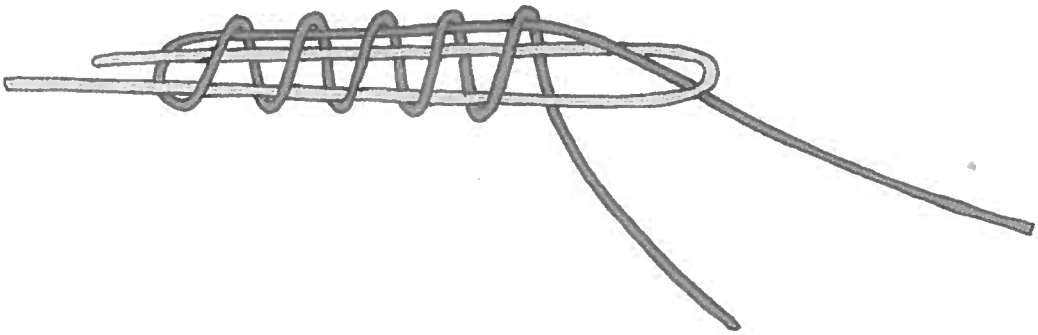
Step 1. Form a loop in the thicker of the two lines, and pinch tag-end and running line together. Pass other tag end through the loop, noting which direction it ran through.



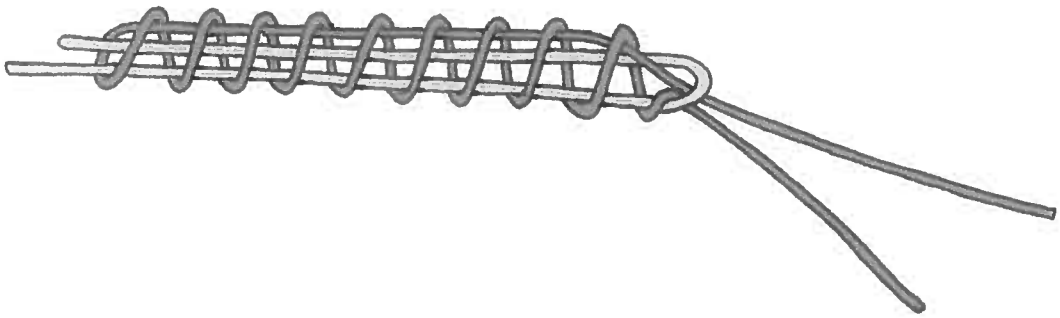
Step 2. Run tag end of lighter line to back end of the loop where you're pinching the line together. Leave plenty of line to work with, pinch it to hold in place, then double lighter line back down the loop.



Step 3. Make 10 to 25 turns, depending on line-diameter differential.



Step 4. Run tag end of lighter line back "down the hole" in the opposite direction you ran the line initially.



Step 5. Cinch it up by pulling all four tag ends. Trim tag ends and admire the product of your nautical wisdom.