

# KNOTS AND TECHNIQUES

When I began making macramé, I knew how to make only two knots: the Square and the Half Square. To this day, these are often the only knots I use when designing. Over time, of course, I have incorporated more knots into my work, and although those first two retain their starring roles, several others make frequent cameo appearances.

You'll find instructions for every knot in this book on the following pages, but don't feel like you have to learn them all at once. Each pattern lists the specific knots you need to complete the project. If you prefer to learn as you go, you can add knots to your repertoire as you need them.

## ROPES AND CORDS: A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

In addition to their everyday meanings, the terms "rope" and "cord" each have a second definition in this book that is specific to macramé. The term "rope" is used to refer to an entire cut length of *any* knotting material, be it yarn, string, twine, or, naturally, rope. A "cord," on the other hand, is either side of a "rope" that has been folded in half and mounted or otherwise made ready for knotting. This means that a single "rope," once folded, yields two "cords," with or around which knotting can be formed. In other words, "ropes" are the lengths that you cut at the beginning of your project. "Cords" are what you knot with.

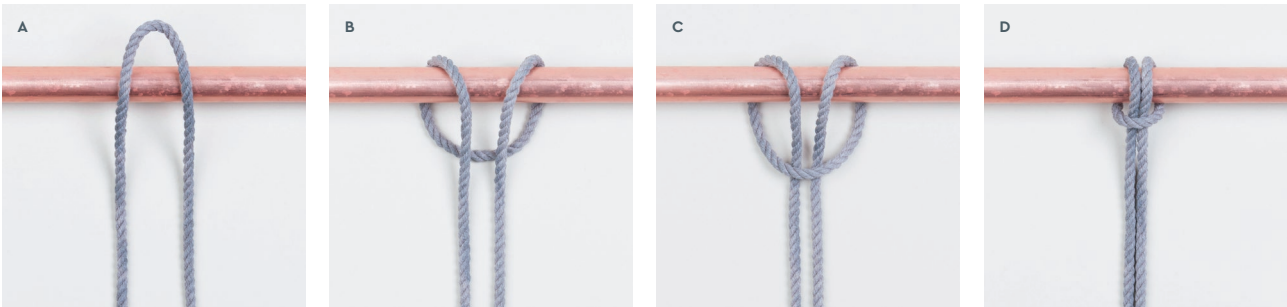
Tip: I always recommend buying 10 percent more rope than a pattern calls for to be sure you won't run out of materials. With colored rope this is especially important, as dye lots may differ.

## BEGINNINGS

Incorporating a new rope into a project is called *mounting*. The first step in most projects is to mount rope(s) onto a dowel or piece of hardware, like a ring; although rope(s) may also be mounted onto other rope(s) or onto existing knotting as well. The easiest and most common way to do this is the Lark's Head Knot (LHK) or its opposite, the Reverse Lark's Head Knot (RLHK).

### Lark's Head Knot (LHK)

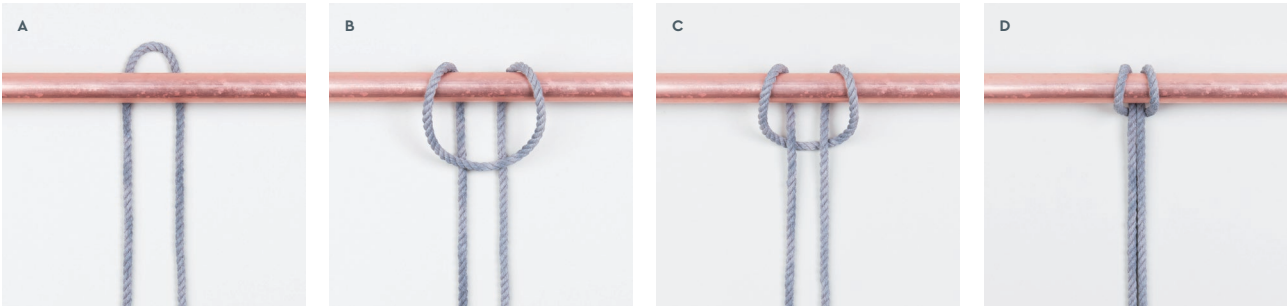
- 1 Make a loop at the center of the rope, and bring it in front of the dowel. [A]
- 2 Fold the loop back around the dowel. [B]
- 3 Pull the ends of the rope down through the loop. [C]
- 4 Make sure the rope is divided precisely in half and then tighten the knot. [D]



### Reverse Lark's Head Knot (RLHK)

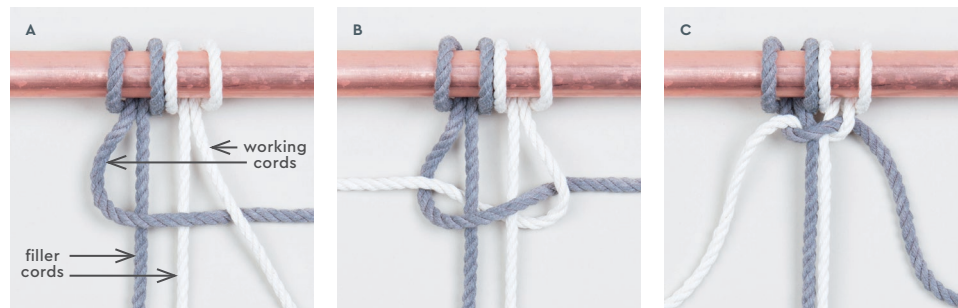
- 1 Make a loop at the center of the rope, and bring it up behind the dowel. [A]
- 2 Fold the loop forward over the dowel. [B]

- 3 Pull the ends of the rope forward through the loop. [C]
- 4 Make sure the rope is divided precisely in half and then tighten the knot. [D]



## HALF SQUARES

The classic Half Square Knot (HSK) and its mirror image, the Right Half Square Knot (RHSK), are made by knotting two outer cords, called *working cords*, around two inner cords, called *filler cords*. This basic method is shown here. Occasionally in this book, however, these knots are worked around more than two filler cords or around a rigid object like a ring or dowel. If so, this will be specified in the individual pattern.

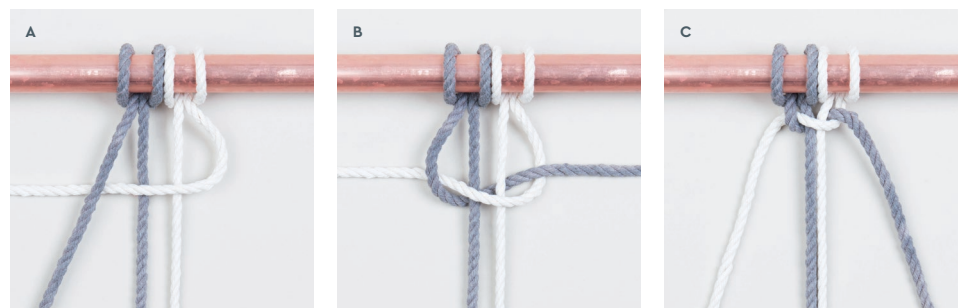


### Right Half Square Knot (RHSK)

**1** Bring the right working cord (white) over both filler cords and under the left working cord (gray). [A]

**2** Bring the left working cord (gray) under the filler cords and over the right working cord (white). [B]

**3** Tighten the knot. [C]



### Half Square Knot (HSK)

**1** Bring the left working cord (gray) over both filler cords and under the right working cord (white). [A]

**2** Bring the right working cord (white) under the filler cords and over the left working cord (gray). [B]

**3** Tighten the knot. [C]

## SQUARES

One of each type of Half Square worked back to back forms a Square. In this book, Squares that begin with a Half Square Knot (HSK) are called Square Knots (SKs), and those that begin with a Right Half Square Knot (RHSK) are called Right-Facing Square Knots (RSKs).

### Square Knot (SK)

**1** Work an HSK.

**2** Work an RHSK.

**3** Tighten the knot.

You've now made one Square Knot (SK). This knot is also known as the Left-Facing Square Knot. In the photo at right top, note the vertical line of white rope on the knot's left side. Throughout this book, I refer to it simply as the Square Knot (SK) because the Right-Facing Square Knot (RSK) is rarely used.



### Right-Facing Square Knot (RSK)

**1** Work an RHSK.

**2** Work an HSK.

**3** Tighten the knot.

You've now made one Right-Facing Square Knot (RSK). In the photo at right bottom, note the vertical line of gray rope on the right side of the knot.



### Mounting with a Half Square Knot (HSK) or Square Knot (SK)

You can also mount one rope onto another, or onto a rigid object like a dowel or ring, using a Half Square Knot (HSK) or Square Knot (SK).

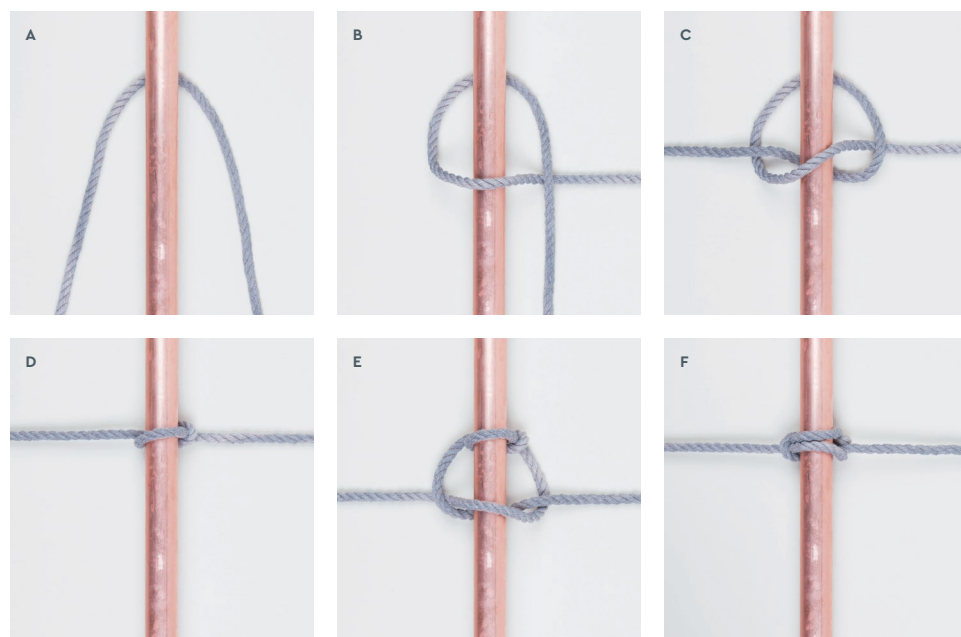
- 1 Bring the center of the rope behind the object (or mounting cord). [A]
- 2 Bring the left working cord across the object (or mounting cord) and under the working cord on the right. [B]

3 Bring the right working cord under the object (or mounting cord) and over the working cord on the left. [C]

4 Tighten the knot. If you are mounting with an HSK, stop here. [D] If mounting with an SK, continue with 5 and 6.

5 Work an RHSK around the object (or mounting cord). [E]

6 Tighten to complete the SK. [F]



### KNOTS WORKED IN SEQUENCE

Two or more knots worked directly above one another using the same cords are said to be *worked in sequence*. Knots worked in sequence form vertical chains called *columns*. Some of the columns in this book consist of more than one knot type, and some also have varying amounts of space between the knots. Most, however, are of the two types described here: sinnets and spirals. Each of these consists of knots of just one type, worked without any space left between them.

#### Sinnet of Square Knots

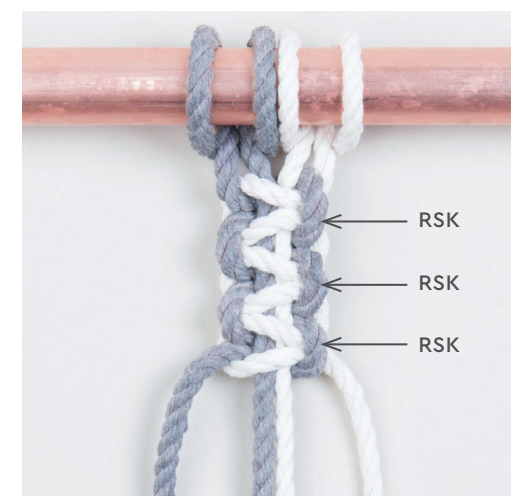
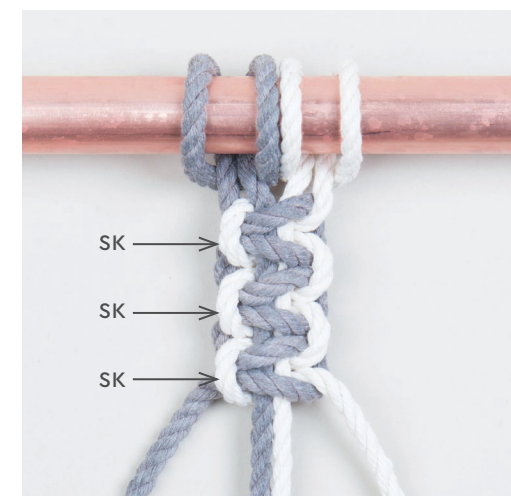
A *sinnet* is a column of knots of a single type. Sinnets of Square Knots (SKs) are used frequently throughout this book. You can determine the number of SKs in a sinnet by counting the vertical bumps on its left side. The one pictured at right top contains three SKs in all.

#### Sinnet of Right-Facing Square Knots

To determine the number of Right-Facing Square Knots (RSKs) in a sinnet, count the vertical bumps on the right side of the knots. The sinnet shown in the right middle photo is made of RSKs.

#### Half Square Knot Spiral

Half Square Knots (HSKs) worked one after another spiral to the right around the filler cords. Right Half Square Knots (RHSKs) worked one after another spiral to the left. The spiral shown at right bottom is made of HSKs. Note that its shape is a bit like a twisted ladder. You can count the number of knots in a spiral by counting the number of ladder "rungs."





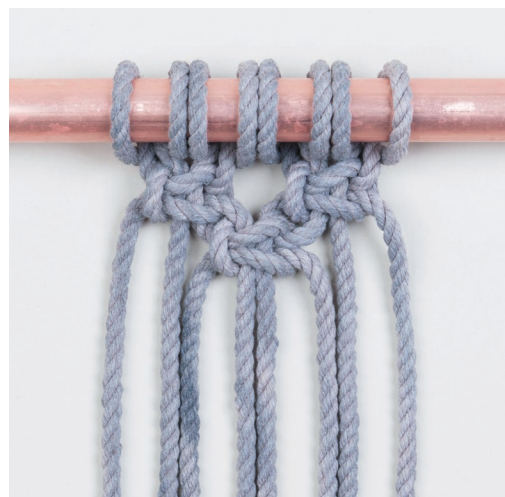
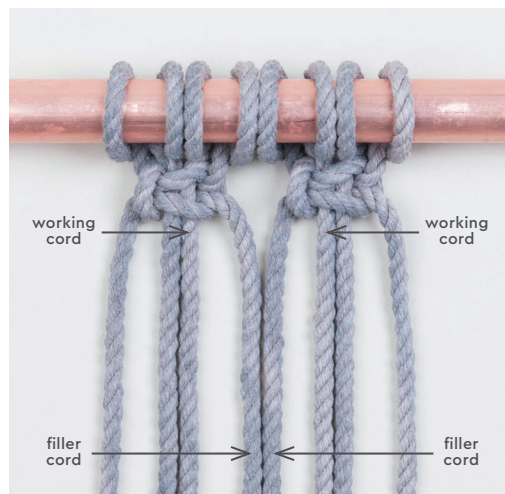
## ALTERNATING KNOTS

An alternating knot is worked between the two knots above it by using half of the cords extending from each of them. Alternating knots produce planes of knotting, called *netting*. The closer together the alternating knots, the denser the netting will be.

### Alternating Square Knots (ASK)

Almost all of the alternating knots in this book are Square Knots (SKs). To work an Alternating Square Knot (ASK), work an SK using the two rightmost cords of the knot on the left and the two leftmost cords of the knot on the right.

The most visually pleasing Alternating Square Knot (ASK) netting has even spacing between the knots. Measure the distance between knots frequently to ensure that it remains consistent. The distance between alternating knots should be measured diagonally, from the edge of one knot to the next. (See *Before You Begin*, page 37.)



## ALTERNATING ROWS AND ROUNDS

Patterns consisting of alternating knots are written out as a series of horizontal rows (if the piece is flat, like a wall hanging) or rounds (if tube-shaped, like a lantern or plant hanger). Unless otherwise specified, work each row or round directly below the previous one, and work rows from left to right.

### Alternating Rows of Square Knots

The photo at right top shows three rows of Alternating Square Knots (ASKs). Note that the first and last two cords of the second row are not worked, which leaves a gap along the edge. This is the case for every even-numbered row of ASKs. The instructions for the knotting pictured might be written in a couple of different ways. Most often, they would simply read, "Work 3 rows of ASKs." If written out row by row, however, they would look like this.

Row 1: Work 2 SKs.

Row 2: Skip 2 cords, work an SK, then skip 2 cords.

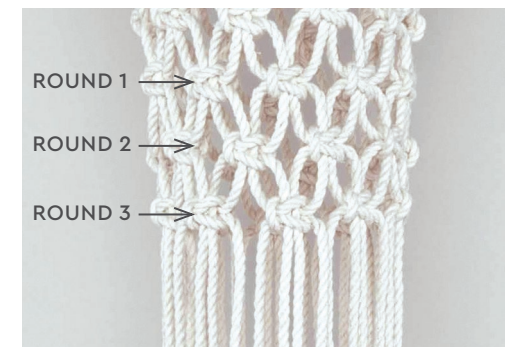
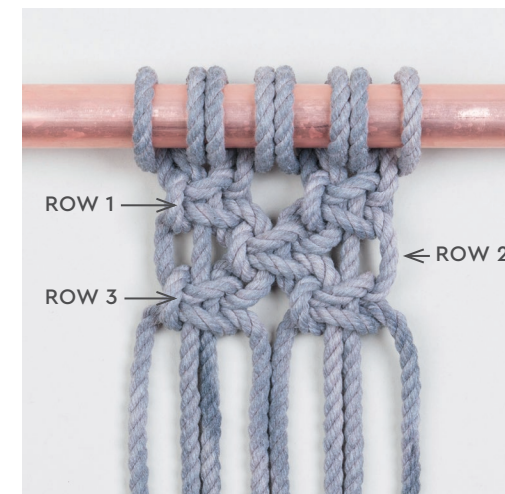
Row 3: Repeat Row 1.

### Alternating Rounds of Square Knots

When working alternating knots in the round, you work every cord in each round. The photo at right middle shows 3 rounds of ASKs with  $\frac{3}{4}$ " of space left between the knots. The instructions for this knotting pattern would read, "Work 3 rounds of ASKs,  $\frac{3}{4}$ " apart."

### Alternating Rows/Rounds of Two (or More) Square Knots

More lengthy and/or complex rows can be alternated to produce netting as well. One such pattern used frequently in this book is shown in the photo at right bottom. Note that each of its rows is made up of sinnets of two Square Knots (SKs).

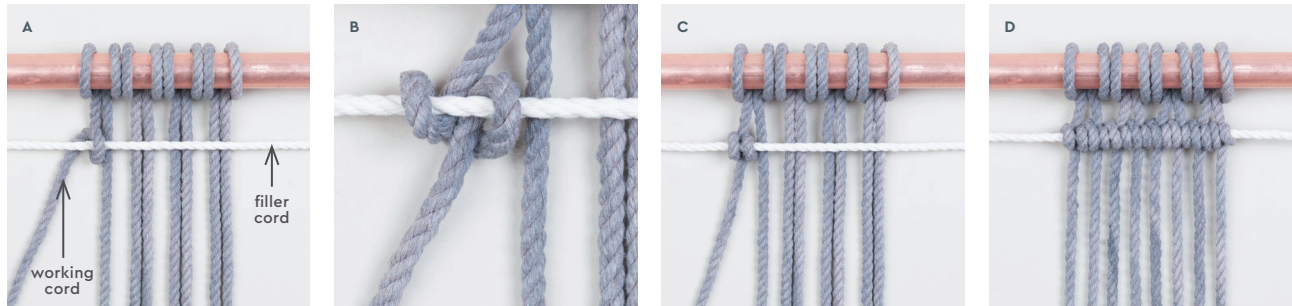


HITCHES

Three types of hitch knots are used in this book: Horizontal Double Half Hitch (HDHH), Horizontal Triple Half Hitch (HTHH), and Vertical Double Half Hitch (VDHH). Like alternating knots, these knots are worked in horizontal rows or rounds. Unlike alternating knots, the method used to form them is different when a row or round is worked from left to right than when worked from right to left.

Horizontal Double Half Hitch (HDHH)

Each Horizontal Double Half Hitch (HDHH) knot is made up of two Half Hitch (HH) knots made from the same working cord. A row of HDHH produces a raised bar across your work.

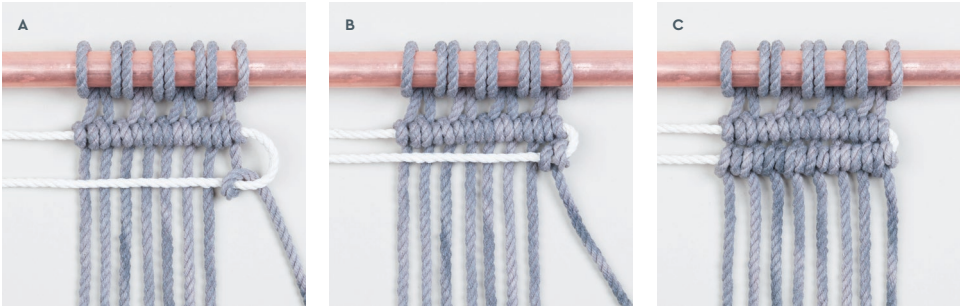


HDHH Worked Left to Right

- 1 Make a Half Hitch (HH) by holding the filler cord (white) horizontally in front of the working cords (gray), leaving a tail of several inches, and looping the leftmost working cord up and around the filler cord. Then bring it down behind the filler cord and to the left of itself and tighten. [A]
- 2 Work a second HH with the same working cord, looping it around the filler cord to the right of the first loop. [B]
- 3 Tighten to complete one HDHH. [C]
- 4 To complete a row of HDHHs, repeat steps 1–3 with the next cord to the right, and so on to the end of the row. [D]

HDHH Worked Right to Left

- 1 Loop the rightmost working cord up and around the filler cord and to the right of itself and tighten. [A]

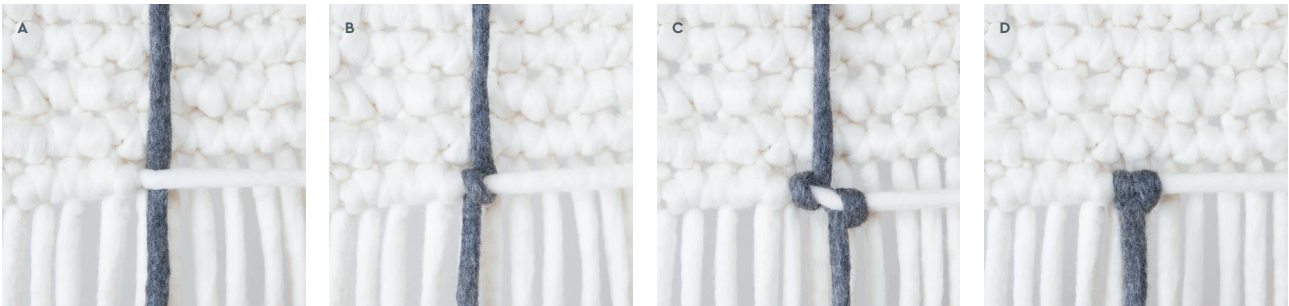


- 2 Work another HH to the left of the first and tighten. You've now completed one HDHH. [B]
- 3 To complete the row, repeat steps 1–2 across the remaining working cords. [C]

Mounting with an HDHH

You can also use a Horizontal Double Half Hitch (HDHH) to mount a new rope onto an existing filler cord. Use the following instructions to mount a new cord within a row of HDHH worked from left to right. This method also works if you are working from right to left. In that case, just work the HDHH in the opposite direction (as in HDHH Worked Right to Left, above).

- 1 Hold the center of the new rope (gray) behind the filler cord (white), bringing one end up and out of the way and allowing the other to hang down vertically. [A]
- 2 Loop the lower end of the new rope around the mounting cord and to the left of itself. Tighten. [B]
- 3 Work an HH to the right of the first loop. [C]
- 4 Bring the two new cords together and adjust the knot so that they are equal in length. Tighten. [D]



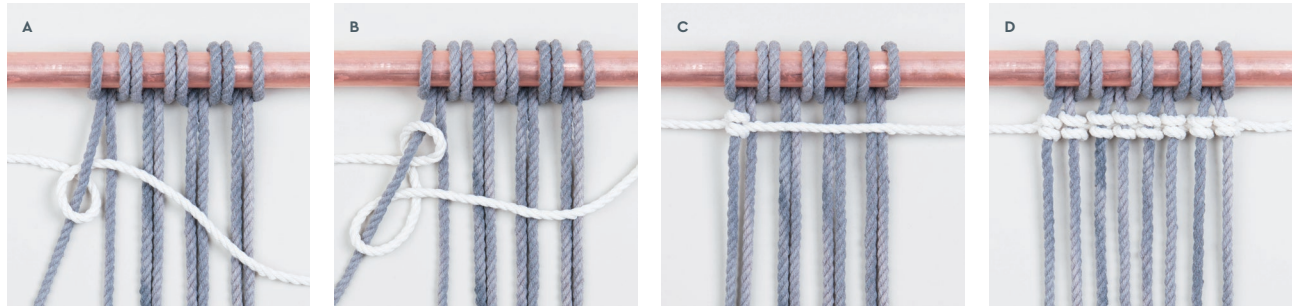


Horizontal Triple Half Hitch (HTHH)

A Horizontal Triple Half Hitch (HTHH) is formed by making three Half Hitch (HH) knots in a row with a single working cord.

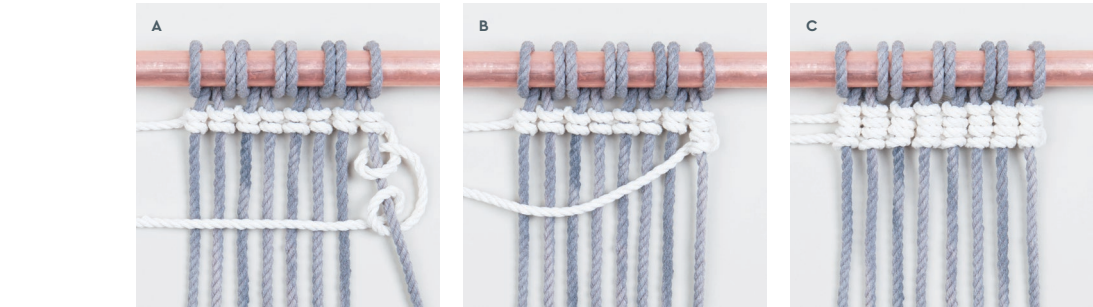
Vertical Double Half Hitch (VDHH)

When making Vertical Double Half Hitch knots (VDHHs), you use a single working cord to form Double Half Hitch knots across multiple filler cords. Like the HDHH, each VDHH consists of two HHs.



VDHH Worked Right to Left

- 1 Work an HH by bringing the working cord behind and around the rightmost filler cord and then over itself.
- 2 Tighten and, once more, bring the working cord around the filler cord and over itself. [A]



VDHH Worked Left to Right

- 1 Work an HH around the leftmost filler cord (gray) by bringing the working cord (white) behind and around the filler cord and then over itself. [A]
- 2 Tighten and, once more, bring the working cord around the filler cord and back over itself, forming a second HH below the first. [B]
- 3 Tighten. You've now completed one VDHH. [C]
- 4 Repeat across the remaining filler cords to complete the row. [D]

- 3 Tighten to complete one VDHH. [B]
- 4 Repeat across the remaining filler cords to complete the row. [C]

ODDS AND ENDINGS

Just one more knot and two time-saving techniques and you're on your way.

Overhand Knot (OK)

The most basic of knots, the Overhand Knot (OK) requires just one cord and is made by wrapping one end of the cord around the other and then tightening.

Bundling

Very long ropes are difficult to work with and have a tendency to become hopelessly tangled piles of spaghetti unless they are bundled up ahead of time.

- 1 Fold the rope in half and mark the center with a piece of tape.
- 2 Starting from one end, make a bundle by folding the rope every 8 to 12 inches. Stop 3 to 4 feet from the center, and secure the bundle with a rubber band.
- 3 Repeat step 2 on the other side. When working with the bundled rope, simply hold the rubber band in place while pulling rope from the bundle when you need more length.

Beading

Usually, incorporating a bead into knotwork is as simple as sliding it into place and knotting below it. Sometimes, however, this process is hampered by frayed ends or the need to fit a bead with a small hole around more than one rope. In either case, simply do the following.

- 1 Tape the ends of the rope(s) together.
- 2 Slide the bead into place.

