

FLY FISHING KNOT DIAGRAMS

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Comments: There are many good knots used by fishers for setting-up their fishing systems, particularly for tying on the fly. I've compiled tying diagrams for 13 well-proven knots to help you construct your fly fishing system from the reel to the fly. If needed, take advantage of the detailed videos available on the internet which provide step-by-step instructions for tying most of these knots.

LEFTY KREH'S KNOT TYING SUGGESTIONS

- ANGLERS SHOULD CLOSE EVERY KNOT AS TIGHTLY AS POSSIBLE. LUBRICATING THE KNOT PRIOR TO CLOSING HELPS SEAT THE KNOT TIGHTLY (WATER OR SALIVA WORKS). FOLLOW THE TYING DIRECTIONS "EXACTLY". IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO MAKE THE CORRECT NUMBER OF TURNS WITH THE TAG END AROUND THE STANDING LINE. TOO FEW TURNS AND THE KNOT MAY SLIP AND FAIL. TOO MANY TURNS AND YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO CLOSE IT TIGHTLY ENOUGH TO PREVENT SLIPPAGE.
- SOME MONOFILAMENTS DON'T CLOSE EASILY. USE A PREMIUM-BRAND MONOFILAMENT TO AVOID THIS PROBLEM. TIPPET MATERIAL IS NOT EXPENSIVE, SO BUY QUALITY FROM RECOGNIZED MANUFACTURES. THE KNOT SHOULD BE NEARLY AS STRONG AS THE TIPPET MATERIAL.
- THE KNOT SHOULD BE QUICK AND EASY TO TIE WHEN IT'S RAINING, THE LIGHT IS LOW, OR YOUR FINGERS ARE CLUMSY FROM COLD.
- MANY TROUT FLIES HAVE A SMALL HOOK EYE, SO A SUPERIOR KNOT IS ONE THAT IS STRONG AND REQUIRES ONLY ONE PASS THROUGH THE HOOK EYE.
- A JERK, NOT A STEADY PULL, USUALLY BREAKS THE KNOT. SOME KNOTS DO WELL ON A STEADY PULL BUT FAIL WHEN JERKED.
- LUBRICATE A KNOT AND CLOSE IT SLOWLY AND TIGHTLY. JERKING THE KNOT OFTEN SCORES AND WEAKENS THE MONOFILAMENT.
- PRACTICE TYING KNOTS AT HOME UNTIL YOU CAN CONSISTENTLY TIE THEM CORRECTLY. DON'T WAIT UNTIL YOU ARE STREAMSIDE!!

QUALITY KNOTS FOR RIGGING YOUR FLY FISHING SYSTEM

Arbor Knot: Used to connect the backing to the reel arbor.

Albright Knot: Used to connect the backing to the back end of the fly line.

Nail Knot: Used to connect the butt end of the leader to the front end of the fly line; in constructing a Bryant Loop Knot on the front end of the fly line; can be used to attach the backing to the back end of the fly line as a replacement for the Albright Knot.

Bryant Loop Knot: Used to put a loop on the front end of the fly line when using a leader-to-line, loop-to-loop connection.

Perfection Loop Knot: Used to tie a loop on the butt end of a leader when using a line-to-leader, loop-to-loop connection.

Loop-to-Loop Connection: Used to connect the fly line to the leader and/or the leader to the tippet when using the loop-to-loop approach.

Non-Slip Mono Loop: Used to tie flies in a loop at the end of the tippet; to tie a loop on the tippet end of the leader and/or on the tippet material when using leader-to-tippet, loop-to-loop connections. (Note: Don't use the Perfection Loop for this application because it isn't nearly as strong as the Non-Slip Mono Loop.)

Double Surgeon's Knot: Used to tie tippet material to the end of the leader; can be used to construct knotted, tapered leaders.

Clinch Knot: Used to tie a fly onto the tippet. (A very popular knot for this application but prone to slippage if not properly seated!)

Joan's Clinch Knot: Used to tie a fly onto the tippet. This knot is a variation of the Clinch Knot that employs an extra overhand knot to minimize the slippage problem.

Improved Clinch Knot: Another very popular version of the Clinch Knot for tying a fly onto the tippet.

Orvis Knot: Used to tie a fly onto the tippet. I highly recommend this knot because of its superior strength.

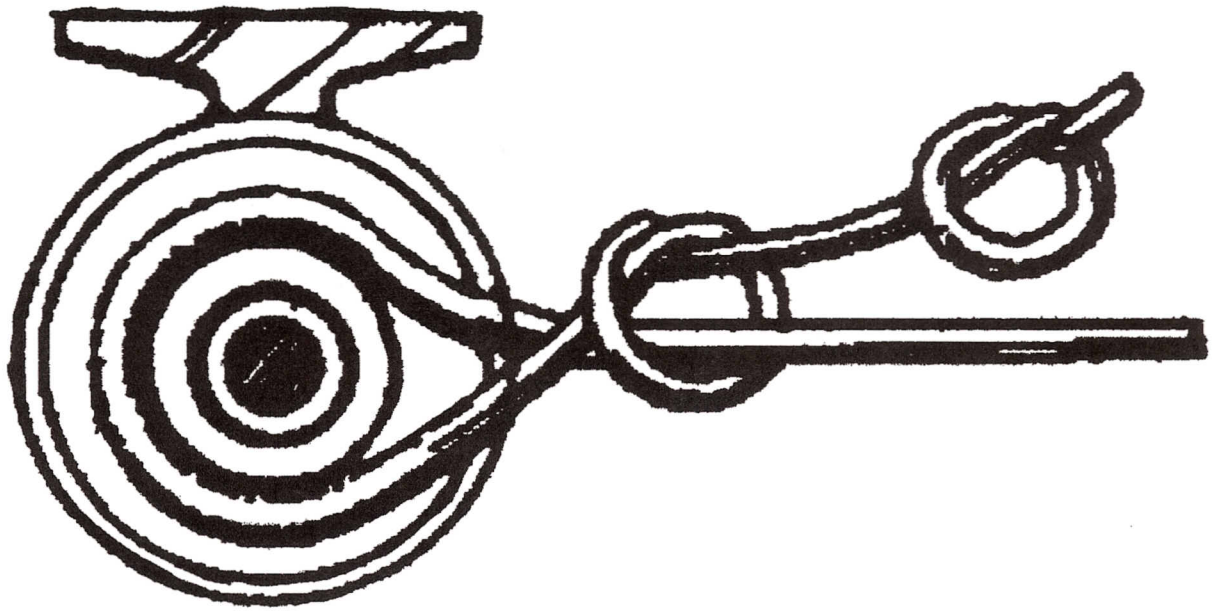
Palomar Knot: Used to tie a fly onto the tippet; great knot to use for tying a dropper leader onto the bend of a fly hook when using a multi-fly rig.

RECOMMENDED KNOTS

- **BACKING TO REEL ARBOR: ARBOR KNOT**
- **FLY LINE TO BACKING: ALBRIGHT KNOT**
- **LEADER TO FLY LINE:**
 - **DIRECT CONNECTION: USE A NAIL KNOT.**
 - **LOOP-TO-LOOP CONNECTION: MAKE A LOOP ON THE END OF THE FLY LINE WITH THE BRYANT LOOP KNOT. MAKE A LOOP ON THE BUTT END OF THE LEADER WITH A PERFECTION LOOP KNOT.**
- **TIPPET TO LEADER:**
 - **DIRECT CONNECTION: USE A DOUBLE SURGEON'S KNOT.**
 - **LOOP-TO-LOOP CONNECTION: USE A NON-SLIP MONO LOOP KNOT FOR BOTH THE TIPPET END OF THE LEADER AND THE TIPPET.**
- **FLY TO TIPPET:**
 - **I PREFER THE ORVIS KNOT BECAUSE OF ITS' SUPERIOR STRENGTH. THE CLINCH KNOT IS THE MOST POPULAR KNOT FOR THIS APPLICATION. USE THE NON-SLIP MONO LOOP IF YOU WANT YOUR FLY ATTACHED IN A LOOP.**

NOTE: PRACTICE THESE KNOTS AT HOME! DON'T WAIT UNTIL YOU'RE ON THE STREAM TO WORK ON YOUR KNOT TYING!

Arbor Knot (Backing to Reel)



The Arbor Knot, used to tie the end of your backing to the fly reel spool or arbor. It is simple to tie but more importantly, is easy to remove even after long periods of service under tension

1. After first passing the tag end of the backing around the spool arbor of your reel, tie an overhand knot around the standing part of the backing.
2. Tie a 2nd overhand knot on the tag end beyond the 1st first one.
3. Tighten the 2nd knot 1st, then tighten the 1st knot, and allow it to slide down against the arbor of the spool.
4. Trim the tag end.

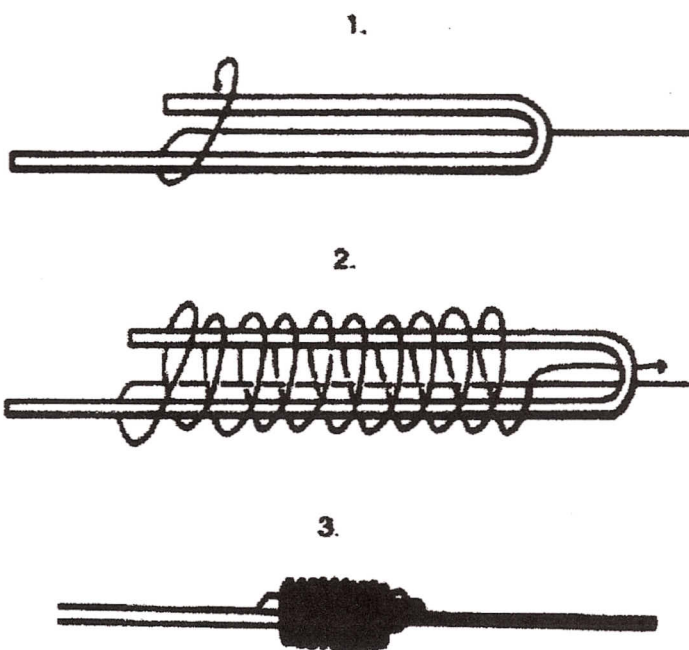
The two knots will work together to prevent slippage and the knot will be easily loosened in the future.

Albright Knot

(Fly Line to Backing)

The Albright knot is used to join two lines of substantially unequal diameter, for example, the Backing to the Fly Line.

Step 1. Form an open U shaped bend in the larger diameter line (fly Line) and hold it firmly between your left thumb and index finger. Lay the lighter line (backing) along the bend and grip it along with the fly line, leave 6-8 inches extra to the left of your left hand.

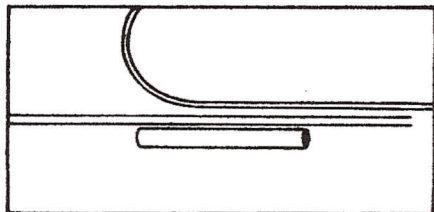


Step 2. Make about 10 wraps with the lighter line wrapping toward the closed end of the bend. Tuck the 10th wrap through the remaining loop. Work the wraps toward the closed loop as you tighten. Try to keep them side by side, not crossing over each other. Alternate pulling on each end until the knot is firmly drawn down on itself.

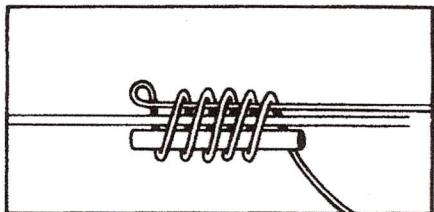
Step 3. Trim the ends close to the knot.

NAIL KNOT (USE TO TIE BACKING ONTO END OF FLY LINE)

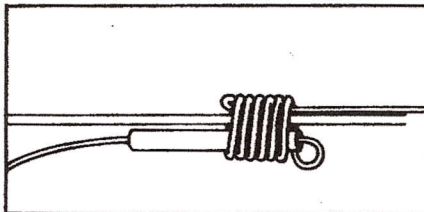
- SHOWS NAIL KNOT TIED USING A SHORT TUBE SUCH AS A METAL TUBE OR SMALL STRAW.



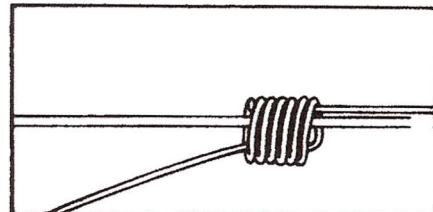
Nail knot: For this knot take a one-inch plastic or metal tube, fly line, and a piece of .023", .021", or .019" monofilament. Lay the three parallel together.



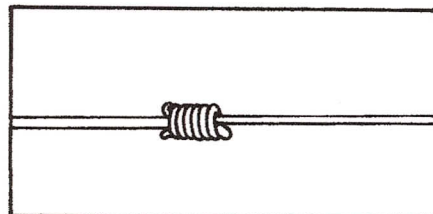
Pinch the tube, monofilament, and line together with one hand. Grasp the end of the monofilament opposite the end of the fly line and wind it toward the line's tip. Wind it over itself, the tube, and the line at the same time. Have at least six inches of monofilament to work with, and make your turns tight and lying neatly next to each other. Five turns are plenty.



Pass the end you've been working with through the tube so that the end passes back under the turns you've just made. Pull the ends of the monofilament in opposite directions, tightening them on top of the tube.

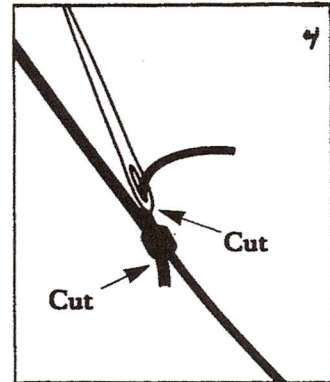
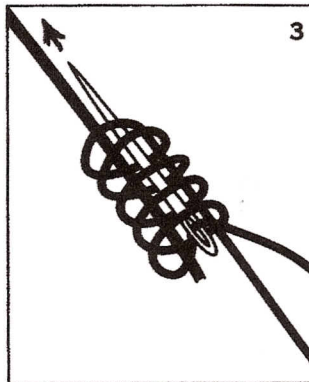
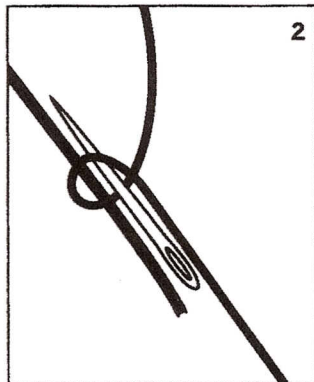
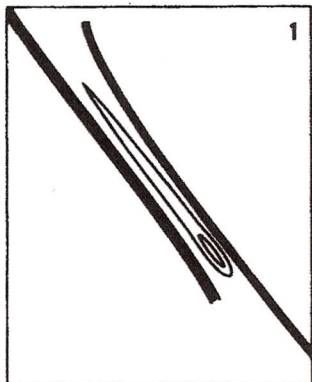


Carefully slip the tube out while you continue to tighten.



Clip fly line extending outside the knot and clip the tag end of the monofilament. Tighten the knot further by holding the fly line with one end and pulling on the monofilament with a pair of pliers.

- SHOWS NAIL KNOT TIED USING A NEEDLE.



Nail knot: Despite its name, this knot is better made with a needle.
(1) Place the two ends of line to be joined alongside the needle. (2) Begin winding the finer line around the thicker line and the needle while holding all three firmly together. (3) Make five turns, then feed the end of the finer

line through the eye of the needle. Holding the windings in place, pull the needle out by the point so that it pulls the line through the windings. (4) Gradually tighten the knot by simultaneously pulling on the two ends of the finer line.

BRYANT LOOP KNOT

I learned this knot from Mike Bryant who learned it from a guide in Florida. Mike doesn't remember the name of the knot so I've decided to call it the "Bryant Loop Knot".

1. CUT THREE APPROXIMATELY 12 INCH PIECES OF 10 – 12 POUND TEST MONO OR 20 POUND TEST BACKING FOR TYING NAIL KNOTS (I PREFER THE BACKING MATERIAL FOR THIS.)
2. FOLD BACK A 2 – 3 INCH LENGTH OF THE FLY LINE TIP FORMING AN END LOOP. TIE A "LOOSE" NAIL KNOT AROUND THE DOUBLED-OVER FLY LINE.



3. ADJUST THE FLY LINE LOOP TO THE DESIRED SIZE (ABOUT 5/8 INCH IN LENGTH) LEAVING A 1 – 1 ½ LENGTH OF FLY LINE TAG BEHIND THE NAIL KNOT.



4. MOISTEN, THEN TIGHTEN THE NAIL KNOT AND TRIM ITS TAG ENDS CLOSE TO THE KNOT. DO NOT TRIM THE FLY LINE TAG.



5. ADD TWO ADDITIONAL NAIL KNOTS BEHIND THE FIRST ONE, EACH SEPARATED BY ABOUT 1/8 INCH. TRIM OFF THE NAIL KNOT TAGS.

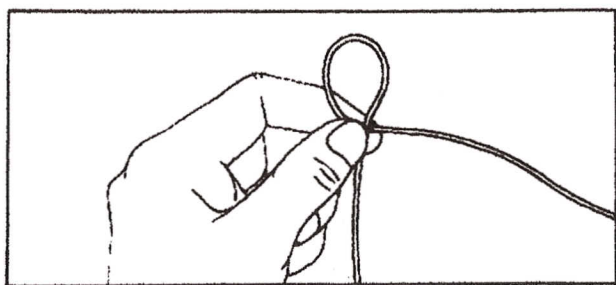


6. TRIM OFF THE FLY LINE TAG CLOSELY BEHIND THE LAST NAIL KNOT, AND THEN APPLY GLUE TO EACH NAIL KNOT (SUPER GLUE OR HEAD CEMENT WORKS!). WHEN THE GLUE IS DRY APPLY 2 – 3 COATS OF RUBBER CEMENT OVER THE NAIL KNOT AREA TO SMOOTH IT OUT SO THE LOOP SLIDES THROUGH THE ROD GUIDE EASILY (I USE PLIOBOND RUBBER CEMENT).

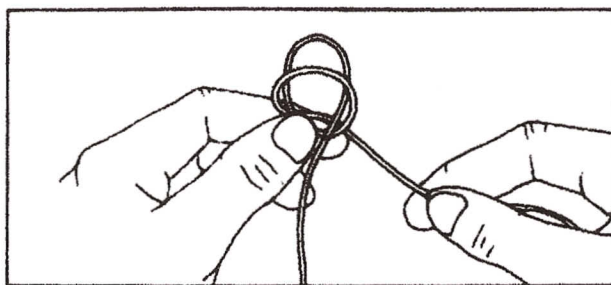


PERFECTION LOOP

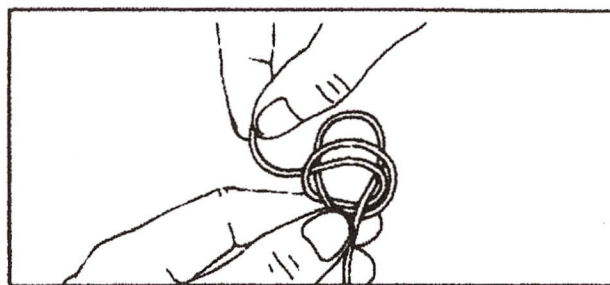
The Perfection Loop Knot is recommended for tying a loop onto the butt end of the leader. This knot can also be used to tie a loop onto the front end of a fly line in an emergency.



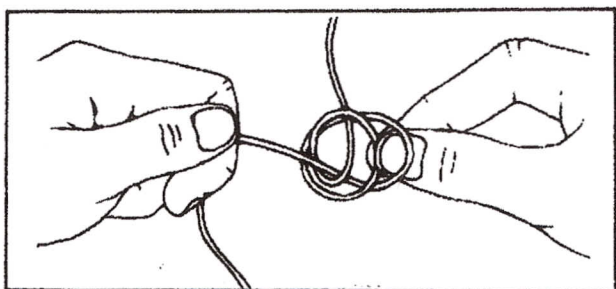
The perfection loop: form a single loop by bringing the end around behind the standing part of your leader. The end should be on the right hand side.



Form a second loop by bringing the end to the left and in front of the first loop and around the back of the first loop. The second loop should be smaller than the first.

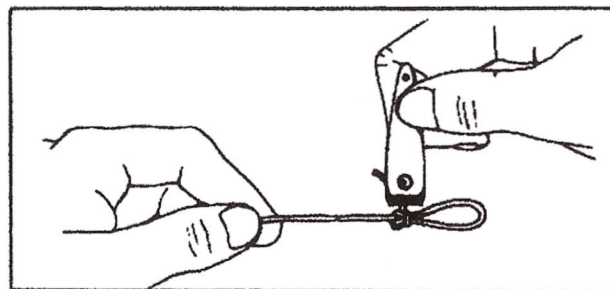


Take the end and pass it between the two loops, folding it from right to left.



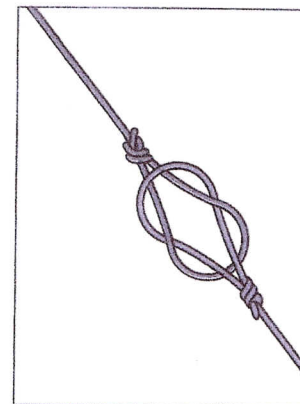
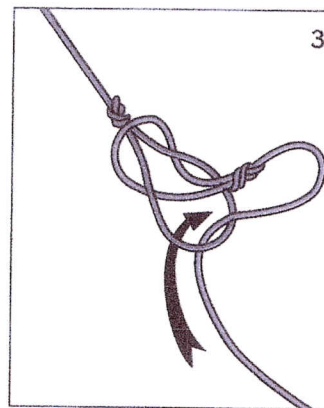
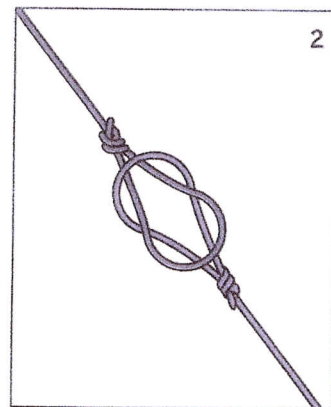
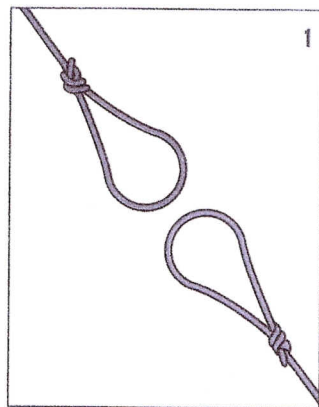
Holding the end in place, reach through the first loop from behind and pull the second loop

through. Tighten by pulling on the second loop and the standing part of the leader. Do not pull on the tag end. While tightening slowly, make sure the end stays at right angles to the loop and the standing part of the leader.



Trim the tag end as close to the knot as possible.

LOOP-TO-LOOP CONNECTION
**(USE TO CONNECT BUTT END OF LEADER TO FLY LINE AND
SMALL END OF LEADER TO TIPPET)**



Loop-to-loop joint: (1) Start by placing the two loops next to each other end to end. (2) Insert the first loop into the second. (3) Fold back part of the line with the second loop, feed it through the first loop, then pull the entire length of the line through. (4) The two loops lie against each other.

To undo the loop-to-loop joint, simply push one end against the other, and pull the shorter section through the first loop. This type of joint is most often used to attach a leader to the fly line when you need to be able to make quick changes.

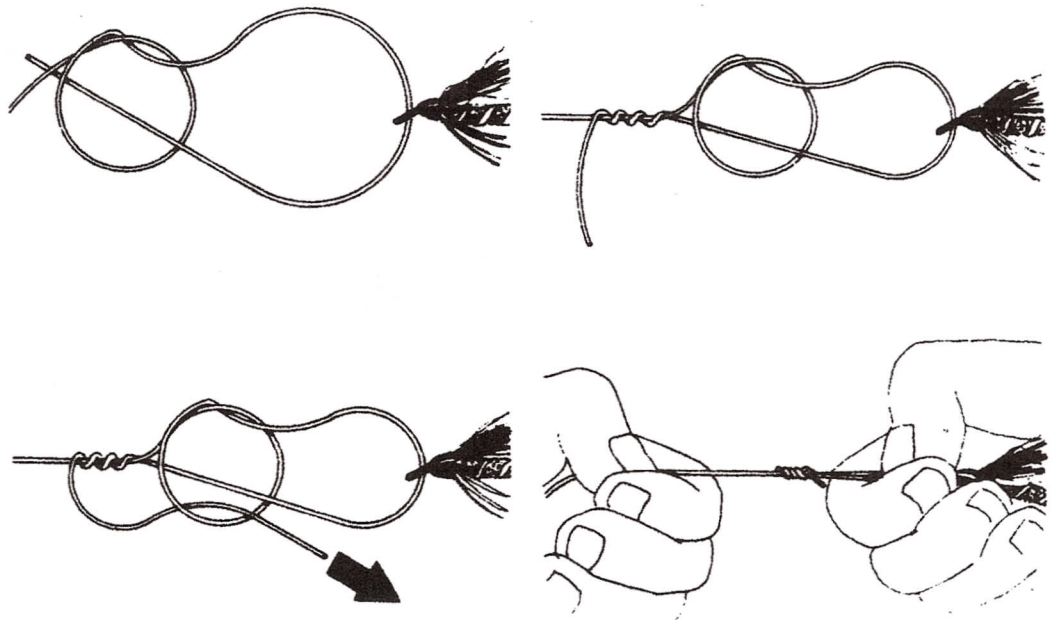
NON-SLIP MONO LOOP

(USED TO TIE LOOPS TO THE END OF THE LEADER AND TO TIPPET MATERIAL WHEN MAKING LOOP-TO-LOOP CONNECTIONS; ALSO USED TO TIE A FLY TO THE END OF THE TIPPET WHEN A FLY-IN-A-LOOP CONNECTION IS DESIRED.)

COMMENTS FROM LEFTY KREH:

- **THERE ARE SITUATIONS WHERE A LOOP RATHER THAN A TIGHT CONNECTION IS BEST BETWEEN TIPPET AND THE FLY. A LOOP PERMITS THE FLY TO MOVE MORE FREELY. MANY NYMPH AND STREAMER FISHERMEN PREFER A FREE-SWINGING LOOP.**
- **THE NON-SLIP MONO LOOP FORMS A LOOP THAT DOESN'T SLIP (CLOSE DOWN ONTO THE HOOK EYE) AND MOST OF THE TIME IT DOESN'T BREAK – THE TIPPET DOES. WHEN TIED CORRECTLY AND CLOSED SECURELY, IT WILL USUALLY TEST AS A 100% KNOT. IT IS VASTLY SUPERIOR TO THE UNI-KNOT (DUNCAN LOOP).**
- **FOR MAXIMUM STRENGTH THIS KNOT HAS TO HAVE THE CORRECT NUMBER OF TURNS AROUND THE STANDING LINE. USE 7 TURNS FOR 6-POUND TIPPET OR LESS, USE FIVE TURNS FOR 8 TO 12 POUND TEST AND USE 4 TURNS FOR 15 TO 40 POUND TEST.**

NOTE: THE DIAGRAM BELOW SHOWS THE USE OF THE KNOT TO TIE A FLY TO THE TIPPET. TIE THE KNOT WITHOUT A FLY TO FORM LOOPS FOR LOOP-TO-LOOP CONNECTIONS SUCH AS LOOP-TO-LOOP TIPPET-TO-LEADER CONNECTION.



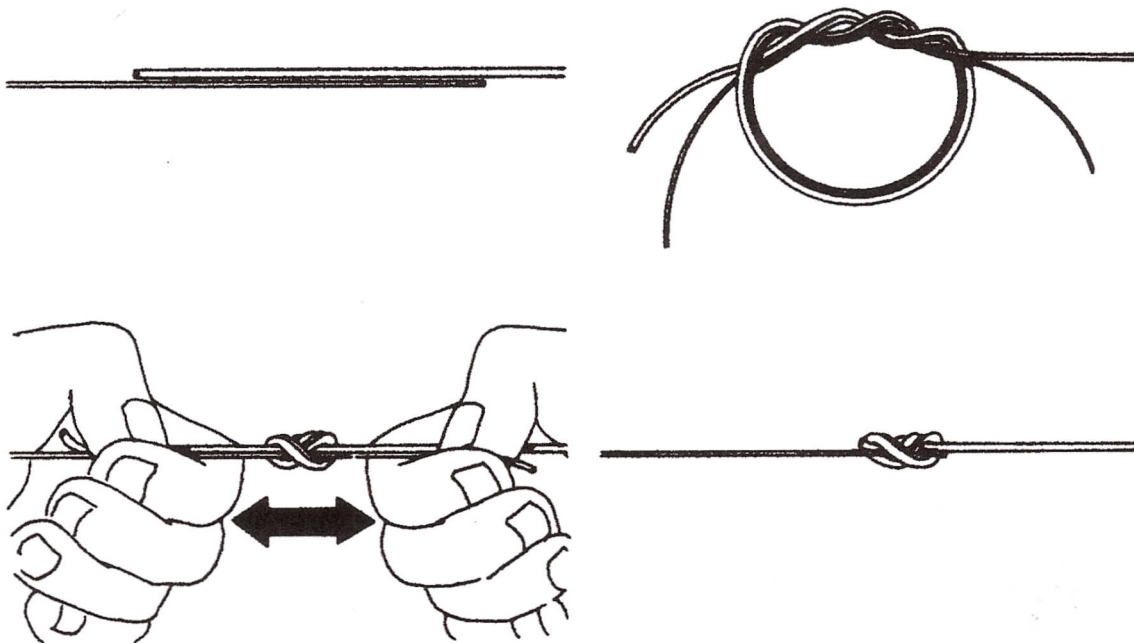
DOUBLE SURGEON'S KNOT

(USED TO TIE A PIECE OF TIPPET DIRECTLY TO THE END OF THE LEADER)

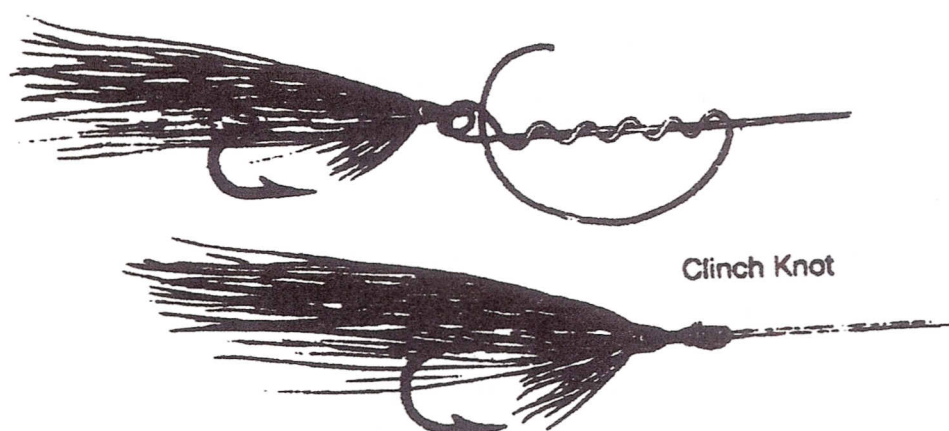
LEFTY KREH COMMENTS:

- "THERE ARE MANY SITUATIONS WHERE THE ANGLER HAS TO CONNECT TWO DIFFERENT DIAMETERS OF MONOFILAMENT TOGETHER. THE SURGEON'S KNOT WILL DO THIS QUITE WELL IN MONOFILAMENT LINES UP TO 60 POUNDS IN STRENGTH AND BRAIDED STEEL WIRE UP TO 40-POUND TEST. YOU CAN QUICKLY JOIN A 6-POUND TEST LEADER MATERIAL TO A 40 POUND-TEST.
- THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN CONSTRUCTING A GOOD SURGEON'S KNOT IS THAT ONCE THE KNOT HAS BEEN TIED, ALL FOUR ENDS MUST BE PULLED VERY TIGHTLY, OR A WEAK KNOT MAY RESULT.
- THE DRAWING BELOW SHOWS A DOUBLE SURGEON'S KNOT. BUT IN VERY THIN MONO LINES, SIX-POUND TEST OR LESS, I RECOMMEND A TRIPLE SURGEON'S KNOT, WHICH CAN BE DRAWN PROPERLY TIGHT IN SUCH SMALL-DIAMETER LINES.

(NOTE: SURGEON'S KNOTS CAN BE TIED IN SINGLE, DOUBLE OR TRIPLE VERSIONS.)



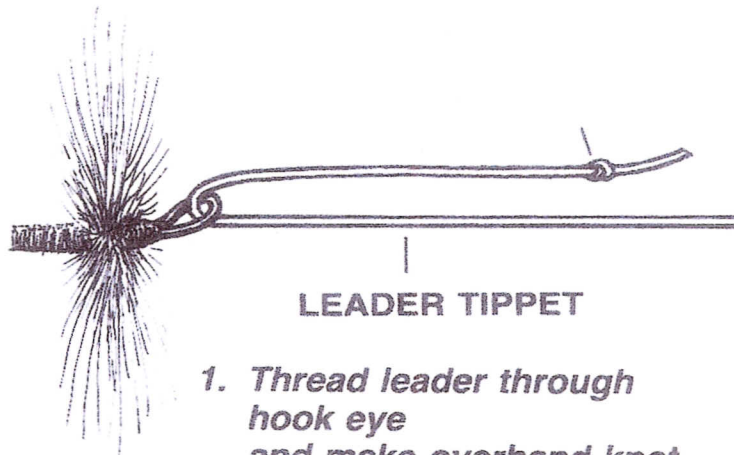
CLINCH KNOT



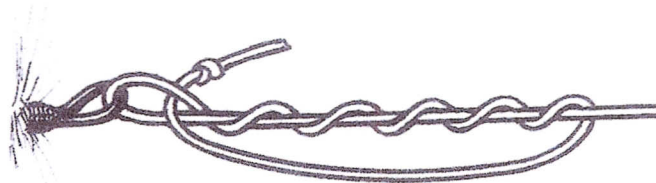
The Clinch Knot is a very popular knot for tying flies onto the end of the tippet; however, this knot is prone to “slippage”. The Joan Clinch and Improved Clinch Knots are modifications of the Clinch Knot designed to prevent this slippage problem.

JOAN'S CLINCH

LEADER TO FLY KNOT

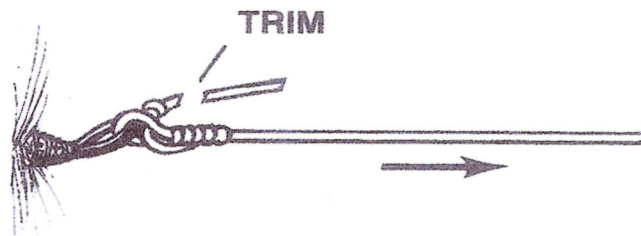


1. Thread leader through hook eye and make overhand knot near end.

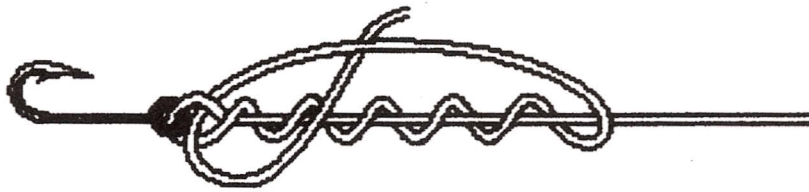


2. Five turns with end around leader. Bring overhand knot through loop at eye.

Hold knot against hook eye.
Pull leader away from hook,
jamming turns against eye
and knot. Trim end. Care-
ful! Not so close as to lose
the overhand knot.
Trim end beyond knot.



IMPROVED CLINCH KNOT



The Improved Clinch knot is used to tie the fly onto the tippet.

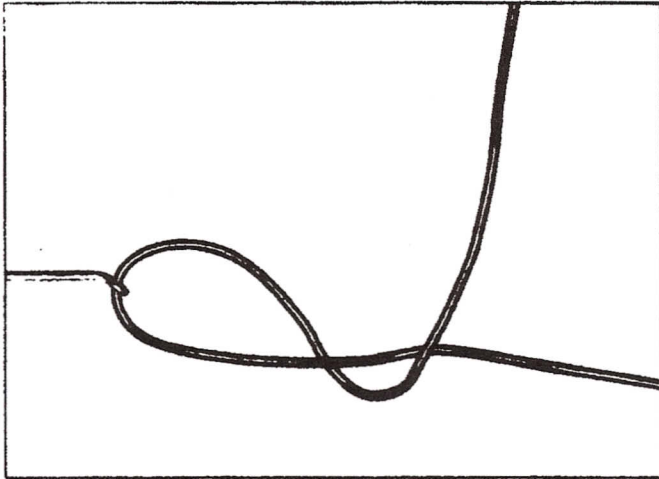
1. Thread the tippet through the eye of the hook. Wrap the tag end around the standing part 3-6 times. The smaller the tippet, the more turns. 3 turns work well with OX tippet, and 6 turns work well with 7X tippet. Outside that range other knots should be used.
2. Pass the tag end through the gap between the first wrap and the hook eye, and then pass it through the loop just formed by the previous step.
3. Wet the knot and tighten 1st by holding the standing part and pulling the tag end gently. Then hold the hook and pull on the standing part. Trim off the excess tag end.

ORVIS KNOT

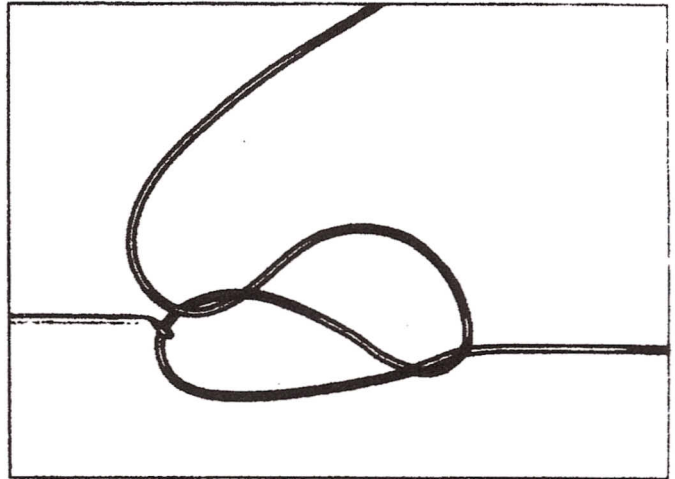
(USE TO TIE THE FLY ONTO THE END OF THE TIPPET WITH A TIGHT KNOT)

COMMENTS BY ART SCHECK:

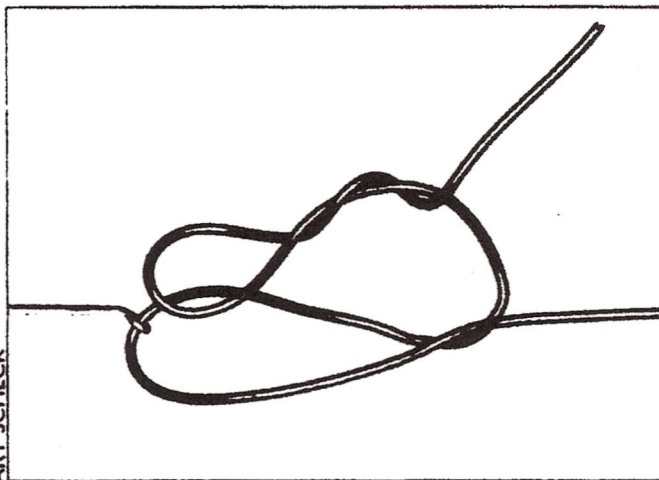
- FIRST, IN THE KNOT-TO-KNOT SHOCK TESTS THAT I CONDUCTED WITH VARIOUS 3X AND LIGHTER MATERIALS – AND I DID THOUSANDS OF THEM – THE ORVIS KNOT FINISHED FIRST OR SECOND AMONG ALL KNOTS I TRIED.
- SECOND, IT ALWAYS WORKS IN ANY MATERIAL INCLUDING FLUOROCARBON. THAT'S NOT TRUE OF ALL KNOTS.
- THIRD, IT'S ALMOST TOO SIMPLE TO BE TRUE. THE KNOT'S SIMPLICITY TRANSLATES INTO CONSISTENCY.
- ONE CAVEAT: THE KNOT SEEMS LESS EFFICIENT IN SOME HEAVY, FAIRLY STIFF MONOFILAMENT (0.011 AND 0.012-INCH) IN WHICH CASE THE TRILENE KNOT WAS STRONGER MORE THAN HALF THE TIME.



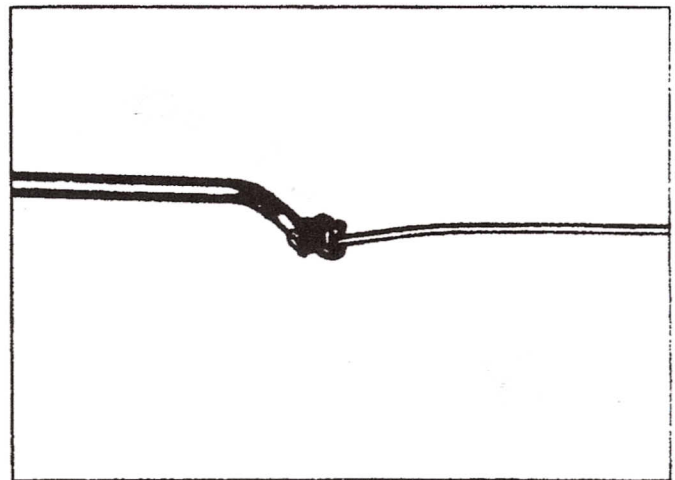
1 Thread the tippet through the hook eye from the bottom. Bring the tag end down on the far side of the standing line, and then bring it up in front of the standing line.



2 Pass the tag end through the first loop, entering the loop from the back side. If you tightened the knot at this point, you'd have a simple figure-8.



3 Poke the tag end through the back side of the second loop. Make one more full wrap with the tag end around the top of the second loop. It's almost too simple to be true.



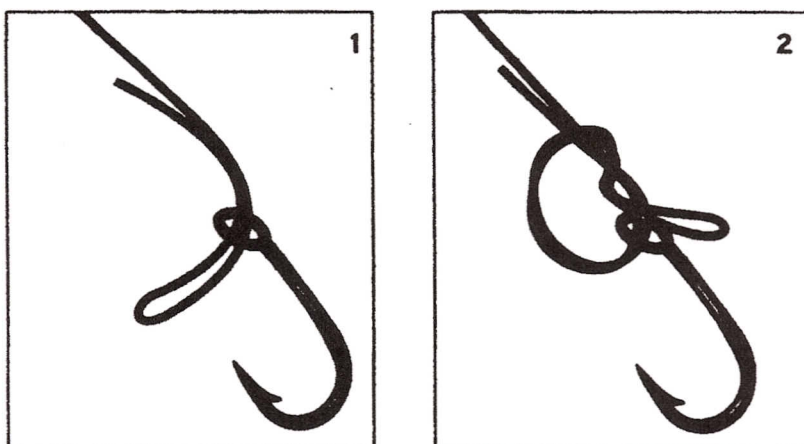
4 Pull the tag end to close the knot on standing line. Slide the knot down to the hook eye, and pull hard on the standing line to seat the knot. Clip the tag.

PALOMAR KNOT

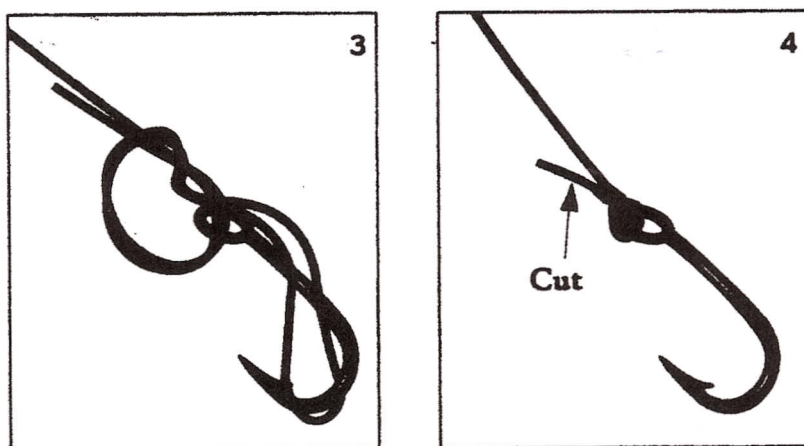
COMMENTS (LOU HAYNES):

THE PALOMAR KNOT IS ONE OF THE EASIEST AND STRONGEST KNOTS TO USE FOR ATTACHING A FLY. HOWEVER, IT HAS TWO DRAWBACKS. 1) THE KNOT REQUIRES THE LEADER TO BE PASSED THROUGH THE HOOK EYE DOUBLED. I FIND THIS NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE WHEN USING SIZE 16 OR SMALLER HOOKS. THE DIAGRAM BELOW SUGGESTS PASSING THE DOUBLED LEADER THROUGH THE EYE. FOR ME, IT IS EASIER TO PASS THE END OF THE LEADER THROUGH THE EYE IN ONE DIRECTION THEN REVERSE AND PASS THE END BACK THROUGH THE EYE AGAIN (STEP 1 BELOW). 2) THIS KNOT CONSUMES MORE TIPPET MATERIAL TO TIE THAN MANY OTHER KNOTS THUS YOU GET LESS FLY CHANGES PER TIPPET CHANGE.

WHEN I USE DROPPERS THIS IS MY KNOT OF CHOICE TO ATTACH THE DROPPER LEADER TO THE HOOK BEND OF THE LEADING FLY. IT IS VERY STRONG AND SIMPLE TO USE FOR THIS APPLICATION. (SEE NEXT DIAGRAM).

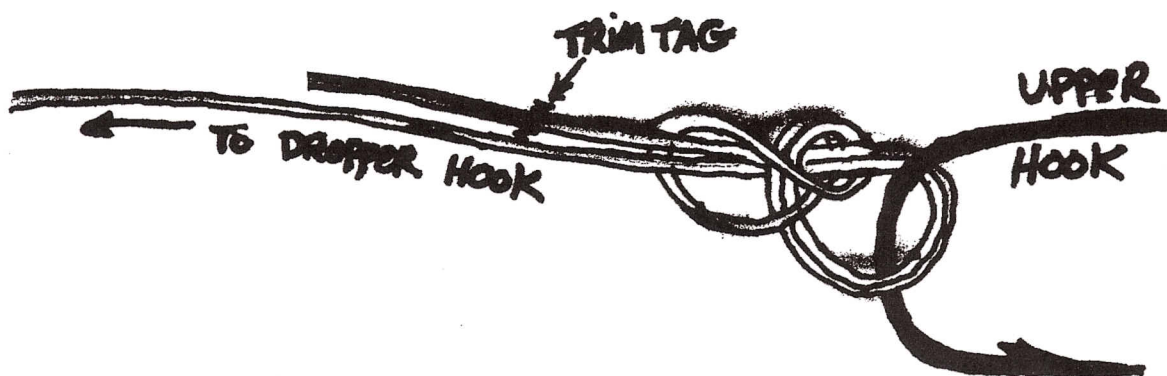
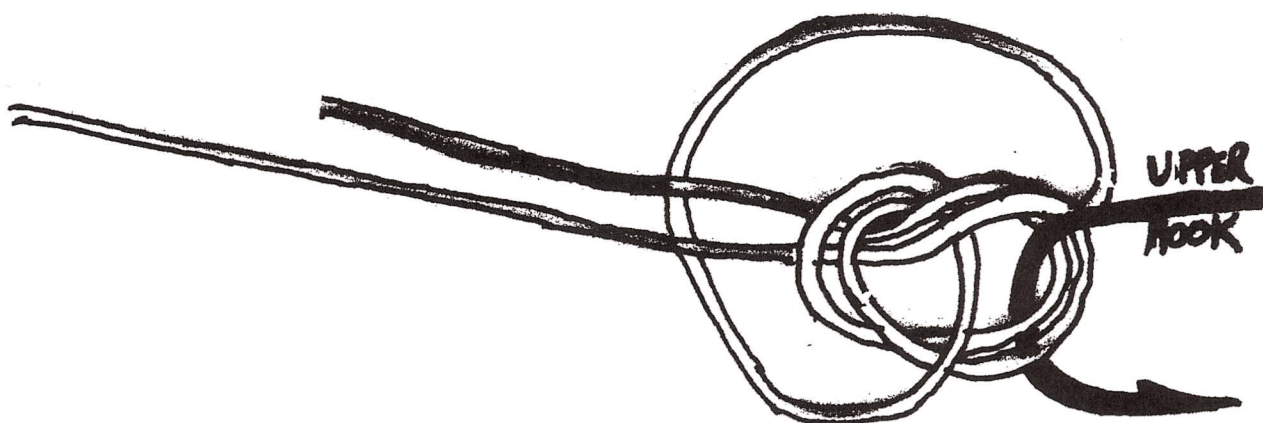
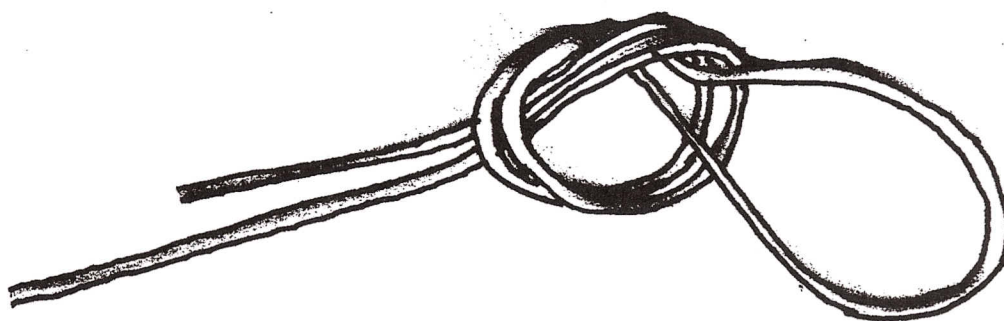


Palomar knot: (1) Start by doubling the end of the line back on itself to form a double line about 4 inches long, then thread the loop through the eye of the hook. (2) Make a simple overhand knot with the double line. (3) Enlarge the loop at the end so that you can bring the hook through it.



(4) Bring the loop to the front of the eye and gradually tighten it by pulling on the hook with one hand and on the double line with the other. This knot is one of the easiest to make and also one of the strongest.

How to Use the Palomar Knot to Add a Dropper Fly



TO CLOSE THE KNOT MOISTEN THE KNOT AREA THEN HOLD THE HOOK WHILE PULLING ON THE STANDING TIPPET AND TIPPET TAG TOGETHER.