

**Tying knots is an essential skill children should learn**

- Knot tying develops our hand muscles and strength.
- While trying to replicate a knot or untie it children are encouraged to think critically from different perspectives.
- Whilst following visual instructions to tie knots, children use their hands and eyes simultaneously.
- Knot tying develops skills such as critical thinking and problem solving.
- Children use both hands to tie a knot, helping them to coordinate both sides of their body which in turn helps them to perform different tasks to achieve an outcome.

**Tips for teaching knot tying**

- Ensure you are confident at tying the knot yourself and know the application and limitations of it, so you can pick the best knot for the task and the learners' ability levels.
- Think about the language you will use to teach knot tying and make it appropriate for the learners (e.g., younger children may find it easier to visualise the rope as a snake or worm, thinking about the working end as the snake's head).
- Consider the learners' motor skills and dexterity – younger children may first need to use large ropes on the ground, using their whole body to move them into shapes.
- Learn how to demonstrate tying knots with both your right hand and left hand as the dominant hand, so that you can support all learners.
- Braided synthetic ropes behave much better and are softer on hands, compared to twisted and rough natural fibres. Set learners up to achieve by giving them an easier material to work with when first learning knots.
- Some learners like stories and/or songs to help them remember how to tie the knots – get creative with it!
- Some learners like pictures – why not have a set of cards as visual prompts? It will also enable children to self-check their own knots.

**Year 1**

- Understanding the purpose of a particular type of knot.

**Year 2**

- What is an overhand knot used for?
- Why is a shoelace knot (granny knot) known as the 'bunny-rabbit knot'?
- Why is knot tying an important skill?

**Year 3**

- Apply knowledge of an overhand knot in bushcraft activities.
- Know what a square (reef) knot is.
- Know what lashings can be used for.

**Year 4**

- Begin to apply knowledge of clove hitch knots through bushcraft activities.
- Investigate untangling knots.
- Name parts of a rope.

**Year 5**

- Learn how to tie the following: clove hitch knot, half hitch knot, square lashings, a ridge line, and a prusik knot.
- Basic survival knowledge using knots.

**Year 6**

- Apply knowledge of clove hitch knots and square lashings in bushcraft activities.
- Use a range of knots when building shelters and understand their purpose (look at Forest School training knot sheet).
- Know how to do a sheer lashing.