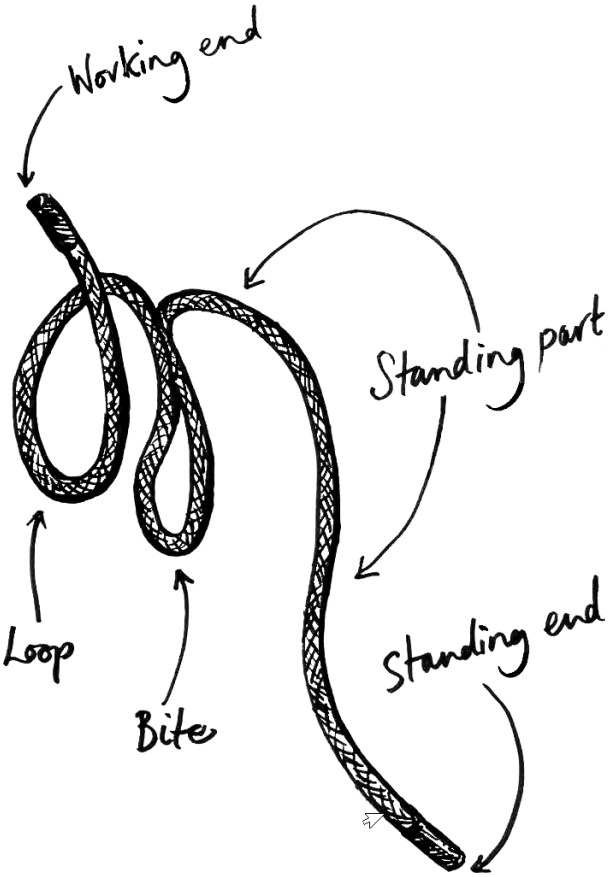
Knot Tying

An important outdoor skill to acquire for safe shelter building is understanding how to select the correct knot. Knot tying is a versatile and transferable life skill - which is not only great for curriculum coverage, but also fine motor skills, and will enable you to create your own resources, such as ladders.

Rope Parts



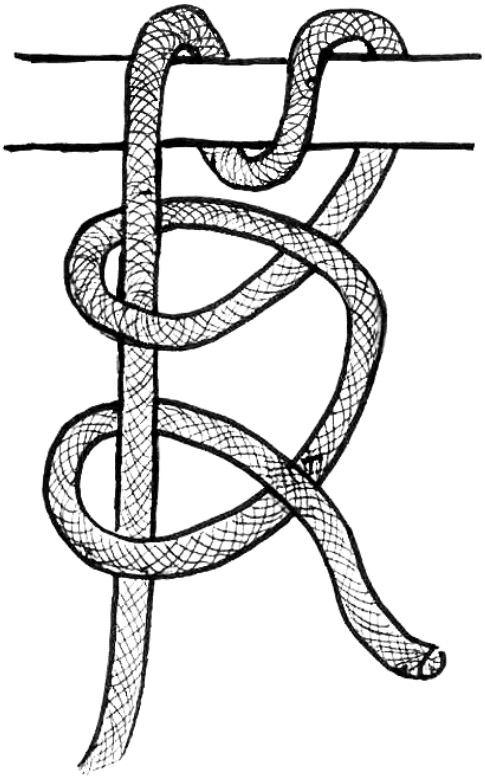
Understanding how to identify which parts of the rope are being used at any one time is helpful knowledge and will enable you to teach knot tying more effectively.

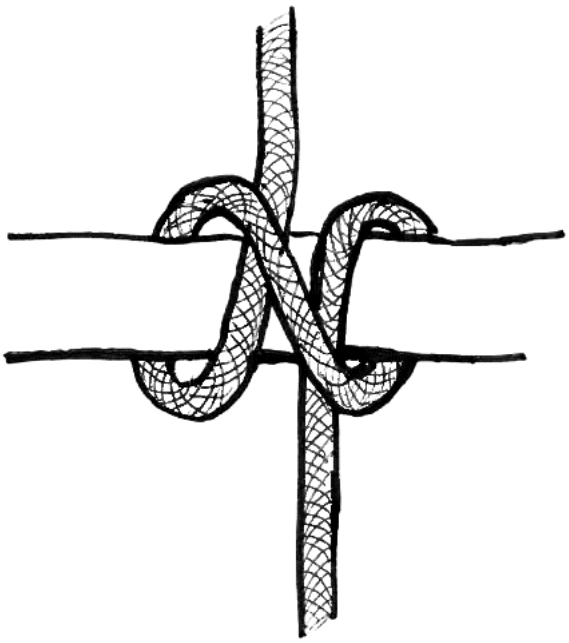
For most knots, the working end is the part which will be used to do the tying. Some knots (like the figure of eight) can be tied 'on the bite'.

The Standing part is the section of 'lifeline' rope that lies between the standing end and is usually 'inactive' during knot tying.

How you create a loop is also critical to the outcome – if two loops are used (i.e: as in clove hitch below) then you will always need to do this in the same way (as show here).

Two suitable ‘hitches’ for shelter building





Round Turn and Two Half Hitches

This hitch is perfect for shelter building as it is quick to release and has a constriction action. It is not suitable for putting under any form of heavy strain, but is ideal for using on eyelets of tarps and tying off on branches.

Clove Hitch

Another quick release hitch and not to be used for weight bearing and so is considered to be a weak binding knot. This is not to say it isn’t useful – it has many important uses and can be used for anchor hitch when building shelters.

Further Learning: Video tutorials of how to tie these knots, as well as others, please see Animated Knots: https://www.animatedknots.com.

To rig hammocks the Timber Hitch and Bowline are suitable as knots which are able to withstand high load bearing strain. Always check the condition and breaking strain of the rope being used as well as testing the tension on knots carefully and thoroughly before putting them under this kind of tension**. DISCLAIMER: Any activity that involves ropes is potentially hazardous. Factors such as the knot choice, rope and branch/ tree load bearing capacity should always be carefully considered during activities of this nature. No responsibility is accepted for incidents arising from the use of this guidance.**