

Terminology: Knot To Be Confused...

You can get away with saying "tie this end around that thing" for a while, but at some point you need to learn some of the correct terminology. Some of the terms can get a little confusing and may vary between seamen or sources.

Marlinspike Seamanship:

This is the overall term for working with ropes and line. A "marlinspike" is a long, pointed tool used to open up the strands of a line for splicing.



Knots (General):

Knots in the general sense includes "knots" in the specific sense. Confusing? Of course! Knots (general) includes three classes: Hitches, Bends and Knots.

Hitches:

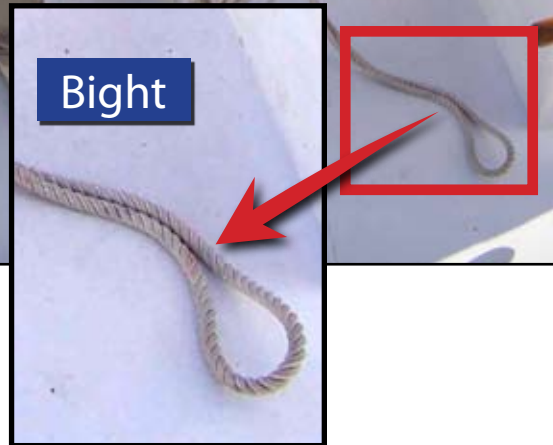
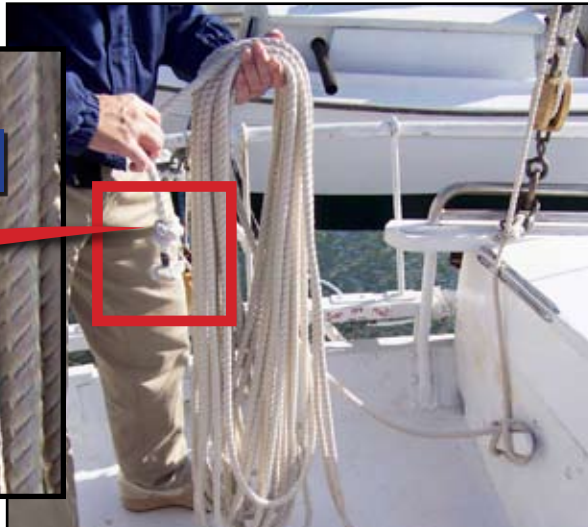
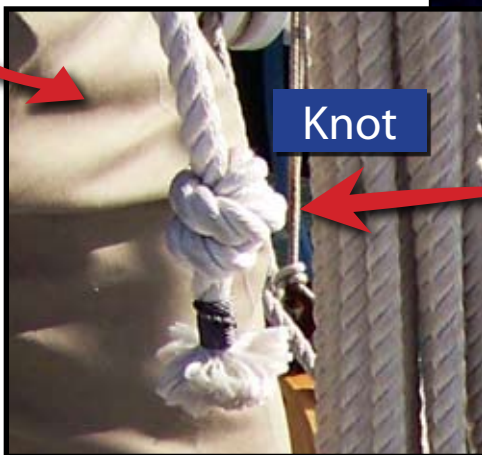
A hitch is a type of knot (general sense) that secures a line to another object.

Bends:

A bend is a type of knot (general sense) that is used to attach two lines together.

Knots (Specific):

In the specific sense, a knot is a class of knot (general) that creates a loop or a stopper in the end of a line. To confuse you even more, a bowline is considered a knot (since it forms a loop in the end of the line), but is generally used to secure a line to an object, or even to another line.



Bitter End:

The free end of the line that carries no load.

Standing Part:

The part of the line that is under tension. It is also called the "Working Part", not to be confused with the "Working End," which is the end of the rope being used to tie a knot, which is the opposite of the "Standing End," which is the other end of the line...huh?

Rope:

What you buy in the store.

Line:

What rope magically transforms itself into once it is brought on board a boat. Once on board, line can be called a wide range of names, depending on how it is being used. There are dock lines, main sheets, jib halyards, push boat painters, anchor rodes, etc. Occasionally, it may even be called a "rope," such as the bell rope. All are made out of line of various materials and dimensions.

Bight:

You form a bight in a line when you double the line back on itself, without crossing itself.

Loop:

Crossing the end of the line over or under the working part creates a loop. However, if you do the same thing around an object, you are forming a turn.

Turn:

A turn is a 180- to 270-degree wrap (single pass) around an object.

Round Turn:

A 540-degree turn (two passes) around an object.

Knots: The Nathan Way