

To make a rope halter, follow these steps:

1. Begin with a 21-foot length of rope. Melt the ends over a flame or tape them to prevent unraveling. No other tools or equipment are needed. Construction begins at the long end that goes over your horse's head, proceeds through the parts of the halter, then returns to end at the same place, resulting in the double length of rope over the poll that's used to fasten the halter.
2. Using the spacing shown in Figure 3, tie the offside cheekpiece overhand knot (Knot 1), and the one that goes under the jaw (Knot 2). Tie all knots tight enough to stay in place and keep the spacing correct, but make them so they can be loosened.
3. Now make the loop where the lead rope attaches, and tie that overhand knot (Knot 3), using two strands together.
4. Tie the noseband knots (4 and 5), using the spacing in Figure 4.
5. Return to the loop where the lead rope attaches and untie the knot (Knot 3) tied earlier. Make the loop and tie again, using four strands this time. The loop will now be only 3 to 3½ inches long, because of the additional rope used to tie the larger knot. Check the spacing between knots frequently, adjusting as necessary, to retain the correct proportions and measurements for the halter.
6. Now return to the overhand knot under the jaw (Knot 2) and tie a double overhand knot. Here's how:

Loosen the original overhand knot and run the end of the rope containing no knots through the middle of it, passing on the same side of the loop as the rope used to tie the original knot (see Figure 5). Tie another overhand knot intertwining the first, as shown in Figures 6 and 7.

Pay close attention to how the second overhand knot is tied upside down with the loop formed by the second knot passing over the top of the first knot.

The second knot is made inside

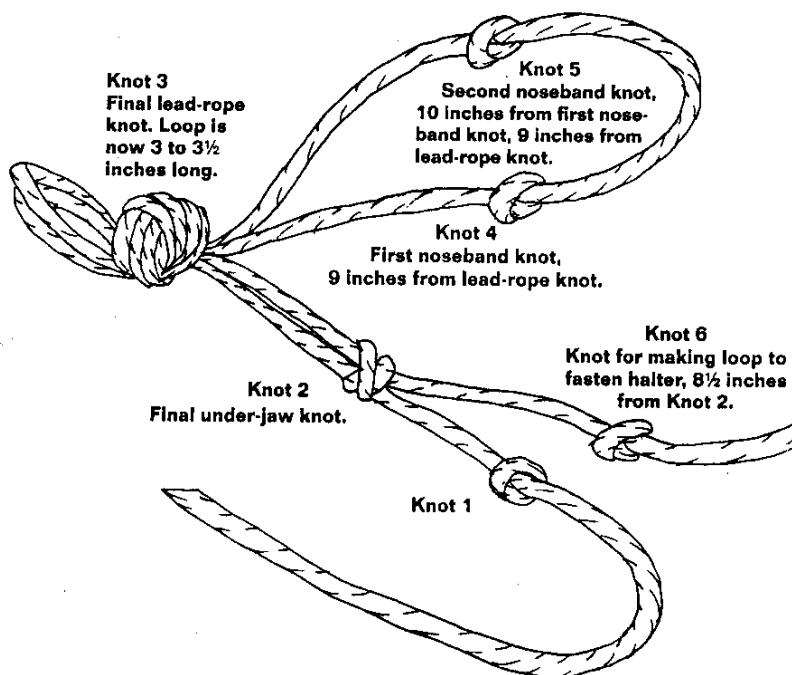


Figure 4. After making the noseband knots, the lead-rope loop overhand knot must be retied, using four strands of rope. The loop will now be smaller (approximately 3 to 3½ inches) as additional rope was allowed in the initial measurements to compensate for tying the larger knot using four strands.

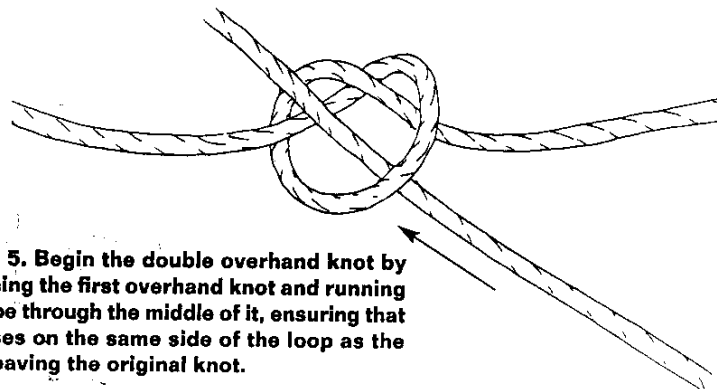


Figure 5. Begin the double overhand knot by loosening the first overhand knot and running the rope through the middle of it, ensuring that it passes on the same side of the loop as the rope leaving the original knot.

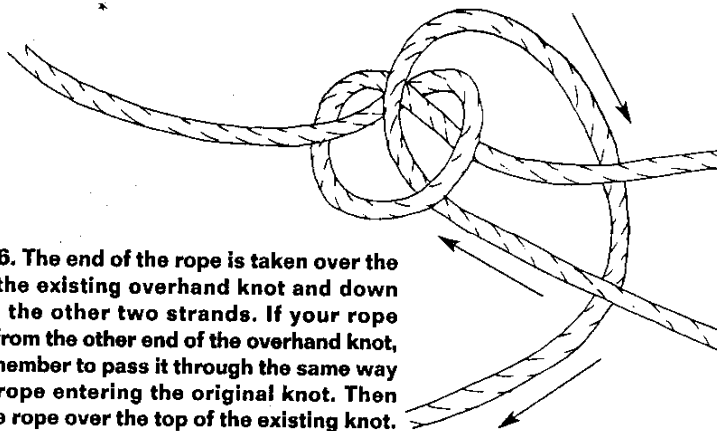


Figure 6. The end of the rope is taken over the top of the existing overhand knot and down behind the other two strands. If your rope enters from the other end of the overhand knot, just remember to pass it through the same way as the rope entering the original knot. Then loop the rope over the top of the existing knot.

the first, and the rope passes out the middle of the first knot on the same side as the rope leaving the original knot. The second knot is opposite from the first, while it's upside down (see Figure 8); but if it's turned in the same position as the first one, you'll find them identical.

Tighten both knots for the resulting double overhand knot (see Figure 9). You might need to move the strands around a bit to overlap more squarely before the knot lies flat.

7. Next, make Knot 6, using the spacing in Figure 4, and return the end of the rope back through Knot 6 to make the loop for fastening the halter (see Figure 10). Make the double overhand knot, as explained above, to complete the loop (see Figure 11).
8. Return to the noseband and complete those double overhand knots (Knots 4 and 5) using the spacing in Figure 12. Be sure that the rope doesn't get twisted or tangled with other parts of the halter.
9. Finish the offside cheekpiece double overhand knot (Knot 1).
10. Even the remaining ends of rope by cutting only the longest end. Then melt the ends together, or tie a small overhand knot for ease in fastening the halter.

When using your new halter, fasten it as shown in Figure 13 by tying a half-hitch to the loop end. If the half-hitch is made on the rope going over the poll, it can come untied when pressure is exerted on the halter. Attach the lead rope to the halter by a no-slip knot, and you will eliminate any chance of hardware breakage.

For a small investment and a minimum amount of time, you've made a sturdy and serviceable piece of equipment.

Editor's note: This article, one of the most popular in WH's history, originally appeared in our October 1991 issue, and was reprinted in June 1995 and July 2000. Because of countless reader requests, we decided to make it part of this 2002 edition of our equipment issue. Be sure to save this issue for future reference.

Figure 7. The end of the rope is then looped over the rope that was fed through the first overhand knot to make the second overhand knot. Feed the end of the rope out through the center of the first knot, passing on the same side of the loop as the rope leaving the original knot.

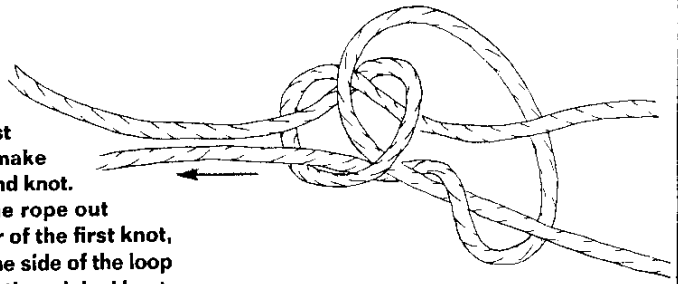
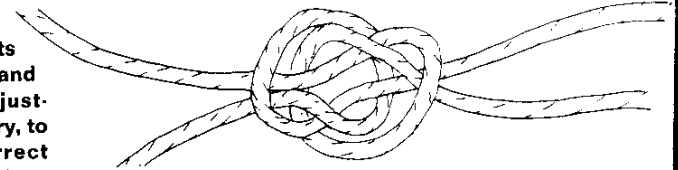


Figure 8. Align the two overhand knots under each other and tighten. Make adjustments, if necessary, to ensure the correct spacing for the halter.



Loop for fastening halter is 3 1/2 inches long.

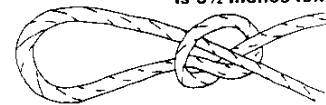


Figure 9. The final knot should look like this. Even though the overhand knots might be properly tied, you might need to rearrange the strands slightly for the knot to form properly when tightened.

Figure 10. Make an overhand knot, then run the end of the rope back through it, forming a loop. Now make another overhand knot inside the first to form the final knot, and the loop for fastening the halter.

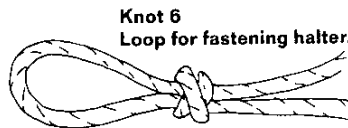


Figure 11. The finished loop, for fastening the halter on the near side, should look like this.

Knot 6 Loop for fastening halter.

Knot 6 is 8 1/2 inches from Knot 2, the under-jaw knot.

Knot 6 is 8 inches from the noseband knot.

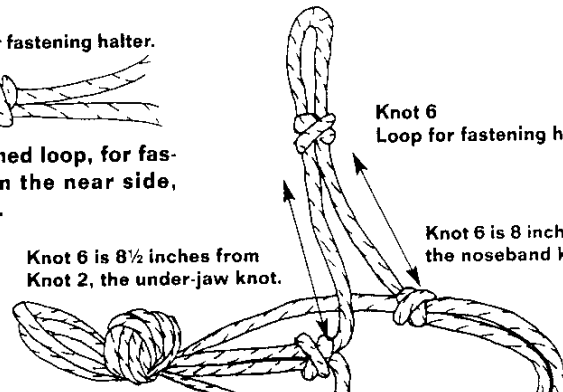


Figure 12. The halter takes shape after tying the double overhand knots.

This noseband knot is 8 inches from Knot 1, the offside cheekpiece knot.

Knot 1



Figure 13. When using your halter, be sure it's fastened with the half-hitch made on the loop end. If the half-hitch is made on the rope coming over the poll, the rope can easily pull through and leave you without a horse.