



# Natural Horse Supply

## Tie Your Own Simple Rope Halter



Making your own rope halters is a rewarding process. You get an extra feeling of accomplishment knowing that your horse is responding to something personally made with your own hands. The first time that you attempt to make a halter, you may spend a few hours tying and untying the knots, studying the instructions, and thinking about all the money you are saving making your own tack! Don't get discouraged if you make mistakes or have to start over from the beginning -- each successive rope halter that you make will be a little bit easier, until you have it down to a 10 minute process!

These are **not** the same techniques that we use to manufacture our Natural Horse Supply rope halters. These are instructions for a "simple" rope halter that can easily be made by the average person. Our Natural Horse Supply rope halters use a Fiador knot for lead rope attachment and double overhand ("Blood") knots. In addition, the latch knot end ropes are spliced and sewn to prevent unraveling. We'll teach you how to make a simple, very durable and safe rope halter that you can use to train your horse.

### Materials List:

Depending on the size of your horse, these are the materials you need:

Size of Horse	Amount of Rope Needed
Small – Pony	18 Feet
Medium – Arab	20 Feet
Large – Horse	22 Feet
Extra Large - Warmblood	24 Feet
Extra Extra Large - Draft	26-28 Feet

We use 1/4" nylon double braided nylon. This is an ideal choice because it has a braided nylon sleeve over a braided nylon core which makes for a very soft rope. You can find this type of rope at a marine supply store or mail order it from many sources. This rope is much more expensive than other ropes that you'll find in the hardware store, but there is definitely a difference in quality. Nylon double braid also has a tensile breaking strength of 2,300 pounds per square inch (PSI), making it extremely durable. Many people use 1/4" or 3/8" nylon or polyester rope to make halters it really comes down to a personal preference. And, you may just have to use what you have available.

You'll also need a sharp knife or single edge (safety) razor blade to trim the ends of the rope and a lighter or matches to melt/seal the ends of the rope when finished.

### Knots

Even a good Cub Scout knows a thing or two about knots. Fortunately, you don't need to master too many in order to make a rope halter. You may want to practice these knots before you start making your halter to lessen the frustration level...

#### The Overhand Knot



This rope halter relies on an overhand knot as the basis for making your halter. This is what an overhand knot looks like. If you can tie your shoes then you can tie this knot! Tying the overhand knot is simple, the hard part is tying into this knot to create a double overhand or "blood" knot.

#### The Double Overhand Knot



The double overhand knot is tied by threading the end of the rope through an existing overhand knot and back around to form a "double" knot. This is an attractive and durable knot which is extremely difficult to take apart once it has been used on a horse. It's also difficult to learn to tie

because you come at it from different directions on a rope halter. This knot takes some time to perfect, but is ideal for the rope halter because there is not flat portion of the knot.

## Tying the Double Overhand Knot



Step 1: Loosen the existing overhand knot and feed the loose end of the rope through the middle of the existing knot. Make sure that the rope goes into the center loop of the existing knot on the same side of the loop as the rope on the first overhand knot.



Step 2: Take the end of the rope over the top of the overhand knot, crossing directly in the groove or V of the knot and back behind the two strands of rope. I find it easier to turn the existing double overhand knot to the side at about a 45 degree angle – this makes it easier for the next step.



Step 3: Bring the end of the rope around and through the middle of the overhand knot. Take the rope through the “new” overhand, tighten the rope and take up the slack. Turn the knot over and you’ll have a wonderful double overhand knot!

## TIP: Knots for the “Knot Challenged”



For those of you who are having a hard time getting the double overhand knot to work out, you can simply tie into the knot following the path of the rope through the existing overhand knot. This is not as effective for training because it lays flat on the horse. Also, not as pretty as the double overhand -- but it’s not very hard to tie either... It works!

## Making the Halter

This type of halter requires that you tie the overhand knot at the correct location on the rope. The distances are measured from knot to knot and do not include the knot in the measurement. It’s important not to tie these knots too tight at first because you are going to go back to tie into the existing overhand knots to finish the halter.

**Step 1:** Determine the size of halter you want to make. Take a measurement around your horse's nose just below the cheek bone. Note: the average horse is about 24" around the nose. Use a string to get the length of these measurements and lay the string out against a yardstick or tape measure. **DO NOT USE A METAL TAPE MEASURE TO TAKE THESE MEASUREMENTS ON YOUR HORSE!**

**Small** - fits ponies/yearlings, etc. Approximately 20" around the nose.

**Medium** - fits cob/Arab size horse heads. Approximately 22" around the nose

**Large** - fits the average size horse head. Approximately 24" around the nose.

**Extra Large** - fits the large horse i.e. warmbloods. Approximately 26" around the nose.

**XXL** - fits the VERY, VERY large horse , i.e. Draft. Approximately 28" around the nose.

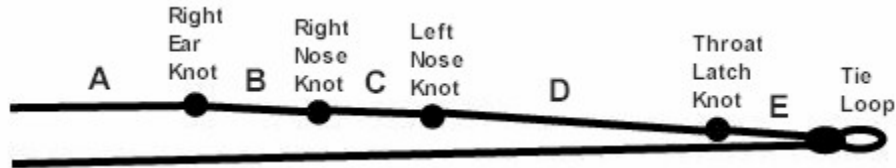
The following table shows the measurement between knots for different sizes of horses:

Point	Location of Knot	Small	Medium	Large	XL	XXL
A	End of Rope to Right Ear Knot	28 inches	30 inches	32 inches	34 inches	36 inches
B	Right Ear Knot to Right nose Knot	7 inches	8 inches	9 inches	10 inches	16 inches
C	Right Nose Knot to Left Nose Knot	8 inches	9 inches	10 inches	11 inches	12 inches
D	Left Nose Knot to Throat Latch Knot	29 inches	31 inches	33 inches	35 inches	37 inches
E	Throat Latch Knot to Tie Loop	8 inches	9 inches	10 inches	11 inches	12 inches

<b>F</b>	Tie Loop to Left Nose Knot	8 inches	9 inches	10 inches	11 inches	12 inches
<b>G</b>	Left Nose Knot to Right Nose Knot	8 inches	9 inches	10 inches	11 inches	12 inches
<b>H</b>	Right Nose Knot to Throat Latch Knot	29 inches	31 inches	33 inches	35 inches	37 inches
<b>I</b>	Throat Latch Knot to Right Ear Knot	8 inches	9 inches	10 inches <td 11 inches	12 inches	
<b>J</b>	Right Ear Knot to End of Rope	28 inches	30 inches	32 inches	34 inches	36 inches

**Note:** This is a “recipe” for a rope halter – you may have to adjust the suggested measurements to fit your horse. These instructions suggest enough rope for the average horse of each size. This should leave you enough margin of error to have a bit of rope left over. You’ll appreciate this if you go through all the effort to make a halter and it comes up short! If you have to decide on a size -- It's better to have a halter that is a little bit too big than one that is too small.

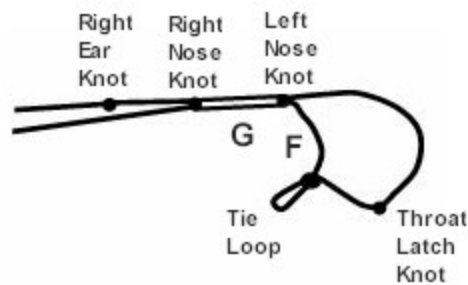
**Step 2:** Using the diagram below, tie overhand knots in the rope at points A, B, C, and D using measurements from the table in step 1. You may find it easier to label the points on the diagram with the measurements from the table to keep things straight.



**Step 3:** Using the diagram above, tie the tie loop in the correct location by holding the rope in a loop and making an overhand knot. Make sure that the measurement between the tie loop and the throat latch (point E) is correct from the table in step 1. The tie loop should be about 4 inches in length. You may need to “flatten” the knot if the ropes get over each other. Take a second to look at this now, because it will be difficult to fix later.

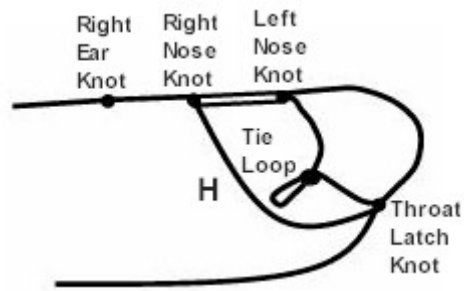


**Step 4:** Using the diagram below, tie into the left nose knot from the tie loop. Remember to use the measurement from step 1, point F on the halter. This is your first opportunity to use the double overhand knot. You are going to use the double overhand to tie into the left nose knot.

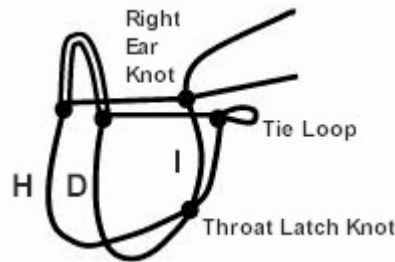


**Step 5:** Using the above diagram, tie into the right nose knot from the left nose knot, point G. Again, you will use the double overhand knot to tie the rope into the right nose knot. When you are finished with this step, your halter will have two parallel pieces of rope tied between the left and right nose knots. These two pieces of rope should be the same length.

**Step 6:** Using the diagram below, measure the distance between point H from the right nose knot to the throat latch knot and tie into the throat latch knot using the double overhand knot. Make sure that the distance between the left nose knot and the throat latch knot are the same – points D and H need to be equal. Now is the time to correct any difference in length.



**Step 7:** Your halter should be taking shape now. Arrange the halter so that it looks a bit like the diagram below. Tie into the right ear knot from the throat latch knot, point I -- using the double overhand knot. Congratulations, that was the last double overhand knot you will need to tie on the halter. Verify that all of the measurements are correct.



**Step 8:** Using the above diagram, hold the two long sections (D and H) together and tie an overhand knot in the bottom. This is the knot that the lead rope goes into under the chin of the horse. This knot should have two loops about 4-5 inches in length. Don't tighten this knot until you can fit the horse correctly. This is where you will "adjust" the halter to fit your horse.



**Step 9:** Trim the rope ends to be the same length and melt them with a lighter/match to seal the ends. Many people will tie the ends together with a piece of leather while others leave the ends loose. Again, this is a personal preference thing. We splice them together to make one single piece of rope.

**Step 10:** Adjust the halter to fit your horse. If you didn't tighten the knots too tight you'll have the ability to move things around, take up slack, give more room etc. If you need to adjust the size, slip the knots up or down the rope or adjust the size of the tie rope under the chin. If you are going to ride with the halter you may need more room above the tie rope at the chin -- we recommend a 2"-4" space above the knot that ties the lead rope into the halter to leave room for the lead rope.

### Tying the latch knot

Bring the tie strings through the back of the loop. Hold your fingers below the loop, bring the strings around the back of the loop, through and under the strings. This is the best way to tie the latch knot. It won't come loose and it will come apart easily when you go to take the halter off.





**Important:** These halters are great training devices, but aren't very forgiving – the breaking strength on the rope is so high that a horse won't likely be able to get free on their own if they get into trouble . Do not leave a rope halter on your horse when you are not using it. Do not tie your horse in a trailer with a rope halter. There is some risk involved in horse training for both you and the horse. Horses can cause serious injury. Be sensible and don't attempt anything that is outside your comfort level. This information is intended to illustrate how we apply our training techniques, you are responsible for using this information wisely. If you don't feel comfortable with your abilities or an exercise, don't do it! Seek advice or assistance from a professional horse trainer. Stay on the "high side of trouble".

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