

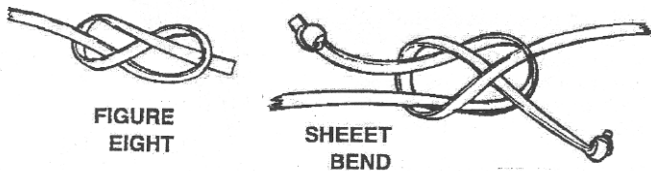
TYING RUBBER KNOTS AFTER LUBING

by John Barker

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To my mind the most important thing is to have the rubber well lubricated before the knot is tied. This is contrary to the opinion of many people who like to tie the rubber before lubricating. However, if you look at the rubber adjacent to a knot that has been tied "dry", you will very often find signs of scuffing or other damage all ready to start a failure. Even if damage does not occur when the knot is tied, it almost certainly will when the knot is stressed unless some care has been taken to work lubricant into the knot.

It may be thought that a well lubricated knot would slip undone and so it would except for the fact that one puts a stopper knot on each end of the rubber before tying the main knot. The two knots I recommend were much used in my sailing days and even long before that in my Boy Scout days. The one used as a stopper is the Figure 8 knot and the one used as the main knot is the Sheet Bend. The Sheet Bend is in fact identical to a Bowline knot except that it is formed with two ends instead of on a loop. Both the Figure 8 and Sheet Bend knots are diagramed below.



The stopper knots are put on before lubricating. I lick the rubber, tie the knots and pull them up quite tightly but not enough to cause any damage. The rubber is then lubricated. I use straight castor oil and have found nothing better. Then again, I haven't tried anything else for forty years. The Sheet Bend is now tied loosely and carefully worked until the stoppers are laying alongside the main knot. All is then pulled tight. The reason for this is that the stopper knots prevent the Sheet Bend from coming loose and the pressure from the Sheet Bend prevents, the stoppers from coming undone.

All of the above may sound complicated but it is another of those things which are much easier to do than to read about. If you have trouble tying knots (the Figure 8 and Sheet Bend aren't really that difficult to tie) it may be well worth finding some sailing buff who can give you some pointers on the best procedures. Good luck and good flying!

Submitted by Bill Henn