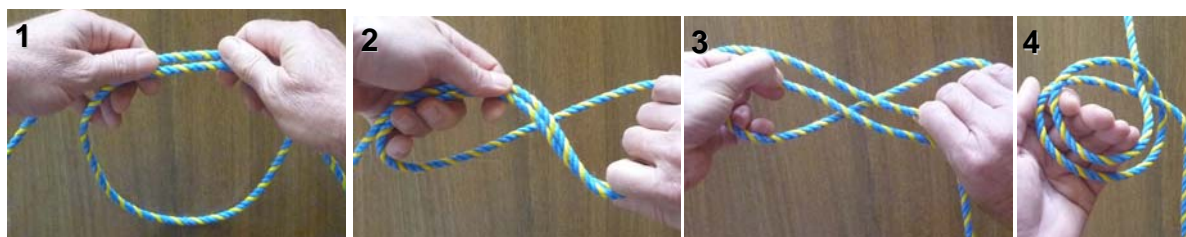


## ABOK #2545?

On page 408 of *ABOK* at #2545 we find a blank space under “This knot was mislaid.” In Ashley’s effort involving some 11 years, 7000 drawings and 3854 entries on knots and ways to tie and use them – before the advent of computer databases, graphics or word processing – it is remarkable that only one was mislaid.

The missing #2545 is in the middle of a series about fast ways to tie a clove hitch (in lines from string to heavy hawsers). But one of the commonest fast ways to tie the clove hitch in mid-sized rope is absent from this series, and also from pages 215 and 302 where other methods are given. Could this method be the mislaid entry intended for *ABOK* # 2545?

To cast a clove hitch in the bight, make a clockwise overhand loop and grasp it with both hands: with the thumbs on top of the doubled region and the fingers inside the loop, pointing at your body (1). Slide your hands apart to make the desired size loop (twice the diameter of the final clove hitch). Twist the right hand so that the thumb comes in, and twist the left hand so that the thumb moves out; thus forming the two loops of the clove hitch in a horizontal plane (2). Release the ends which will fall onto the connection between the loops (3). Fold the two loops together, and grasp them to finish the clove hitch (4), which may now be placed over a spar or bollard. Once you are familiar with it, the whole process takes about 2 seconds.



If you twist your hands in the opposite directions (and ensure that both rope ends fall between the loops), you will make a constrictor knot. So with this slight modification, the method does double duty.

With Z-laid rope, most people will probably be comfortable with the initial clockwise overhand loop (as if they were starting to coil the rope) and this will yield an SS clove hitch. However, if it feels more natural, left handers can easily adjust the method to start with a counter-clockwise overhand loop, and use the opposite direction of hand twists to form the two horizontal loops. This will make a ZZ clove hitch.

If a Z-laid rope is already coiled in the usual fashion (clockwise overhand = S helix), it is even faster to simply pick up one coil and perform the hand twists as described above to cast an SS clove hitch.

Although commonly referred to as a “clove hitch”, the knot cast in the bight is really a precursor, which becomes a “hitch” when it passes around a solid. It may be argued that the fingers are the solid in (4). Like some other hitches, the clove hitch will spill if it is removed from the solid and tension is placed on the line.