



# QUARTERMASTER

## Lesson Nine: Emergency Kit Repairs

One of the important skills of a Quartermaster is the ability to repair things quickly – so this lesson is just a few pointers on what you can do.

### Tent tears

Depending upon the size and position of the tear, there are a number of options available to you, depending on the amount of time you have available.

If you have a large tear on a canvas tent, then you should consider sewing the two sides together. Don't worry, you don't need to be neat, it's just to hold the two parts together (oh, and you will need something a little stronger than the needle and thread for a button). Once you have reduced the amount of "flapability" on the tear, you can then use Duct tape on **both** sides to hold the tear.

For nylon tents, you can buy tent repair kits, which basically come with a piece of nylon canvas and glue.

For tears on seam lines, you will need to sew it first – typically there is a lot of strain on a seam line – and left unchecked will unthread along the length of the seam, so what starts as a small tear can quickly become a big problem.

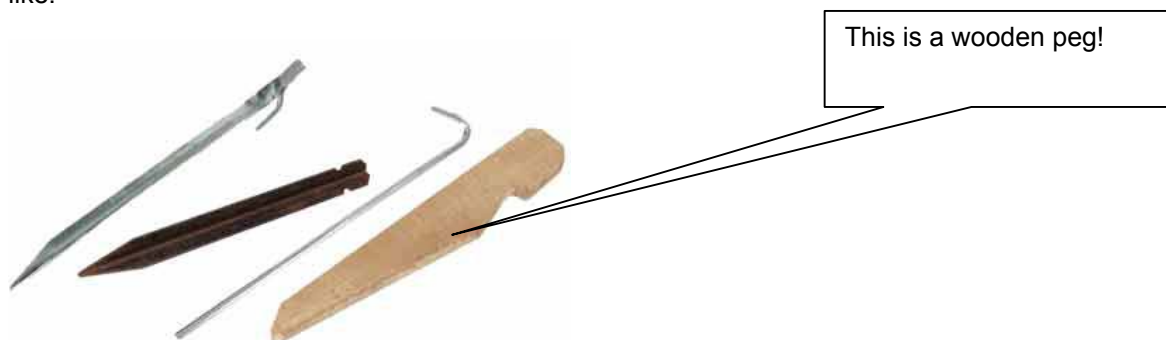
For all patching, look at the section about wet repairs.

### Pegs

Metal pegs will bend out of shape – and the simplest way to repair them is with a hammer and a pair of pliers.

Plastic pegs can't be repaired – they can really only be thrown away and replaced. So for the emergency kit repair? Keep a couple spare!

Wooden pegs can't be repaired as such – but with a decent bit of wood (or even a decent branch) you can make a replacement peg. Wooden pegs tend to break at the top, so it's worth having an idea of what a wooden peg looks like:



## Fixing guy lines

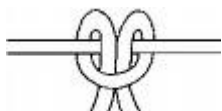
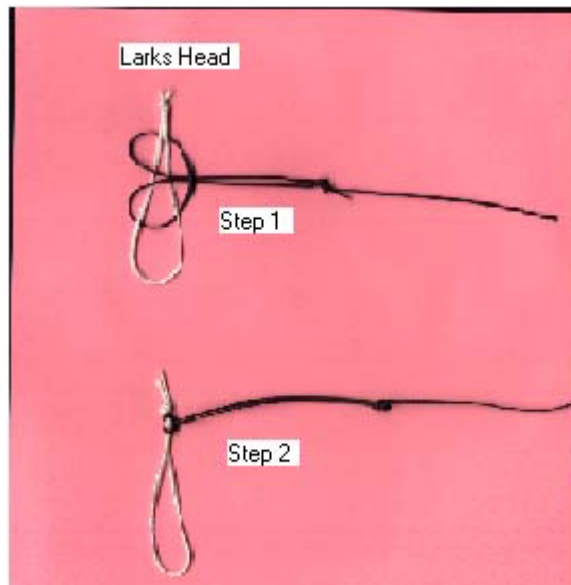
Ever wondered why you learn all those knots? Fixing guy lines is the one area that having a good grasp of two knots will stand you – as Quartermaster – in a very good position to make an effective repair.

The most common problem with a guy line is the wooden or plastic runner breaking – or just not holding onto the guy line, so the tension goes out of the line and it all gets very flappy.

The first knot you should know about is the SHEEPSHANK. Typically, this knot is taught for when you need to strengthen a weak point in a rope – the tension keeps the knot tight. Consequently, by making use of this knot you create a very effective holding point on the rope. Whilst this is a brilliant solution (and always looks very effective when you can “just do it”) it does require that you have enough rope to shorten (typically the length of the rope is halved at best)

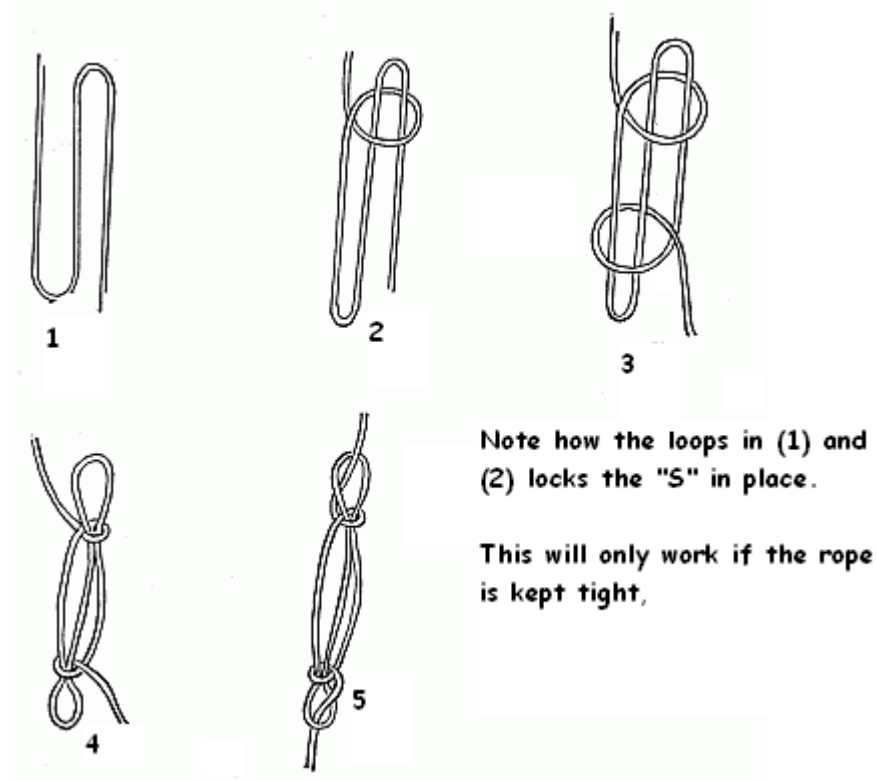


The second knot that is worth knowing is the LARKSHEAD knot. This is a slip knot – it's quite quick to tie and untie, but when in place will work like the runner that you are trying to replace. The image below shows how simple the knot actually is...



- what the top of the knot looks like....

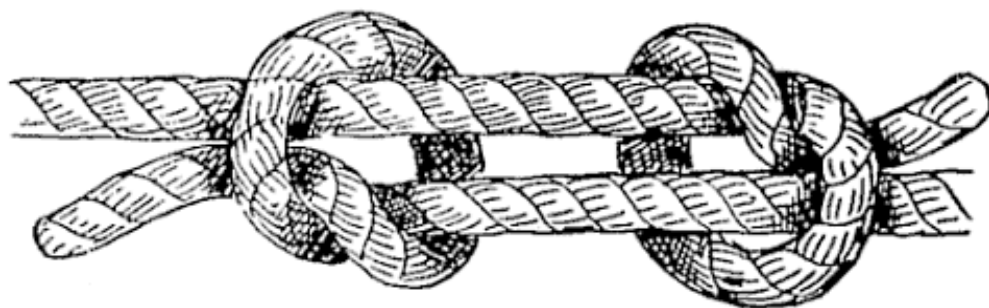
## Tying the Sheepshank:



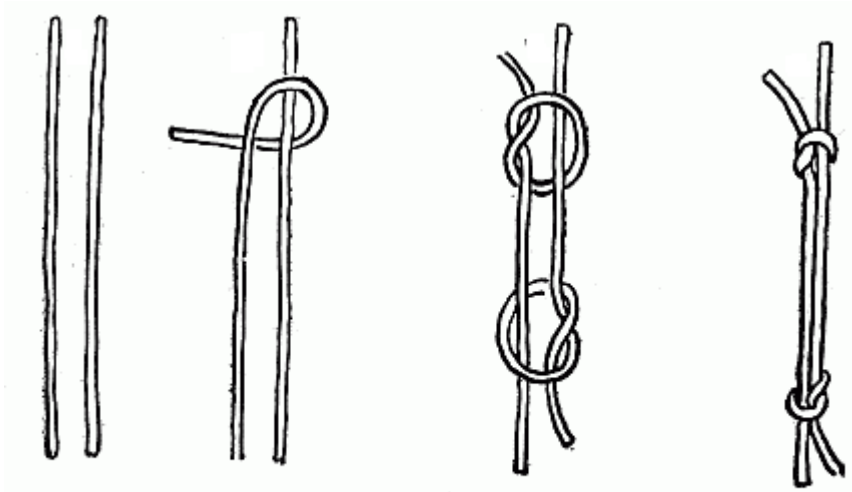
## Rope repairs

One option for a rope repair is listed above, but as a quartermaster you already have the skills to repair a rope... remember the whipping? A simple or West Country whipping can patch a partially frayed rope. If you need to, you can always tape over the work to further protect it.

For a rope that has broken in half there is a Splicing solution – but this is advanced knowledge and typically it is just easier to use a FISHERMANS KNOT.



To tie a Fisherman's Knot:



1. Tie a thumb knot around the other rope.
2. Repeat on the other rope. Pull tight.

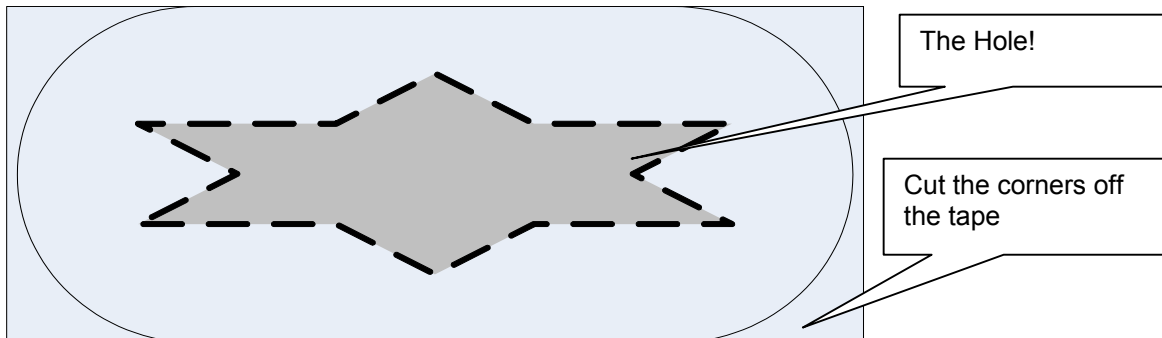
However, these repairs will make the rope a little bigger at the join and should only be considered a temporary repair.

If the rope in question is a climbing rope – **DO NOT REPAIR IT**. Because this rope is a safety item it should be replaced **immediately**.

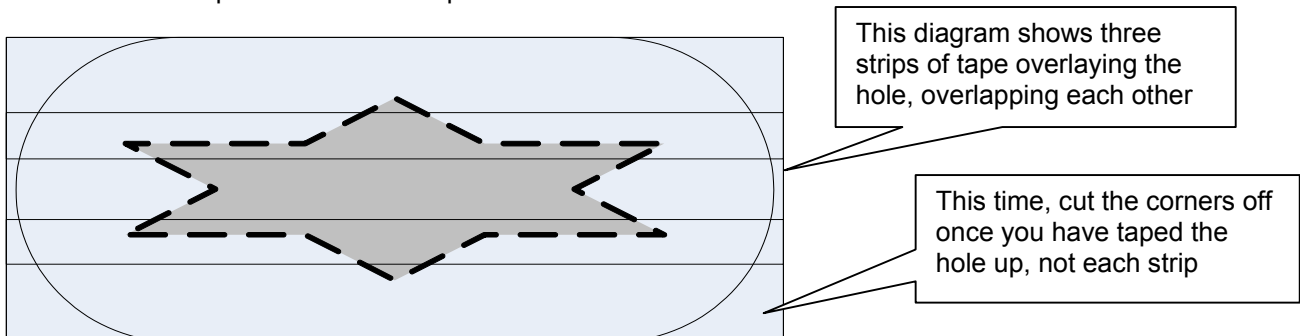
### Canoe repairs / wet repairs

As Quartermaster, you may need to quickly patch a canoe so it can be used. The most useful kit in your arsenal for canoe repairs is Duct Tape (actually, this is probably THE most useful piece of kit in any Quartermasters tool kit!). Firstly, you need to make sure that the surface is very dry – even slightly damp canoes will mean that the repair won't stick. Then, you stick the tape over the hole...

That should be it, right? **WRONG!!!** The corners of the edge of the repair will catch, and then the repair will peel off. So once you have made sure that the tape is on properly, cut the corners round (this tip applies to any repair that you may undertake using tape)



But what happens if the hole is wider than a strip of tape? Simply lay up more strips – but make sure that there is a reasonable overlap between each strip



## A Word about Duct Tape

Duct tape – or ducting tape – is a very sticky fabric tape. It is very different from parcel tape or Sellotape and is available from DIY stores.

It can come in a variety of thicknesses and colours. Known by many names (including Gaffer tape, Canoe tape) this is a very useful tool to have. Experience seems to show that black is okay (and probably the easiest to come by) – but silver does allow you to use a waterproof marker pen – so as quartermaster you can then label boxes up with a removable tape.

If you do keep some in your kit, it is worth also keeping a pocket knife or scissors to hand - because it is a fabric tape it is quite difficult sometimes to tear by hand.



### FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

BUT! There is a tape that is even more sticky than Duct Tape!! This is used for guttering repairs – and can be applied to wet surfaces (so in theory you can even repair a canoe whilst in the water!) However this is VERY expensive – and VERY gooey – so you should only use it if you have plastic gloves available and a cutting implement that you are prepared to throw away afterwards.

## Exercise

What would be in Your Emergency Kit Repair Pack?