

TECHNIQUES, TRAINING & REVIEWS.

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ROPE COILING AND PACKING

In this issue of the *Journal* I thought it would be appropriate to follow on with ropes.

Packing ropes into packs

Before venturing into a cave preparation is paramount. Part of preparing for a vertical cave is having the ropes ready for each pitch wherever possible. Ropes can be stored into packs ready to go for each pitch.

One of the common ways of doing this is to have the rope stored in a pack with knots ready and they can be pulled out of the bag during the abseil with the pack hanging from the abseilers harness.

1. Tie a stopper knot into the end of the rope. Any knot will do. This is just in case the rope does not reach the bottom of the pitch and prevents the caver abseiling off the end of the rope (Photo 1).



2. With a carabiner attached to the chin strap of your helmet, feed the rope through the carabiner and feed the rope into the pack. It is often easier to have someone hold the pack open while feeding in the rope and compress the rope into the pack. By feeding the rope in this way the rope will come out exactly as it went in, no knots, twists, etc (Photo 2).

3. Once all the rope is in the pack tie the knot of choice to the end ready for attachment to an anchor at the top of a pitch (Photo 3).

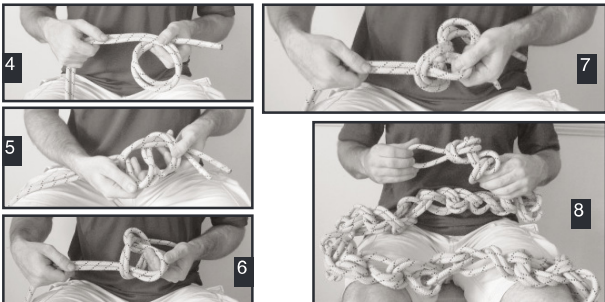
Daisy Chaining Ropes

Creating a daisy chain is great for care of ropes. It can be used for washing of ropes in a washing machine and storing ropes for drying afterwards. More on washing ropes in future articles.

1. Start with a loop of rope. (Photo 4).
2. Pull a bight of rope through the first loop, but not all the way (Photo 5).
3. Pull another bight of rope through the first bight of rope from the back (Photos 6, 7).
4. Continue this process all the way to the end of the rope and feed the end through the last bight to lock off (Photo 8).

To untie the chain simply pull out the end from the last bight. Then pull the same end and all the chain will simply untie.

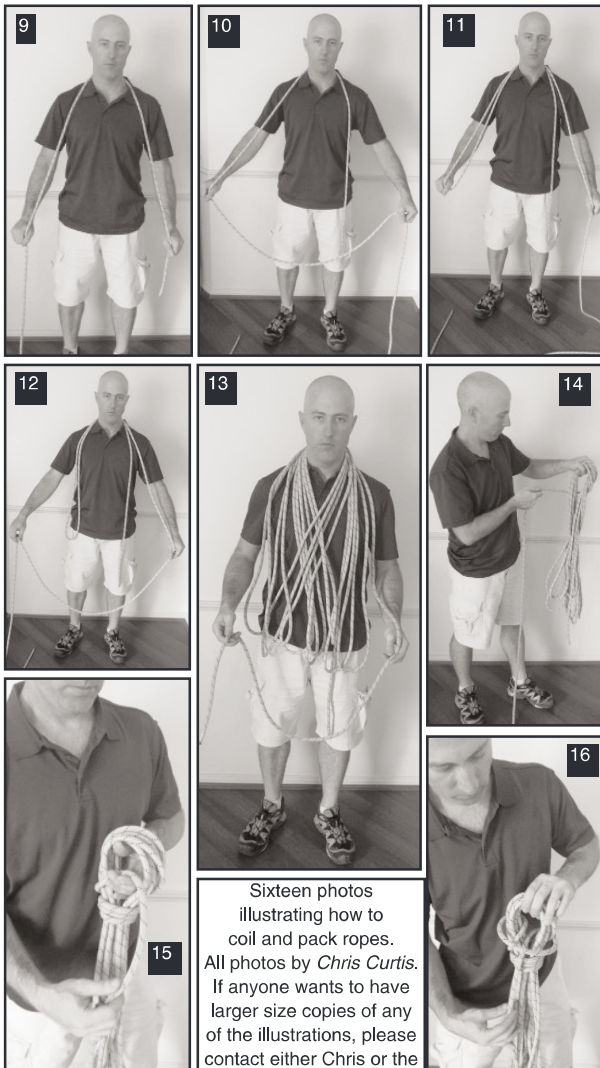
In the pictures I have created a daisy chain using two strands, but it can also be done with a single strand or four strands.



Coiling ropes

For longer term storage I use coil my ropes as it takes up less space and is neater. There are many variations on coiling ropes. They can be coiled for canyoning in half's or for backpacking over the shoulders. Coiling can be done with the hands only or over the shoulders as I have shown.

1. Start with a length of rope over the shoulders with a long tail in the left hand (Photo 9).
2. With the left hand pull another section of rope. Do not let go of the rope with your right hand (Photo 10).
3. Flip that length of rope over your shoulders (Photo 11).
4. With the right hand pull another section of rope. Do not let go of the rope with your left hand (Photo 12). Flip the rope over your shoulders again.
5. Continue to repeat the process of left then right hands until all the rope is over your shoulders, but leave a long tail hanging (Photo 13).
6. While holding the rope in your left hand bring the tail around the loops as shown (Photo 14).
7. Pass the tail around the 3 or 4 times (or more if desired) and pull a bight through the all the loops (Photo 15).
8. Pull the bight over the loops and then pull the tail of the rope to tighten (Photo 16).



Sixteen photos illustrating how to coil and pack ropes. All photos by Chris Curtis. If anyone wants to have larger size copies of any of the illustrations, please contact either Chris or the Editor of JSSS.

I will go into storing ropes in a future article.

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