



DIY Monkey Fist

You've seen this awesome looking knot on various props and you want to know how to make a monkey fist. Our step-by-step guide will show you how you can make a monkey fist at home, which can then be used to make your own [DIY poi](#) or [DIY rope dart](#).

The monkey fist, an interlocking spherical knot, is one of the most common knots used when making props, particularly poi and rope dart. It can be a little frustrating at first, and does require patience and concentration, but the end result is a pretty amazing, super secure knot.

First, a few important things to note:

- **The core** – the monkey fist needs a core to wrap around. This could be a knot in the end of your rope, a tennis ball, a polystyrene ball, or anything else with a round shape that will provide a fairly rigid core.
- **Weight** – The weight of your core and the density of your rope will impact the final weight. If you have a super dense and heavy rope, it could be worth going for a lighter core. If you have a low-density, light rope, a tennis ball works great. You can even add weight by cutting open the tennis ball and filling it with old bicycle inner tubes, beads, sand etc.
- **Size matters** – the thinner your rope is, the more passes you'll have to do around your core. A thicker rope means less passes, but too thick and it becomes difficult to work with. A happy medium is somewhere between 6-10mm diameter.
- **More is more** – It's better to start with too much rope than not enough and have to start your monkey fist again! The amount you need will vary based on the size of your core and the diameter of your rope.

Materials for DIY Monkey Fist (non-fire)

- **A core** – a tennis ball or a similarly sized polystyrene ball works great
- **5-6m rope** – we suggest using braided rope over twisted rope. You can find braided polypropylene rope at your local hardware store
- **Tape or a peg** – to mark your measured rope
- **A lighter or tape** – melting the working end of your rope or wrapping it with tape will stop it from fraying as you work
- **Scissors**
- **Ruler or tape measure**



Method for DIY Monkey Fist

1. Measure out approximately 5m of rope. **You do not need to cut the rope!** Grab a peg or a piece of tape and use it to mark your measurement. This is the point you will start from, with a long 'working end'.



2. Begin wrapping your rope around your core. Start at the bottom right, towards the back of the core and go underneath the core towards the left. These first passes can be the most frustrating step as you try to wrap and hold things in place at the same time. **Be patient, take your time, ask a friend for help if you need it.**



3. Go up the left side, back over the top (towards the right), and back to immediately in front of the point where you started. ***Make sure you don't wrap too tight as you'll need to fit your rope between these passes and the core later.***



4. Make this pass as many times as you need to cover the centre area of the core. You want to cover about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the core, but still be able to see the rounded ends poking through on either side. This should be anywhere between 3-8 passes, depending on rope and core size.



5. Hold the first lot of passes in place and begin your second lot of passes, starting from where you finished the first lot of passes (bottom right, towards the front). These ones will go over the first ones, and can be done tighter to help hold the first lot in place.



6. Go up over the front of the core, across the top towards the back **over the first lot of passes**, down the back of the core, across the bottom **over the first lot of passes**, and come back to the immediate left of the starting point.



7. Make this pass the same number of times that you made the first lot of passes.



8. Begin your final lot of passes. These ones will go under the first lot, and over the second lot. Starting from where you finished the second lot of passes (bottom left, towards the front), thread the end of your rope **under the first lot of passes** towards the back.



9. Next, go across the back towards the right **over the second lot of passes**, then back to the front **under the first lot of passes**, and finally **over the second lot of passes** back to just above the starting point.



10. Repeat this pass the same number of times as the others.



11. Once you have an equal number of passes on each side, you can begin tightening the rope so it's secure against the core. The easiest way to do this is to pull each pass, one by one, tight against the core, working from your final pass to your first pass.



12. You may need to repeat this tightening step one or two more times to get the rope really tight and secure.



13. *Don't cut the rope just yet!*

What you'll use your monkey fist for will determine where to cut it – check out our DIY [rope dart](#) and [poi](#) instructions.



Congratulations!

You made a DIY monkey fist!