

# A guide for rope bottoms and bondage models.



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[http://rope-topia.com/downloads/tutorials/rope\\_bottom\\_guide.pdf](http://rope-topia.com/downloads/tutorials/rope_bottom_guide.pdf)

# Introduction

This is a set of guidelines for those who are unfamiliar with being tied in rope bondage, or those who want to know more on bondage safety from the rope bottoms perspective. With the increase of bondage riggers who are not aware of safety, it is important for a resource such as this, to provide rope bottoms with information that you will need to make informed choices with your rope bondage experience.

There are risks attached to any bondage scenario even with the best bondage rigger. **Bondage is never risk free.** By working with a rigger who is skilled and aware of how to keep you safe, you will significantly reduce the risks of bondage but you will not eliminate the risk entirely. It is very important to understand and remember that all bondage has an associated risk.

This article is a general guide, it is by no means suited to every rope bondage situation and every body type. It is important to remember that every person's body is different, what is correct for you, might be dangerous for another person. It is the riggers responsibility to ensure what they are doing, is right for your fitness level and body type but for this to happen, it is up to you to communicate. Communication is key to reduce the risk. It is **your** responsibility to communicate and give feedback before, during and after bondage.

Sometimes skilled, experienced and risk aware riggers can go against these guidelines with your risk aware consent, if approached with caution, keeping the risks and safety in mind. However, a rigger must know the rules that they are breaking and why these rules are there to begin with, before they decide to break them. Don't be afraid to ask your rigger at any point.

Having a good basic understanding of human anatomy and knowledge of the common locations where rope should not be placed on the body will make your bondage experience safer and more enjoyable.

## The bondage rigger

Ideally, your rigger should, be good at communicating, possess good knowledge of anatomy, be aware of potential risks and how to act in an emergency. Your rigger should demonstrate good skill and experience, with an openness to learn and expand this skill.

**Here are some questions to consider before allowing someone to tie you:**

### **What bondage rigging experience have they had?**

Years of experience does not always equate to years of safe bondage. It could mean that they have been performing unsafe bondage for many years and they have been very lucky. Their level of experience can of course be a good indicator when taken into account with other factors.

### **How confident do they feel about their rope bondage skills?**

There are some riggers who feel very confident of their rope bondage skills even if they are limited. Even if the rigger boasts years of experience, drops names and talks about how many people they have tied, please check for references; do not just take their word for it. Do not to confuse an attitude of arrogance with one of self-assured confidence.

## Do they have any references?

It is good practice to check references if you are being tied by this person for the first time. Ask around to see if you can obtain any references from people the rigger has tied up before. Always get more than one reference, including (if possible) a reference from someone you consider to be an experienced rope bottom. Ask the opinions of any people who have refused to allow the rigger to tie them to find out why they chose to refuse. Do not allow anyone to tell you that you are doing the wrong thing by seeking this information. It is for your safety.

## Does the rigger know the common locations where rope should not be placed for bondage?

When asking this question, it is important to be familiar with the correct answer so please read on to discover what you should expect your rigger to say.

## Does the rigger have a suitable means to cut the rope in an emergency?

For instance EMT shears or rescue hook etc.

# Anatomy

If nerves are injured you can lose sensation and the ability to move a part of your body and become disabled. Clearly, it is important to ensure that your nerves are not damaged. Unfortunately, this is one of the most common injuries with rope bondage, especially in suspension.

The danger with nerve damage is that it does not always produce immediately noticeable symptoms. By the time you notice a problem the damage is done. In contrast, with loss of circulation, you will get symptoms long before there is any danger. This is why it is important to communicate to your rigger when something does not feel right; if they act immediately it can reduce or eliminate the damage. Nerve damage can build up over time with repeated episodes of unsafe bondage.

## Wrists

In a 'box tie' (Fig 1) the wrists should always face each other to protect the vulnerable area on the inside of the wrist. If the wrists are facing each other the rope will be tied around the outside of the wrists to protect the vulnerable area inside the wrist.

Rope should not be tied with a knot that may tighten around the wrists. You should have space between the rope and your wrists for movement so that you can 'swap' your hands over if necessary for comfort during bondage.



Arms boxed with the vulnerable inner part of the wrists facing each other to protect them. The arms are even and relaxed. The wrist tie has enough space to allow the top and bottom wrists to be swapped if they become uncomfortable.

INCORRECT rope placement (Fig 2). The rope is close to the hand, over the wrist joint and in the groove of the wrist. This is unsafe because the radial and ulnar nerves are vulnerable in this groove. This placement is one of the most common causes of a loss of sensation in the fingers (a handcuff neuropathy).

CORRECT rope placement (Fig 3). The rope is further away from the hand, away from the vulnerable groove in the wrist. The rope is on the arm side of the wrist joint, this placement is far less likely to cause nerve problems.



Rope placed on the hand side of the wrist joint where this can lead to a handcuff neuropathy



Rope placed in the strongest part of the wrist

## Upper Arms

The radial nerve allows you to move your arms when you choose to. If it is damaged you may lose the ability to move your arms.

You can check for your own radial nerve in the upper arm by feeling along the outside of your arm. The radial nerve is in a 'valley' between the deltoid and tricep muscles (most people should be able to feel this valley). The rope should NOT be placed in this 'valley' or in the area immediately below it. In a 'box tie' the 'wraps' should generally lie either above or significantly below it, missing it completely. The 'valley' will be in a different place on the upper arm on different people. Your rigger may need to feel along your arm to locate this valley.



Rope placement will vary depending on the physiology of the person tied. This image is for illustration only.

CORRECT rope placement (Fig 4) with the tie and wraps missing the 'valley'.

## Armpits

There is a cluster of nerves in the armpit (brachial plexus), including the Radial, Median, Ulnar and Axillary nerves.

Wraps should not dig into the armpits.

In some types of chest harness the arms are not tied into the bondage no rope should put pressure into the armpit. There must be no knots, bulges or joins in the rope in the armpits because this will increase pressure and risk of nerve damage.

## Neck

It is dangerous to have pressure on this part of the body as it can cut off circulation to the brain and you may lose consciousness.



Load bearing rope pulling into the sides of the neck. This can restrict blood in numerous vessels and potentially injure the neck.



Rope placed to avoid putting pressure on the side of the neck and with firm (not excessive tension)

Rope placement will vary depending on the physiology of the person tied. This image is for illustration only.

## Recommendation

If you are a model, working with a photographer for a bondage shoot, it can be a good idea to ensure that a professional rigger is present by either hiring one yourself or asking the photographer to do so. A professional rigger should ensure that rope bondage is safe, secure and beautiful to the model and photographer's requirements, allowing the photographer to concentrate on producing the desired images.

## Improving Your Bondage Experience

Remember that during play safety comes before D/s protocol.

Remember that during a photo shoot safety comes before doing your job as a model.

## Communication

It is important to inform your rigger of health problems before rope bondage;

- Internal health problems you may have, including breathing, heart, circulation and nerve damage problems.
- Mobility problems.
- Mental or emotional problems that are significant to your rope experience.

It is important to communicate during bondage;

- How the bondage feels. Sometimes even a small adjustment can radically change how the bondage feels and make the tie safer.
- Any feeling of tingly fingers whilst in bondage which will give your rigger time to react to the problem. The sooner you make them aware of any problems the better the outcome will be.

It is helpful to give feedback afterwards.

## **Stress**

Most rope bondage will cause stress on the body. This is particularly true of most partial or suspensions and some floor bondage. It is helpful to make sure that you are as fit and healthy as possible to help you to withstand this physical stress. A physically fit person will be able to withstand bondage for longer than an unfit person. They will recover from any bruising rapidly and will find that their breathing is not as badly restricted.

Bondage can be emotionally stressful so it is important to ensure that you are mentally prepared for bondage and in the right state of mind to be placed in bondage. Most people find it helpful to be calm and relaxed but alert and present in the moment for bondage to take place.

## **Stretching**

Increased flexibility cannot be achieved instantly but must be worked on consistently and regularly to be maintained and enhanced. You should move around and stretch gently before bondage to warm your muscles. If you know what position you will be bound into, you can concentrate on the muscles that will be put under strain in the position.

Stretching while in bondage and flexing your muscles will help pump the blood around your body. Stretching will prevent tingling and help prevent muscle ache. If your fingers begin to feel tingly tell your rigger. Clenching and unclenching your fist can help with tingly fingers.

## **Temperature**

If you feel cold you will not be able to withstand bondage for as long as you would if you were warm because the fluid in your joints will be thicker and your muscles will be colder and less flexible.

Try to ensure the room is warm enough, particularly if you will be naked.

If you are being tied up outdoors or in a cold space, wear something warm between ties and drink plenty of warm fluids. It is best to avoid extreme temperatures.

## **Food**

Do not skip any meals before bondage. Have snacks and a sugary drink to hand for between ties or after bondage. Being in bondage appears static but holding poise in bondage actually uses a lot of energy and can be quite demanding on your body. Make sure you drink plenty of water.

# Coming Undone

When you are being untied, it can be tempting to slouch. This is a natural reaction to the end of a rope bondage experience.

Fig. 6 Shows INCORRECT movement. The rope bottom in this picture has dropped her hands in anticipation of being untied. This causes the rope to tighten around her wrists causing her hands to scissor together which may lead to nerve damage and circulation problems.

Fig. 7 Shows CORRECT holding position. The rope bottom in this picture has kept her wrists and arms in line in anticipation of being untied. This reduces the risk of damage to the arms and hands.



Wrists dropped (scissoring) thereby increasing the pressure on the wrists and by pulling the tie down increasing the pressure on the arms. The wrists are also turned out meaning that pressure is on the vulnerable inner part of the wrist.



Arms boxed with the vulnerable inner part of the wrists facing each other to protect them. The arms are even and relaxed. The wrist tie has enough space to allow the top and bottom wrists to be swapped if they become uncomfortable.

# Bad hand positions

Below are some examples of hand positioning likely to lead to problems. Remember that the inside of the wrist and the side of the wrist toward the hand side of the wrist joint are most vulnerable to pressure induced injury.

This can be avoided by crossing your wrists past each other so the rope lies on the arm side of the wrist joint. Keep your wrists facing each other to protect the vulnerable areas. The wrist tie should have enough room to allow the wrists to be moved and top and bottom arms to be swapped to alleviate discomfort.



Wrists turned over top to bottom exposing the inner part of the wrist to maximum pressure from the rope.



Wrists turned putting pressure on the vulnerable inner part of the wrist.



Wrists turned, elbows pushed out. The rope is on the most vulnerable parts of the wrist, the inner side of the wrist and on the outer of the wrist on the hand side of the wrist joint.

All images in this guide are provided for illustration purposes only. Some images have rope placements exaggerated in order to illustrate a point more clearly. They are not intended as a how-to guide for tying. You should not attempt to emulate the images in this guide.

Rope placement will vary depending on the physiology of the person tied.

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