

SAINTS GLOBAL

# ACTIVITY PLAN

## ROPES & KNOTS

### INTELLECTUAL CORE

Version 2026.1



Companion to the BRC: a series of one-hour activity sessions for use on weekly activity night or at home. Each session declares which requirements it contributes to.

#### THE CULMINATING EVENT

### The seven-knot stations

In Session 3, the room is set up as seven stations — square knot, sheet bend, two half hitches, clove hitch, taut-line hitch, bowline, and timber hitch. Each saint rotates through every station and ties the knot on a real load (a tent line, an anchor post, a log) in front of a leader who checks tension, dress, and security. The drill is where the act-step knots are earned; a clean pass at each station counts.

INDOOR OR COVERED OUTDOOR SPACE — SEVEN STATIONS SET UP WITH REAL ANCHOR POINTS, LINES, AND A LOG

## SESSION 1 · INTELLECTUAL CORE

⌚ 60 min target

# Rope, knot, and the right tool

*Pick the right rope and the right knot before you tie anything that matters.*

## 🎯 WALK AWAY WITH

- Can name the differences between natural and synthetic rope and when each is right
- Can explain why five knots tied well beats twenty tied badly
- Has handled both kinds of rope and felt how they stretch, grip, and load
- Has watched a wrong-knot failure and named what would have prevented it

## 📦 BRING / SET UP

- A 6-foot length of natural-fiber rope (manila or sisal) per pair
- A 6-foot length of synthetic rope (nylon or polypropylene) per pair
- A fish scale or luggage scale, plus a five-pound weight
- A short length of cheap cordage for the failure demo (so it can be cut or burned)
- A printed list of the five knots saints will learn in S3 (square, sheet bend, two half hitches, clove, taut-line, bowline, timber hitch — call out the count: seven)
- Whiteboard or flip chart and a marker

## 🕒 THE HOUR

### BLOCK 1 · DISCUSSION Opener — A knot that let go

⌚ 5 min

Ask each saint to name one time a rope or knot let go on him — a swing, a tent line, a tarp in the wind, a load on a trailer. Keep it under thirty seconds each. Write the failures on the board; the rest of this session is about why each happened and how the right rope and the right knot would have changed the outcome.

### BLOCK 2 · SKILL PRACTICE Feel the rope — natural and synthetic

⌚ 18 min

1. Hand each pair one natural-fiber and one synthetic rope. Each saint takes both ropes in his hands for thirty seconds — bend them, pull them, twist them.
2. Ask each pair to name three differences they felt: stiffness, weight, grip on the hand, how much each stretched.
3. Loop each rope around a sturdy anchor point. Hang the five-pound weight from each in turn and watch how much each stretches under load.
4. Walk the right-job-for-each list: natural rope grips and ties firm but rots wet; synthetic holds load wet but is slick and stretches more.
5. Each youth should be able to say which rope he would pick for a clothesline that lives outdoors, and which for a tent line that needs to bite a stake.

REQ 1A

## SESSION 1 · ROPE, KNOT, AND THE RIGHT TOOL (PAGE 2 OF 2)

## THE HOUR — CONTINUED

BLOCK 3 · SKILL PRACTICE **Three tasks, three wrong knots**

⌚ 22 min

1. Set up three real tasks on a table: joining two ropes that need to bear weight; securing a tarp corner that needs to be untied later; making a fixed loop a saint can step into.
2. Tie each task with the obviously wrong knot first — a granny knot for the join, a slipknot for the tarp, an overhand loop for the step-in. Have each saint pull on each one.
3. Cut or release each failed knot. Name what went wrong: granny rolls into a slipknot under load; slipknot jams; overhand loop weakens the rope by half.
4. Tell saints which knot fixes each task — they will tie those in S3. The point now is that the right knot does work the wrong knot cannot.
5. Close the demo with the printed list of seven knots they will earn in S3. Read each one aloud and pair it to a job they have already seen on the table.

## REQ 1B

BLOCK 4 · DISCUSSION **Five knots well**

⌚ 10 min

1. Ask each saint: which knot from the list would he use first if he had to secure something tonight and could only tie one?
2. Take three answers around the room. Push each saint to name the task he would solve with it, not just the knot.
3. Confirm the assignment for S2 and S3: every saint comes back ready to practice ties. He does not need to know any of these yet — he needs to be ready to learn them.

BLOCK 5 · REFLECTION **Close — One knot to learn first**

⌚ 5 min

1. Each saint says which knot on the list he wants to be able to tie without looking by the end of S3, and why.
2. Write his pick on the board next to his name.

## AT THE CLOSE · DEBRIEF

1. Which of the two ropes you held felt like the one you would trust on a real load, and why?
2. Which wrong-knot failure tonight surprised you the most?
3. Which knot from the list of seven did you pick as the one to nail first, and what task are you picturing for it?

☑ Initial 1a and 1b on each saint's BRC after this session — both Discover requirements complete in-session.

## SESSION 2 · INTELLECTUAL CORE

⌚ 60 min target

# Match the knot to the task; respect the rope's limits

*Pair each knot to its job, and name the safety rules before the rope is under load.*

## 🎯 WALK AWAY WITH

- Can match every required knot to a real task and say why it fits
- Can name the three rope-safety rules that catch most failures: load limits, sharp edges, and tripping hazards
- Has walked the work area and called out two real hazards he sees
- Knows what to bring to the seven-knot stations in Session 3

## 📦 BRING / SET UP

- A matching worksheet: seven knots in one column, eight tasks in the other (one task is a decoy — none of these knots fits it well)
- A printed rope-safety card (load limits, sharp edges, tripping hazards) per saint
- Seven short lengths of practice cord (one labeled per knot) laid out on a side table
- A printed photo or a real piece of rope showing rope damage: a frayed strand, a melted synthetic spot, a section that has run over a sharp edge
- Tape and string to mark a fake hazard zone on the floor for the safety walk

## 🕒 THE HOUR

### BLOCK 1 · DISCUSSION Opener — Knot on his mind

⌚ 5 min

Each saint says the name of his pick-first knot from last week and one task he plans to try it on. The point of the round is to check that the names are sticking — if a saint can't say the knot's name aloud, write it next to his pick on the board. Keep it short: thirty seconds each, no demonstrations yet.

### BLOCK 2 · SKILL PRACTICE Match each knot to its task

⌚ 18 min

1. Pass the worksheet to each saint. Eight tasks on the right; seven knots on the left; one task does not match any knot well.
2. Each saint matches the seven knots to seven tasks on his own. Five minutes silent work, no peeking at neighbors.
3. Pair up. Each pair compares answers and argues every disagreement until they reach one shared answer per row.
4. Walk the room and read out the right answers task by task. Pause on the decoy task and ask which knot anyone tried to force on it — name what would slip, jam, or fail.
5. Each youth should be able to explain his choice for at least three rows when asked, not just point at the worksheet.

REQ 2A

## SESSION 2 · MATCH THE KNOT TO THE TASK; RESPECT THE ROPE'S LIMITS (PAGE 2 OF 2)

## THE HOUR — CONTINUED

BLOCK 3 · DISCUSSION **Three rules that catch the failures**

⌚ 15 min

1. Hand out the rope-safety card. Read the three rules aloud: every rope has a load limit; no rope survives a sharp edge for long; a rope on the floor is a tripping hazard.
2. Hold up the damaged rope or the photo. Name what each kind of damage tells the saint: fraying means abrasion or shock; a melted spot means heat or fast movement under load; a flattened section means the rope ran over an edge.
3. Ask each saint: when speed pressure builds — a tent going up in the rain, a load being secured before a trip — which of these three rules is the first to get ignored?
4. Tell them honestly: most rope failures trace back to one ignored rule, not bad knot-tying.
5. Each youth should be able to name the three rules without the card by the end of the block.

REQ 2B

BLOCK 4 · ROLEPLAY **Walk the work area**

⌚ 17 min

1. Walk the room — or step outside to a real work area like the church yard or a campsite — with the saints. Tell them they are doing a hazard check before a rope job.
2. Each saint names one real hazard he sees: a sharp edge a line would cross, a place a rope on the floor would trip someone, a structure that cannot take the load a saint might tie to it.
3. After every saint has called one out, ask which hazard is most likely to be overlooked on a busy work day. Take three answers.
4. Tell each saint to plan, before S3 next week, the work area he would use at home — where the anchor points are, where lines would cross, where a knot could be tied without rope on a walking path.
5. Each youth should be able to point at two hazards in the actual room before he leaves.

REQ 2B

BLOCK 5 · REFLECTION **Close — Ready for the stations**

⌚ 5 min

1. Confirm the date, time, and place for the seven-knot stations in S3.
2. Tell each saint to bring a 6-foot length of practice cord he can leave at the stations, plus the matching worksheet from tonight.
3. Ask each saint to name the knot he is most worried about being asked to tie next week. That is the one his leader will watch him on first.

## AT THE CLOSE · DEBRIEF

1. Which row on the matching worksheet did you and your partner argue about the longest, and which of you was right?
2. Which of the three safety rules do you ignore most often on your own — load limits, sharp edges, or tripping hazards?
3. Which hazard in the room or yard tonight would you not have noticed a month ago?

☒ Initial 2a and 2b on each saint's BRC after this session — both Plan requirements complete in-session.

## SESSION 3 · INTELLECTUAL CORE

⌚ 60 min target

# Drill every knot and tie one secure load

*Tie every required knot under a leader's eye, on a real load.*

## 🎯 WALK AWAY WITH

- Has tied a square knot and a sheet bend on real loads and explained why each one was chosen
- Has secured a real object with two half hitches and a clove hitch under proper tension
- Has used a taut-line hitch on a tent or fly line and adjusted it as conditions changed
- Has tied a bowline as a fixed loop and a timber hitch on a log
- Has cleared every station with a clean pass — or knows which knot he is going to drill at home before S4

## 📦 BRING / SET UP

- Seven station setups, each with: a printed station card, the right kind of cord or rope, and a real load to tie to (paired ropes for joining; two anchor posts; a tent or fly; a fence post and a 4-foot log)
- A leader (or older saint with badge experience) assigned to each station to watch every tie
- A score card per saint: seven rows, one per knot, with a column for clean / drill-again
- A timer or phone with a station-rotation chime
- Spray bottle or hose on the taut-line station (to simulate weather change on the fly)

## 🕒 THE HOUR

**BLOCK 1 · DISCUSSION Opener — Station rules**

⌚ 5 min

Walk the room and point out the seven stations. Tell saints how the rotation works: six minutes a station, then the chime, no exceptions. At each station they tie the knot on the real load, the leader watches, and the leader marks the score card clean or drill-again. A drill-again is not a failure — it is the knot they will work on at home before S4.

**BLOCK 2 · SKILL PRACTICE Tie the join knots first**

⌚ 10 min

1. Each saint joins two ropes with a square knot for a task that needs a tied-and-untied bundle, then names why a square fits there.
2. Each saint joins two ropes of different thickness with a sheet bend, then explains why the square would slip on those ropes.
3. Leader watches for the common errors: square rolling into a slipknot when tied wrong; sheet bend tied with the working end on the wrong side.
4. Leader marks the card clean only if both knots hold under a light pull-test before the rotation starts.
5. Each youth should be able to say which of the two he would use on two ropes of different thickness — the sheet bend — and why.

REQ 3A

## SESSION 3 · DRILL EVERY KNOT AND TIE ONE SECURE LOAD (PAGE 2 OF 3)

## THE HOUR — CONTINUED

## BLOCK 3 · PHYSICAL The seven-knot stations rotation

⌚ 32 min

1. Saints rotate through five stations on the chime — eight minutes a station, six on the last. Each saint ties the knot on the real load while the leader watches, then marks the card.
2. Station 1 (two half hitches + clove): secure a real object to one post with two half hitches under proper tension; tie a clove on the next post and explain when it is the right pick to start a lashing.
3. Station 2 (taut-line on a fly): tie a taut-line hitch on the tent or fly line; the station leader sprays the fly or has a partner pull a corner to simulate weather; saint slides the knot to retension, then loosens it to show the adjust-down move.
4. Station 3 (bowline): tie a bowline as a fixed loop around a post or fence rail without prompts; load the loop with a light pull to confirm it holds and stays untied when slack returns.
5. Station 4 (timber hitch): secure the 4-foot log so it can be dragged or hoisted, working end wrapped under itself; take one short drag-pull to feel the hitch tighten under load.
6. Station 5 (mixed re-tie): each saint re-ties the knot the leader picks from his card — the one that needed the most attention at his previous stations.
7. Each youth should clear at least three stations clean before the chime ends the rotation. Any unclear knot stays on the card as a drill-again.

## BY TIER

## ENTRY

If you forget a knot at a station, ask the station leader to walk you through it once before you tie. The point of the rotation is to learn under a leader's eye, not to bluff through.

## ESTABLISHED

Tie each knot once with your eyes on the rope, then once with the rope held away from your body or behind your back. The point is to make the muscle memory work without your eyes on the knot.

## MENTOR

After you clear your own card, run the station the leader assigns you for the rest of the rotation. Watch for the common error at that knot and call it out before the saint loads the line.

REQ 3B

REQ 3C

REQ 3D

REQ 3E

## BLOCK 4 · ROLEPLAY Pair check — call the dress

⌚ 8 min

1. Pair up. Each saint picks the knot from his own card that was hardest at the rotation and ties it for his partner.
2. The partner plays the leader: watches the knot dress, pulls on it under load, and either calls it clean or names the specific error he sees (knot rolled, working end on the wrong side, not seated, not enough turns).
3. Trade. Then pair up with a different saint and run the drill again with the next-hardest knot on each card.
4. Each youth should be able to name one knot he is more confident on now than he was at the chime, and one he is going to drill at home this week.

## SESSION 3 · DRILL EVERY KNOT AND TIE ONE SECURE LOAD (PAGE 3 OF 3)

## THE HOUR — CONTINUED

BLOCK 5 · REFLECTION **Close — Read the score cards**

⌚ 5 min

1. Each saint looks at his card and names every drill-again knot aloud.
2. Leader confirms the home assignment: each saint drills each drill-again knot ten times before S4, on a real anchor point at home.
3. Lock S4 next week — bring the score card and any knot still marked drill-again, along with one length of rope long enough for a lashing demo.

## AT THE CLOSE · DEBRIEF

1. Which station did you walk into thinking you had cold, and which one actually was?
2. Which knot felt hardest under a leader's eye — and which felt easiest because you'd thought about the task beforehand?
3. Which drill-again on your card are you most likely to skip at home, and how will you make sure you don't?

📝 *Initial 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, and 3e on each saint's BRC for every station passed clean. Note any drill-again knot next to the requirement; do not initial until the saint passes it at the start of S4.*



## SESSION 4 · INTELLECTUAL CORE

⌚ 60 min target

## Build a real structure with lashings; sign off

*Build a structure that holds because the lashings are tied right.*

### 🎯 WALK AWAY WITH

- Has cleared any S3 drill-again knot at the start of the session
- Has built a real structure — a tripod, a camp table, or a drying rack — using square or diagonal lashings with proper frapping
- Has named which knot or lashing he relied on most across four weeks and why
- Has a signed BRC and a sentence on the wrong knot that could have caused him real injury

### 📦 BRING / SET UP

- Three 6-foot wooden poles or hardwood dowels per build group, plus extras
- A 20-foot length of lashing cord (sisal or natural-fiber preferred for grip) per build group
- Each saint's S3 score card and his BRC
- A printed lashing reference (square, diagonal, shear) per build group
- A weight or bucket to load-test each structure at the end (a five-pound weight or a half-full bucket of sand)

## 🔧 THE HOUR

### BLOCK 1 · SKILL PRACTICE **Clear the drill-agains**

⌚ 8 min

1. Each saint pulls out his S3 score card. If every row is clean, he moves to B3 setup and helps lay out poles and cord.
2. Any saint with a drill-again finds the right station setup from S3 still in the room and ties that knot in front of a leader. One pass, clean, done.
3. Leader marks the score card and initials the BRC for that act-step requirement once the pass is clean.
4. By the end of the block, every saint should be cleared on 3a–3e.

### BLOCK 2 · DISCUSSION **Opener — Which one held**

⌚ 5 min

Quick round. Each saint names the knot from S3 that has held something he tied at home or at camp in the last week. Even one is enough. Note the patterns on the board: which knot is doing the most quiet work across the room? That answer is usually a saint's favorite for life. Keep it short — the build needs the time.

## SESSION 4 · BUILD A REAL STRUCTURE WITH LASHINGS; SIGN OFF (PAGE 2 OF 3)

## THE HOUR — CONTINUED

BLOCK 3 · CREATIVE **Build the tripod**

⌚ 28 min

1. Each build group picks a structure: a tripod (shear-lashing the three poles at the top), a small camp table (square-lashing crossbars to two upright legs), or a drying rack (diagonal-lashing a crossbar onto an X-frame).
2. Pass out the lashing reference. Walk the right lashing for the chosen structure: shear for tripod, square for camp table, diagonal for the diagonal brace.
3. Each group lays out the poles on the ground, ties the lashing with a clove hitch start and a clove hitch finish, and wraps three or more frapping turns to tighten the lashing.
4. Stand the structure up. Each group load-tests it with the weight or the bucket — does it hold without wobble, slip, or pop?
5. If the lashing fails or sags, name the cause: too few frapping turns, working turns not pulled tight, or wrong lashing for the joint. Re-tie the bad joint, re-load, confirm the hold.
6. Each youth should be able to point at his group's lashings and say which type each one is.

REQ 3F

BLOCK 4 · REFLECTION **What held, what would have failed**

⌚ 12 min

1. Sit the saints down near the standing structure. Ask each one which knot or lashing across the four sessions he relied on most. Take every answer.
2. Then ask each saint to describe one situation — real or close to real — where using the wrong knot or a bad lashing could cause someone real injury. Keep it concrete: a name, a place, a load.
3. Listen and affirm. Do not correct the reflection — the point is the saint is putting his own work into words.
4. Leader picks two or three patterns from the answers and names them aloud: this knot did the most work; this kind of failure was the closest call.
5. Each saint writes his answer to the wrong-knot-failure question in one sentence on the back of his score card before the close.

REQ 4A

REQ 4B

BLOCK 5 · REFLECTION **Close — BRC sign-off**

⌚ 7 min

1. Walk the BRC row by row with each saint. Initial 3f on the strength of the structure he just helped build and load-test, and 4a and 4b on the reflection answers in front of you.
2. If any saint still has a drill-again open from S3 that he could not clear in B1, write the date he will tie it for a leader. Do not initial that row yet.
3. Hand the saint his signed BRC. Tell him the badge is earned the day the last row is initialed — for most saints, that is tonight.

## SESSION 4 · BUILD A REAL STRUCTURE WITH LASHINGS; SIGN OFF (PAGE 3 OF 3)

## 🗨 AT THE CLOSE · DEBRIEF

1. Which knot or lashing across the four weeks held something real for you — and what was it holding?
2. Which moment in the build tonight told you whether your frapping turns were tight enough?
3. What is the wrong-knot situation you wrote on the back of your card, and who is depending on you getting it right?

📝 *Initial 3f, 4a, and 4b on each saint's BRC tonight. Any drill-again knot still open from S3 gets a written date for the make-up tie — the BRC is fully signed when that row is initialed.*

## HANDOUT 1 OF 2

## FROM SESSION 3 — THE SEVEN-KNOT STATIONS ROTATION

# Seven knots and what each one is for

Print one per saint. Use it at the stations as a memory aid, not as a substitute for tying.

## ROPES &amp; KNOTS · FIELD CARD

## Pick the knot the job asks for.

Seven knots cover almost every rope task at camp or in a work area.

## THE SEVEN KNOTS

knot · what it does · what to watch for

**1 Square knot**

For: tying off a bundle or a sash you expect to untie cleanly.

Watch: rolls into a slipknot when tied wrong.

**2 Sheet bend**

For: joining two ropes — works even when the ropes are different thicknesses.

Watch: working end must end on the same side.

**3 Two half hitches**

For: securing a line to a post or ring when the load pulls one direction.

Watch: both hitches must point the same way.

**4 Clove hitch**

For: starting a lashing or holding a line in place while you tie the rest.

Watch: slides if it isn't seated tight on the pole.

**5 Taut-line hitch**

For: tent and fly lines you need to tighten and loosen as conditions change.

Watch: must slide on the standing part, not jam.

**6 Bowline**

For: making a fixed loop that won't slip — to anchor a line or step into.

Watch: working end must finish inside the loop.

**7 Timber hitch**

For: dragging or hoisting a log, pole, or any round object. Tightens under load and unties cleanly when the pull is gone.

Watch: needs at least three turns wrapped around itself, with the load pulling on the standing part.

Pick the knot the task asks for and pull-test it before you trust the load.

Print this handout for in-person reference during session 3 — the seven-knot stations rotation.

## HANDOUT 2 OF 2

## FROM SESSION 4 — BUILD THE TRIPOD

# Square, diagonal, and shear lashings

Print one per build group. Pick the lashing that matches the joint; the frapping turns are what tighten it.

## ROPES &amp; KNOTS · LASHINGS CARD

## Pick the lashing that fits the joint.

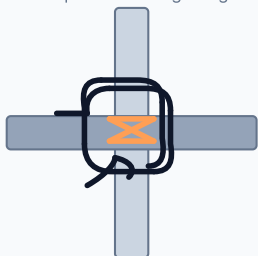
Frapping turns are what tighten the lashing — without them it slips.

### THREE LASHINGS

start · wrap · frap · finish

#### 1 Square lashing

For two poles crossing at right angles — table legs, drying-rack crossbars.



**START** Clove hitch on the vertical pole, just below the crossing.

**WRAP** Three turns under and over both poles.

**FRAP** Three turns between the poles, pulled tight.

**FINISH** Clove hitch on the opposite (horizontal) pole.

Watch: without tight frapping turns the joint racks under load.

#### 2 Diagonal lashing

For two poles crossing at an angle and pulling apart — diagonal braces, X-frames.



**START** Timber hitch around both poles where they cross, pulled tight.

**WRAP** Three turns across each diagonal of the X.

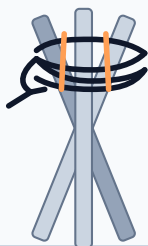
**FRAP** Three turns between the poles — pulls the X together.

**FINISH** Clove hitch on whichever pole the working end lands on.

Watch: use a diagonal when the poles are pulling apart.

#### 3 Shear lashing (tripod)

For two or three poles joined at one end and splayed at the other — tripods, shears.



**START** Clove hitch on the outside pole, near the top of the lashing.

**WRAP** Six to eight loose turns around all the poles.

**FRAP** Two or three turns between each pair of poles.

**FINISH** Clove hitch on the opposite outside pole; tuck the tail.

Watch: too-tight wraps will not let the legs splay open.

**Tighten the frapping turns until the lashing stops moving under load.**

Print this handout for in-person reference during session 4 — build the tripod.