

Finishing Hemp Rope for Bondage

© 2005 - Angelene Black

Course Description:

Angelene Black (www.dirtyprettything.com) shares her extensive knowledge of finishing hemp rope for bondage. The course is designed to teach the student everything he or she needs to know to finish hemp rope, including tips, tricks and techniques that the presenters have developed after finishing thousands of coils of rope for hundreds of customers in the BDSM community.

The course will guide the student step by step on the best techniques to finish hemp rope, including dyeing methods and how to get the ends perfectly whipped. The class includes a comprehensive handout as well as a resource list for finding the best tools and ingredients for finishing the rope.

Course Pre-Requisites:

You will need a personal desire for perfection and/or a commercial motivation for finishing rope in this manner. If you are looking for a quick and simple way to finish hemp, this class will likely not be of interest to you.

Course Materials:

Types of Rope:

- Romanian
 - o www.ecolution.com
 - o www.hempemporium.com
- Hungarian
- Italian
- Spanish

Tools:

- Commercial Washer / Dryer
- Large Pressure Cooker
- Pure Mink Oil
- Lingerie Bags
- Gas Burner / Stove
- Rags
- Sailmakers Whipping Twine (waxed nylon works best)
- Nail Clippers
- Super Glue

Finishing Process:

- 1) Make porous (wash/dry)
 - a. Using mild detergent (or Synthrapol if you plan to dye the rope), wash rope lengths in washing machine using hot water cycle.
 - i. It's important to use lingerie bags for this as loose coils of rope can wrap around drum in washer and break the unit.
 - b. Dry in Clothes Dryer
 - c. Every time that you are drying the rope, be sure to **dry well** – this may take 1 – 2 dryer cycles but the dryer the rope is, the more liquid it will absorb.
 - d. Rope will be softer and fuzzy after this first process.

1a) Dye Rope (if you plan to dye it must be done before adding any oil products) - details under dyeing rope section-

- 2) Infuse with heat/oil by boiling with pressure cooker
 - a. Lightly oil rope using hands
 - b. Coil up and submerge with water
 - c. Pressure cook for 1 hour at 10psi
 - d. The benefits of pressure cooker:
 - i. Keeps odor at minimum
 - ii. Decreases cooking time
 - iii. Evenly infuses rope with oil
- 3) When cooled, carefully drain cooker – rope will be very stiff
- 4) Dry Rope in dryer - 1-2 coils of rope per lingerie bag (I prefer lingerie bags with larger holes as it will allow for more even drying)
- 5) Burn/Singe with gas stove
- 6) Rub burnt parts off by pulling rope through towel (some people say use canvas, some use leather, but any towel will do fine)
- 7) **REPEAT 2X (3x total)** – this is where time is important – the more times you repeat this process the better the rope will get
- 8) Final Step: hand rub rope with oil – let hang dry overnight – put in dryer for 5-10 minutes to “cure” mink oil into rope.
- 9) Cut to length – **Remember** rope will shrink during the finishing process!
Will shrink more for larger sizes (ie 8mm diameter will shrink more in length than 6mm dia rope)

10) Whip ends per specs.

How to Dye Your Rope:

Great finished rope requires boiling – both as part of the finishing process, as well as occasionally throughout your rope's lifetime for proper maintenance. You may use common warm water dyes (ie. RIT dye), but this color will fade considerably if you plan to boil your rope again.

For the last two years of my business I found that only Fiber Reactive Procion Dyes work effectively, and does not fade after repeated washings/boilings. Yes, this can make things messy, requires adding more ingredients to the process and takes some time to accomplish, but it is the only method I found that will give a vibrant color for a long, long time.

For this process you will need:

- 1) large tub (the large Tupperware storage-type work well)
- 2) Fiber Reactive Procion dye
- 3) Calsolene Oil
- 4) Synthrapol
- 5) Non-Iodized Salt (can be found at any grocery store)
- 6) Soda Ash (a dye fixative)
- 7) Patience, patience, patience!

I used Dharma Trading Company (www.dharmatrading.com) for all my dyeing needs. Their Fiber Reactive Procion Dyes come in over 100 colors, and are available in various quantities to suit your needs. Their website is also a GREAT resource for learning how to properly dye things, using various techniques.

For medium shades of most colors, add 1 tablespoon of dye per 1 lb. of rope (3 gallons of water). Colors marked with * on the color card require double those amounts, and those marked with ** require 4X those amounts. For lighter shades, reduce the amount of dye, and for even deeper shades, increase the dye.

1 lb. DRY ROPE
3 gallons of water
3 cups Non-Iodized Salt
1/3 cup Soda Ash Fixer
2 tsp Calsolene Oil

The amount of Non-Iodized Salt and Soda Ash are a function of the amount of water used. For each lb. of dry rope you will need about 3 gallons of warm water. **The water must cover the rope with enough room for thorough, tangle free stirring; otherwise you get uneven dyeing and streaks.** For each gallon of water use 1 cup of Non-Iodized Salt and 1/6 cup Soda Ash. For the Blacks, use 2X the amount of Non-Iodized Salt.

Detailed Directions for Dyeing your Hemp Rope:

(many thanks to Dharma Trading for contributing to this list)

- 1) Wash rope to remove any dirt and grease, using Synthrapol. Hot water is most effective.
- 2) Dry completely in clothes dryer (rope will be soft and fuzzy which is good because it is most porous at this point)
- 3) Dissolve the Non-Iodized Salt completely in the required amount of lukewarm (about 105) tap water. Add Calsolene Oil (Optional - breaks surface tension for more even, less streaky results).
- 4) **Dissolve the Fiber Reactive Dye completely** by pasting it up with some warm water, then adding about a cup of warm water to make a well dissolved slurry, then add to the tub and stir to mix evenly.
- 5) Add rope and stir constantly (or at least every 3 or 4 minutes) for 20 minutes. This is important in ensuring even dye distribution, and can be difficult to do since hemp rope becomes stiff when wet. To make this easier, I recommend not crowding the rope in the tub (we sometimes use 4 to 5 tubs per dye bath), and invest in a good pair of elbow length gloves (stiff rope is easier to stir if you use your hands – you can separate the coils more easily and ensure a more even dye bath)
- 6) Dissolve Soda Ash in hot water and add slowly over 15 minutes to dye bath, while stirring. This is a dye fixative and is important to use or else the dye will not hold. **Soda Ash must be dissolved completely before adding to dye bath or it will leave spots and streaks on your rope.** Don't pour directly onto the rope coils - move it aside. Stir frequently - 30 min. for light colors, 1 hour for deep colors.
- 7) Remove and rinse out excess dye.
- 8) Wash in hot water using Synthrapol to finish washing out the excess dye (can be done by hand in a utility sink, or by using a washing machine). The subsequent pressure cooking/boiling processes will also remove excess dye, so do not be alarmed if your boil water becomes colored.
- 9) Dry in clothes dryer (in individual lingerie bags so that rope will not be tangled). This will make the rope porous again to prepare it for pressure cooking/boiling.

How to Burn/Singe your Rope:

We recommend using a gas flame burner for this part of the process.

- Run your rope underneath or across the metal grating of your burner.



- Ignite your burner, and pull the rope back and forth quickly across the flame in a twisting motion, allowing the flame to burn off all the “frizzies” but without the core of the rope itself becoming burnt.
- Pull upwards lightly against the underside of the tines above the burner. This will scrape off the burnt parts of the rope and allow you to accurately judge your progress.



- Continue to pull the length of the rope through the burner in this manner in a controlled manner. When you are done, your rope should appear “neater” and less frizzy.
- When you are done, pull your rope through a piece of canvas, cloth or leather to remove the soot.



Whipping the Ends:

- 1) I use a variation on a sailmakers whipping to finish the ends of our rope, which is essentially an upside down sailmakers whipping. The difference is that I finish the whipping by tying the final knot and securing it with superglue on the underside of the whipping, in between the three strands of the rope. I have found that this has the result of making the whipping look neater, gives the whipping less chance of coming undone through play, and preventing sharp edges from causing unintended injury and/or discomfort during the tying process.

- 2) Whipping rope is easy once you understand the concept, but best learned in by watching and doing rather than by following a step by step photo procedure. Even the best illustrated examples are difficult to follow. For this reason, I have brought enough rope and twine for those who wish to practice and follow along to learn the process if they so desire.

Care and Maintenance:

Here is a list of rope care basics.

- 1) Your natural hemp rope is durable and machine washable in cold water.
- 2) Loosely coil your rope, place it in a lingerie bag and drop it in the wash. When finished, you can either air dry it or tumble-dry it.
- 3) After extended use, the surface of your rope may gradually become fluffy or frizzy. To remedy this condition, run the rope over a hot flame such as portable propane stove or the gas stove in your home if you have one. Make sure you pull the rope over the flame very quickly so that you only burn off the "frizzies" and do not burn the core of the rope itself.
- 4) I recommend heavily finishing and condition your rope by hand so that it feels soft against the skin, smells nice and does not easily cause rope burns. After a several washing and burning cycles, your rope may dry out a bit and need to be oiled again. To do so, purchase either pure beeswax or mink oil. Try to get a brand that does not include chemical additives that have a harsh smell and can damage your rope.
- 5) Rub a small amount of oil in your palms and slowly pull the rope through your hands, working the oil in bit by bit.

© 2005 - Angelene Black