

Japan Rope

Tutorial 1 / The Wrist Tie



Here it is, the single biggest secret to Japanese style rope bondage -- no, it's not the beautiful girl (or guy.) It's the loop. Double your rope, creating a loop in the very center. If you're working with a 10m length, as we are here, this will give you a doubled piece of rope approximately 5m (about 15ft) to work with. This "knot" is often called a lark's head - though it really isn't unless you then pass the working end(s) through the bight (the looped part) after it's been passed through a ring, or around a pole. Think of luggage tags, and you get the picture.



Have your subject place their wrists together, and start wrapping with the working end of the rope. The looped end here is in the left hand, and the working end in the right.

Note: it doesn't really matter which end you wrap with, but one advantage of doing it this way is that you can measure out how much of the "bight" end is left over. This helps leave you with a knot with a loop later that is just the right size. This extra bit of careful tying doesn't make a whit of difference with this basic tie, but when you build more complex ones from this ... it will.



After wrapping the working end around the wrists two or three times, catch the final turn with the looped bight.



Next, take the bight underneath the turns above the wrists.



A simple knot completes the process. With hemp, this will hold without problem - with a synthetic rope, you might have to tie a square knot.



Here's our finished project. There are actually many different ways to do this basic tie -- and no absolutely right way to do it.



Tutorial 2 / Simple Breast Tie



Start by doubling a twenty-five or thirty foot length of rope. Wrap around the top of the breasts once.



Catch this in the back with a lark's head knot.



Wrap again around the front, making sure your ropes line up evenly.



Run your lines through the lark's head, evening out the tension.



Another wrap around in the other direction, underneath the breasts.



Bring the end of the rope through to the back again.



Now I'm going to finish this with a kind of over-large bow for illustration purposes, but there are any number of methods to do this.



Even things out a bit and ...



Voila.



Here we are - four strands above, and two below.



On to part two. Start again by doubling your rope, then tie a knot around the center section.



What knot, you might ask. Well, I used a simple overhand knot here - make's it easier to untie later (than a lark's head.) With hemp, this will hold, but you might want to go with a square knot or something else, especially if you're not using hemp.



Pass once around, underneath the breasts ...





After sliding the rope to catch its own starting pair of strands, and bring the working end up.

It's best to go from one side, and then over the opposite shoulder, otherwise you get a kind of suspender straps kind of thing, which isn't what we're going for in this one.

Ignore the two dangling strands here - they're left over from when we shortened up those large loops earlier.



Now, once under the bottom four strands.



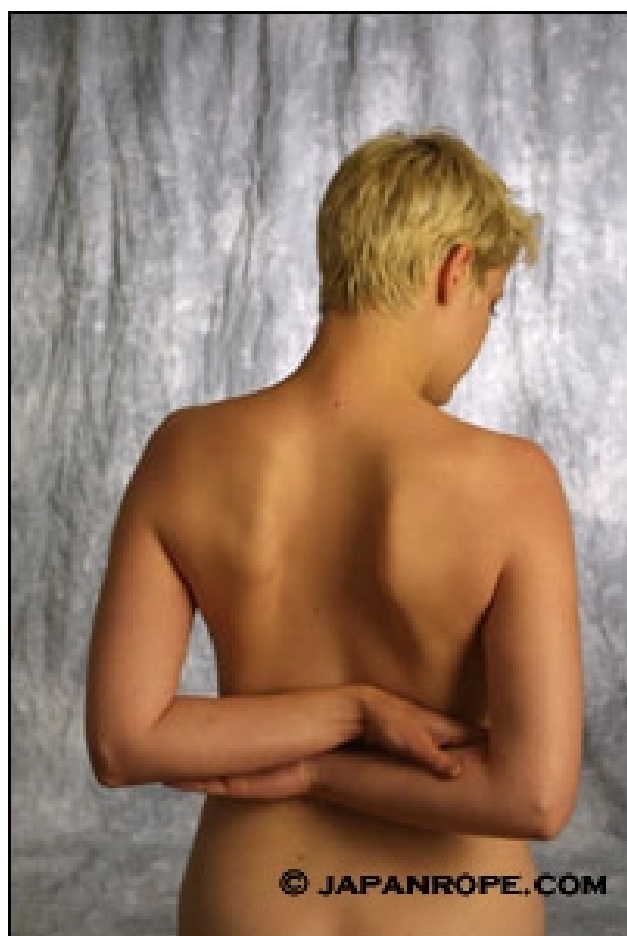
A couple of simple crossings - I know, my hand's in the way. Just hit next.



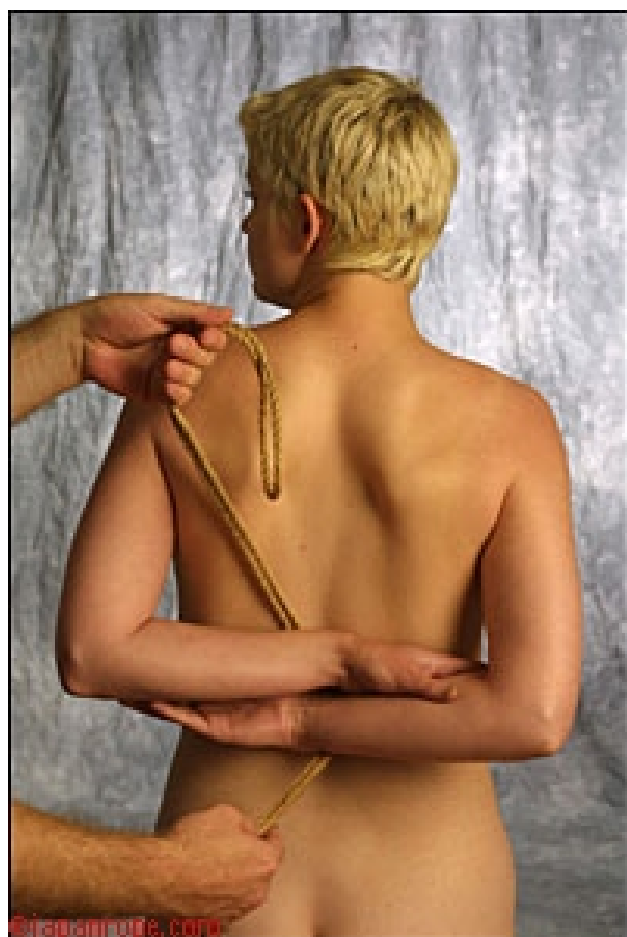
There.



Tutorial 3 / Shinju



Here we start by having our subject place their hands in back.



With the now familiar doubled length of rope, measure enough of the looped end to wrap around the wrists two or three times. The reason we do this with the bight end is so that we don't have to run the entire long end around the wrists -- pretty obvious, but in the heat of play you forget these kinds of things.



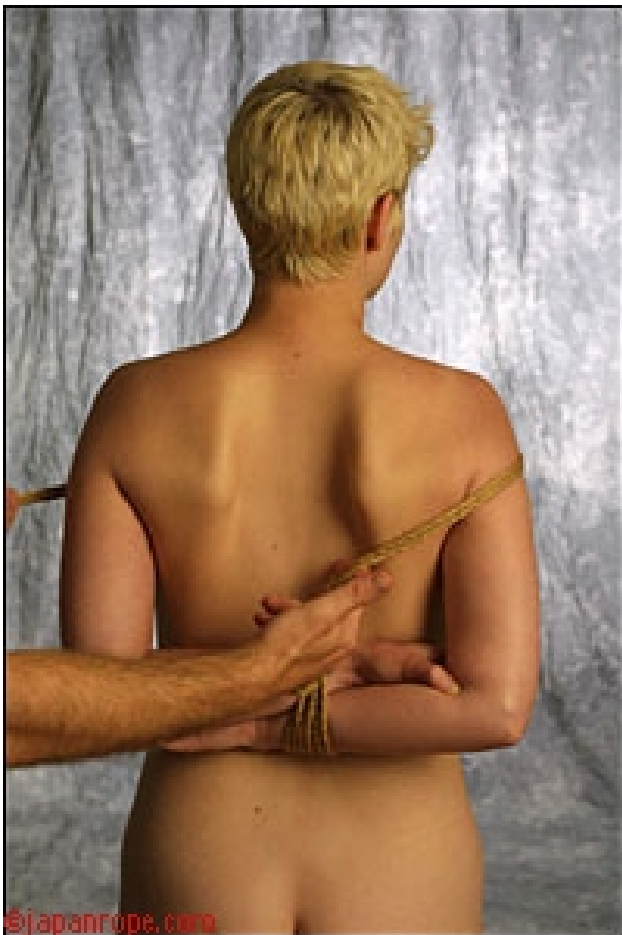
Leave a little extra ...



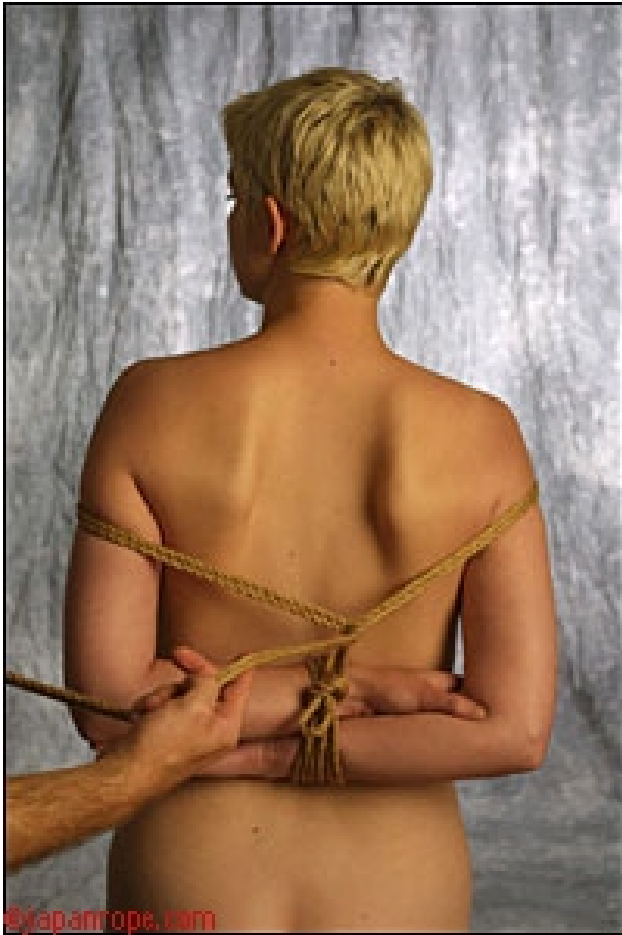
... wrap the looped end behind *all the strands*. This is so that when pulled, the rope won't noose up on the wrists under pressure and cut off circulation in the wrists ...



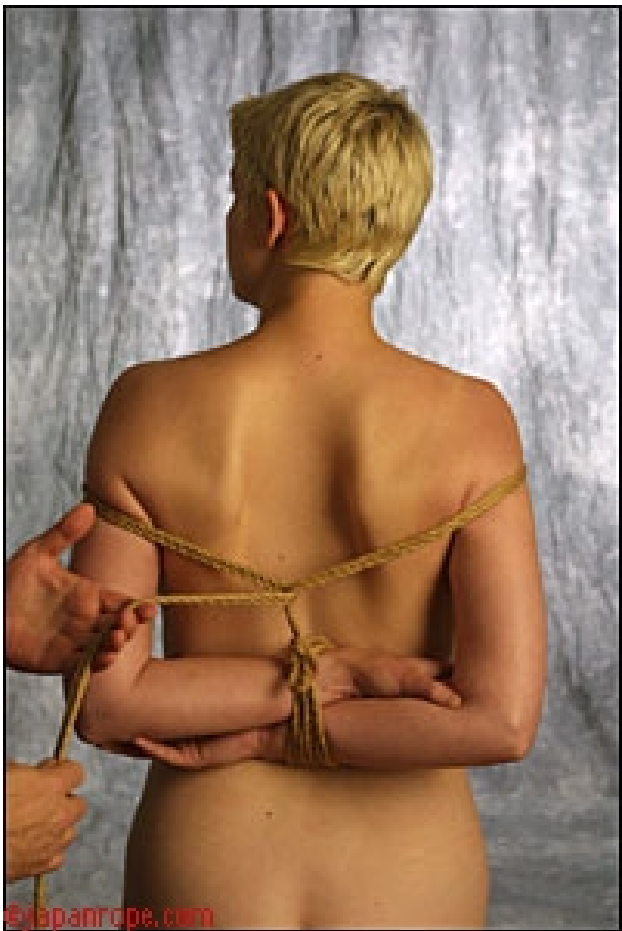
Tie off with a simple square knot, leaving a tad bit of loop to possibly be used later.



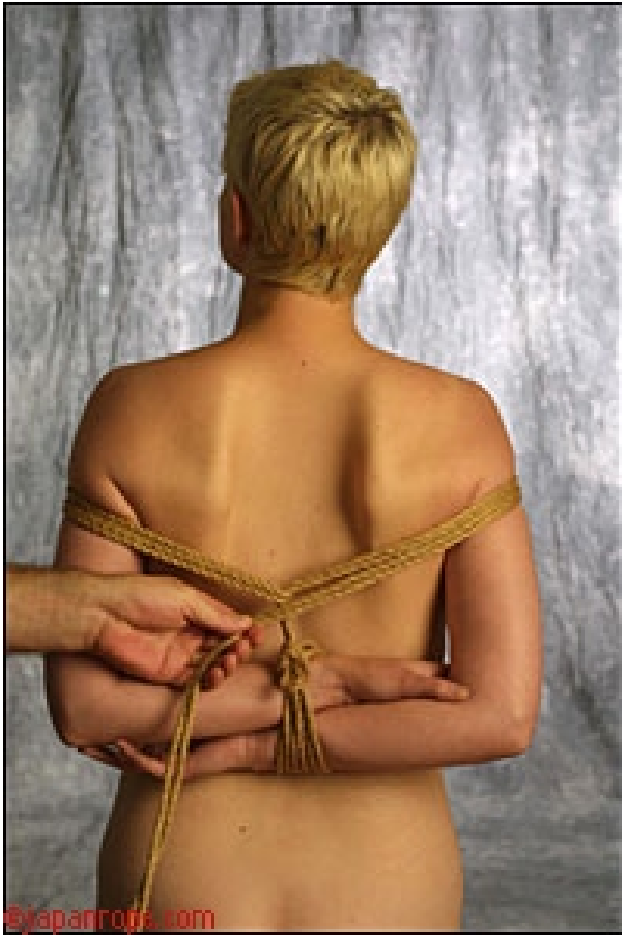
Next, take the loose end around the front, over the breasts. Keep tension on this line with the right hand as well. Why will become apparent in a moment ...



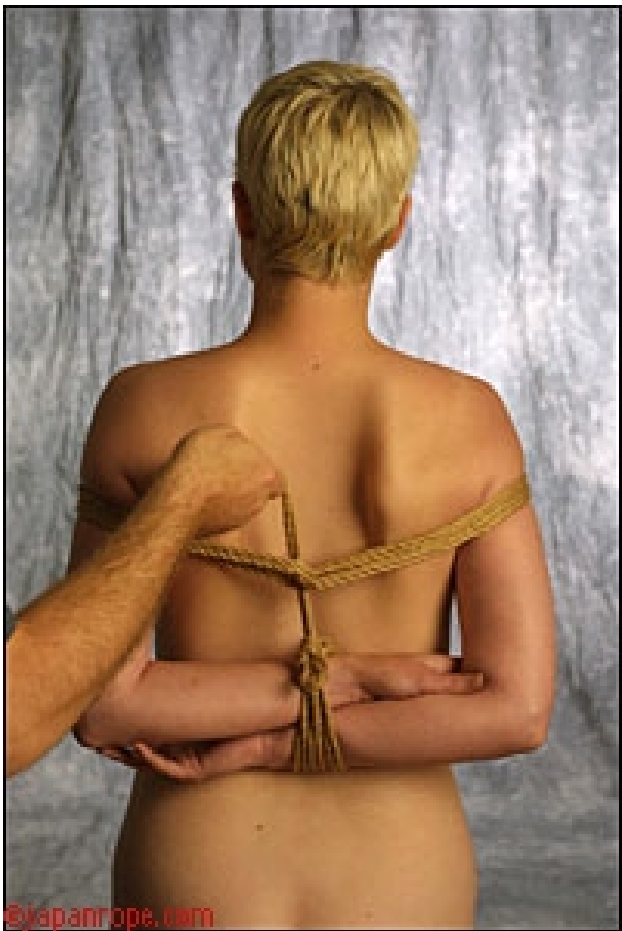
...because the next step is to run your line behind that spot and support the wrists.



Pull up a bit to get things centered.



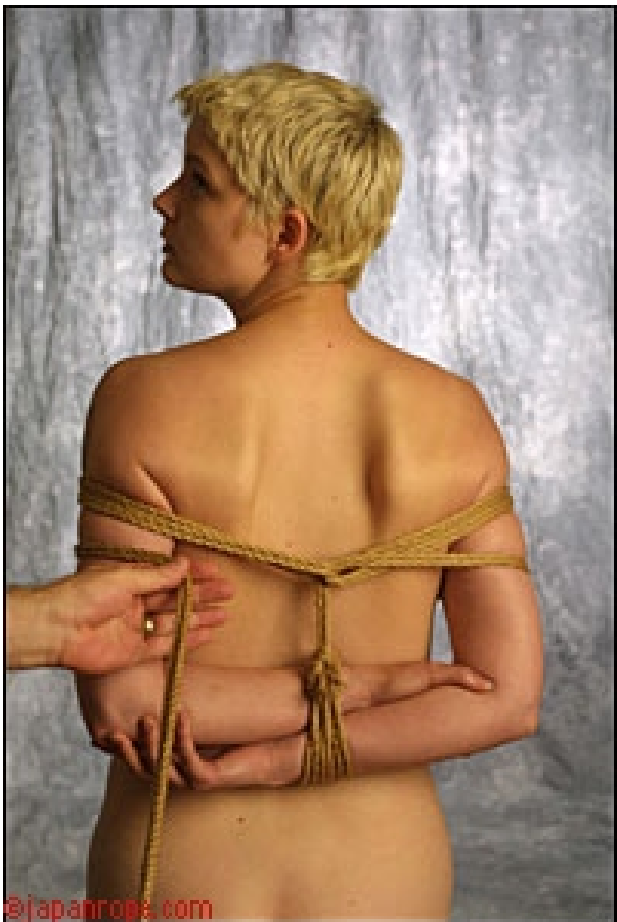
And wrap around the front, on top of the breasts again. Line up your rope strands for that clean look.



Catch the center section going the other way.



Then go once under the breasts. This is how it should look from the front.



... and the back.



Just wrap to balance this out before the next steps ...





And now under one arm and towards the front ...





... and under the bottom strands.

Another good way to do this is to bring the top strands down a bit on the arms and cinch both top and bottom together, but we're just going to do the bottom ones in this tutorial.



There. Cinch it up a bit ...



And bring it to the rear.



Do the same with the other side.



One last knot, and you're done.



There we go.



Tutorial 3a / Shinju Variation



There are a lot of different variations on the basic Shinju tie. It's one reason why it is easily the most popular. You don't have to start right at this point, or with exactly this pattern to make this add-on work. Just follow the basic principles, and make a few things up as you go.



Here we are at the back of the finished Shinju covered in Tutorial 3. We want to add some rope. Take a doubled length of rope and knot it to this portion of your workings.



I'm going to tie my bight off to this section, and rather than just securing it to the horizontal ropes. I'm making sure to go also around the verticle part that is holding the wrists up. This will prevent the ropes from loosening unintentionally as the knot might slide a bit with tension if only fixed on one axis. The knot is a simple overhand knot. You could also use a lark's head - I often do here - but by knotting this rather than running your working ends through the bight, it is easier to undo or shift around later.



There. Note that with the original tie, there are four lines above the breasts, and two below. What we're going to do is make this whole thing more secure.



The doubled rope goes around the front, and under the breasts once.



Here it is from the front.



Pass the working end behind a verticle element and then up to the top of the center knot ...



The reason we went up with the last rope becomes clear - as we then create this diagonal from that point to just above the elbow that's both structurally sound and good looking. Then the rope goes under the arms and to the other side.



Around your diagonal, adjusting for position and tension for this new element, and back again the same way, between the arms and the back ...



Again, to even out the tension, pass this rope around the section you just did.



And now we see one of the great reasons for leaving those small loops. Remember how the wrist tie had that small loop? Well, here we put it to use, threading our two loose ends of rope through the loop on the wrist ...



And then up to just above the ropes that cross the upper arms.



Wrap around the body and back down through the loop at the wrists. You'll get a front view in a moment, but from here you'll want to tie off in some fashion -- we're done.



Here's a view from the front. Note that we now have six ropes running above the breasts, four below, and four keeping the elbows in place around the arms in back. Tie off your rope in any fashion you like.



Here's a side view.



And a rear view with a simple bow.

Tutorial 4 / Arm-bind



This tie is pretty easy. Let's start by wrapping the wrists just as we've done before: around a couple times with the bight end of a doubled rope.



Two or three times around ...



...and through the center of the wrists. See how we're using the working end of the rope (in my right hand)? That's so the rope doesn't "slip-knot" around the wrists, cutting off circulation.



Knot this up and we're here. Simple wrist tie, knot on top, with a small loop that might come in handy if you're feeling clever.



I've only repositioned this a bit, nothing has really changed.



Once around the body, above the breasts, with your doubled rope.



Pick up the line here to give it some tension, keeping the line from falling down and your partner from spinning like a top.



Now we go once around that rope in back, about elbow height.



Around the forearms once.



Note how the ropes form a kind of X pattern at this point. This is what we're shooting for.



A close up of how we did the ropes. We want to keep the final product from moving around, shifting, and generally falling apart on us -- so we've under that center tension point, then over the top and under before going to the next step.



Now we go under or over the bottom-right portion of the X.



And now we take it around the breasts again. This time underneath, returning to the back and running the rope under the arms, and then behind our center structure.



Here's what it looks like from the front at this point. A clean, simple look from this view -- the band above the breasts goes around the arms, the band below does not.



Almost done. One of the neat things about this tie is that there are almost no knots. It goes a lot quicker than you might think. Once more around the forearms, lower than the first pair ...



And then up again to the same place that this rope last went around the center spot.



Under and around to balance things out.



Snug up whatever needs adjusting, and finish with a bow as I have, or another solution for whatever is left over is to go straight back down to the wrists. A third idea might be to separate your doubled rope - one end going right, the other left - and wrap the lines going above and below the breasts, bringing them closer together and adding a bit more tension to the whole array.



A last look from the side. Simple in front, complex in back. A good tie, with only two knots: one to start, one to finish it.



Even things out a bit and ...

Tutorial 5 / Tortoise Shell



We start with either two lengths of 25' to 30' rope, or one long 50'+ length. We're illustrating the two rope version for those that don't have a long length in their rope bag.



Here we've found the midpoints of our two ropes and linked them together.



One length goes over each shoulder, with the midpoints like so. An important note at this point: don't bring this tight against the back of the neck. It should hang loose or you won't be able to do adjustments later.



A simple overhand twist of the two lengths produces this form. There are almost no actual knots in this tie.



Another twist below the breasts.



And two more twists as we're going down the body. Keep these three loops open and loose. They're going to be pulled into shape as we go and to keep even placement and spacing we need that slack.



Pull both lengths of rope, all four ends, through the legs. There's a lot of rope to handle in this tie, but you'll be amazed at how quickly you run out.



Run your two lengths of rope under the looped bit at the back of the neck. One length goes around front to the left, one to the right in this fashion.



And now we begin to spread those tortoise shell patterns. Run your ropes under or over and pull gently -- don't pull tight at this point. Take your ropes around the back bringing the right side rope to the left, and the left around to the right ...



...and this time we go under the breasts. Now it's just a matter of going around the back, to the front, over or under the loops, and out back again to repeat once more.

Here's an illustration of a couple more passes.



And here's the back with the top two of the three tortoise shell hexagons done. We're just able in this example to do the top half of the last hexagon before tying off in the back. In the next step we'll bring those lines back ...





And then knot this portion off because we've exhausted our rope. We'll add more rope in the next step.



Double a new length of rope. Take the bight and knot it around a section of the ropes running up through the legs. I've created an oversize bight loop here for illustration purposes. You can knot this in other ways, but we'll show you how this small loop can be useful in the next steps of the tutorial.



Okay, big jump in steps. It's really simple though. We've taken our rope out around the front, looped the bottom half of the hexagon once, come back around to the other side, done the other bottom half of the hexagon, and come to the back again. Our free ends are then going around a portion of the last ropes we've done to fix a point at the bottom, then we've gone up to the back of the neck, run the ropes under that and down through the bight loop we left when we added the rope, pulled tight -- not too tight -- and wrapped our remaining rope around to neaten things up.



Here's the view from the front.



And a side view. Have fun with this one.