

GETTING IT WIRED

WORKING WITH WIRE—both hard and braided—is challenging for most anglers. But here are two simple connections that will keep you hooked up when targeting toothy creatures from bluefish and sharks to mackerel and wahoo. Both can be used not only to attach hooks and lures, but also swivels and other terminal hardware.

BRAIDED WIRE IS POPULAR in a number of offshore fishing applications because it's supple and easier to work with than hard wire.

This is the connection of choice when making the link to hooks or lures on light tackle, particularly for small, toothy species.

STEP 1: Insert the braided wire

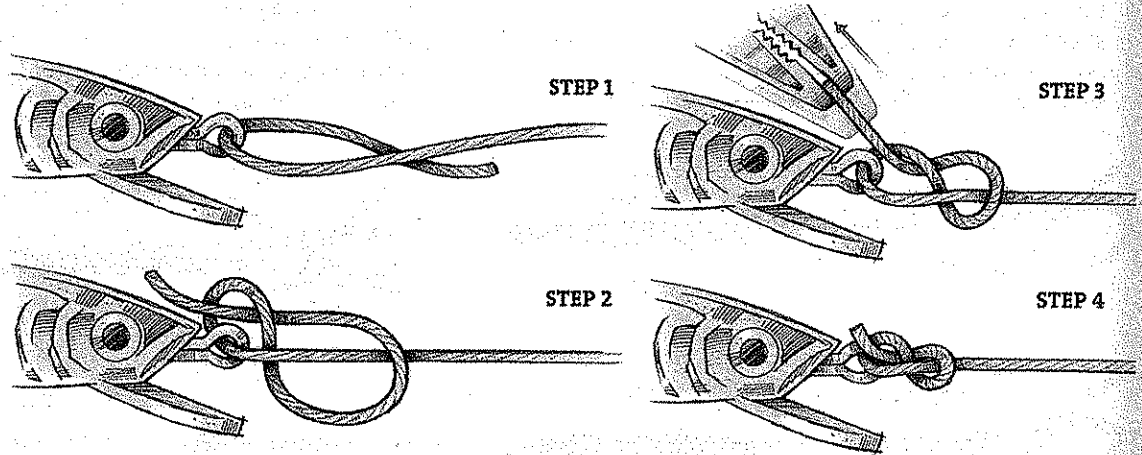
The Figure-8

through the hook eye or split ring. Double back (about 3 inches) and carry the tag under the main strand.

STEP 2: Wrap the tag over the main strand and back through the loop that goes through the eye or split ring (at this point, the knot should resemble a numeral 8).

STEP 3: Tighten by pulling the slack out of the tag end while keeping steady pressure on the main strand. This step is critical, as failure to do so allows kinked wire from inside the knot to be drawn in front of the knot.

STEP 4: Trim the tag end close to the knot.



The Haywire Twist (for single-strand hard wire)

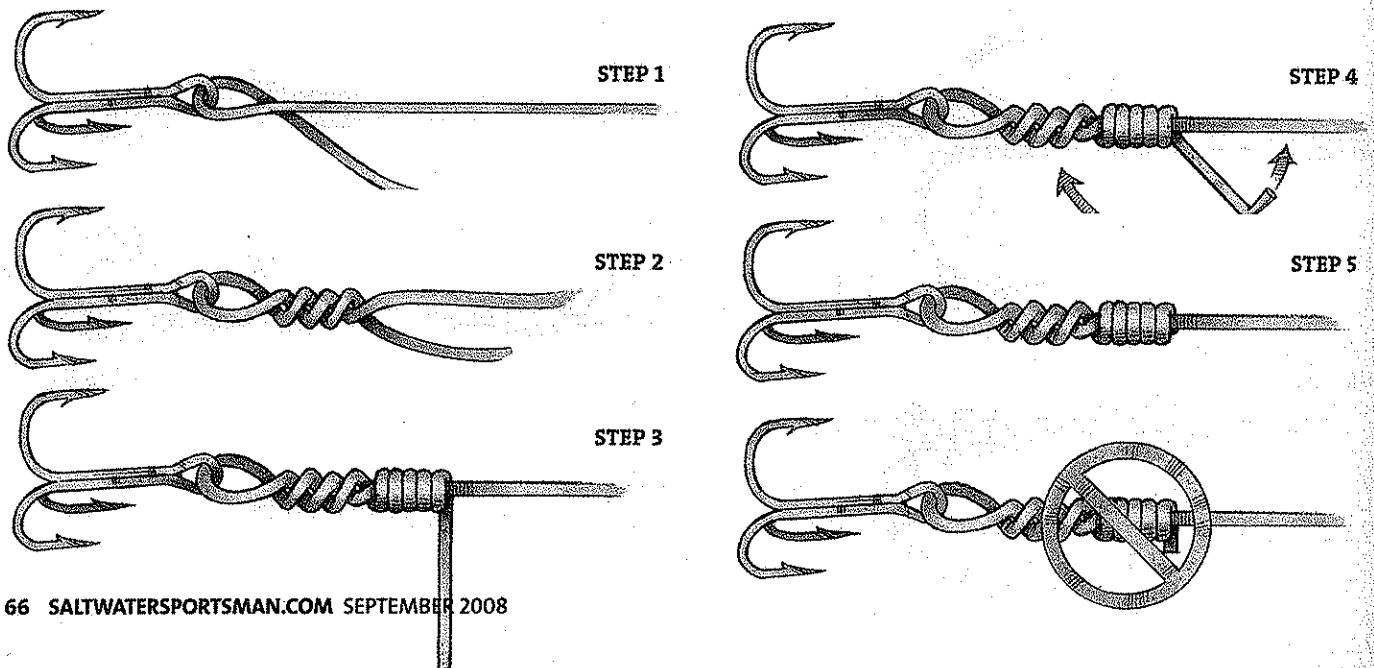
STEP 1: Place the tag end of the wire through the hook eye. Double back 6 inches, crossing the tag over the main strand, forming an X. Pinch with your thumb and forefinger to keep in place.

STEP 2: Firmly hold the wire and make a half-turn with the main strand and the tag at right angles to each other, forming a tight X. The tag and main strand must be held so that such an X forms each time a half-turn is completed. Make 3 1/2 turns. Now the main strand should be straight, and the tag end should be perpendicular to it.

STEP 3: Make three or four sequential wraps around the main line with tag end.

STEP 4: Take the end of the tag and form a small handle at a 90-degree angle to the knot. Grasp and work the handle back and forth in a parallel motion to the main strand, breaking the wire flush to the last wrap.

STEP 5: Make sure the wire breaks cleanly. If not, cut it off and twist the wire again. NEVER trim the tag with cutters; this will result in a small, sharp tag protruding and can result in injury.

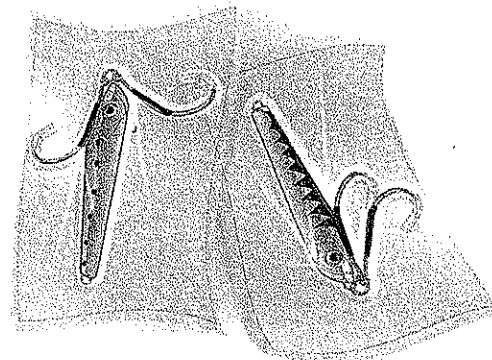




STICKY SOLUTION

Anyone who owns a boat trailer probably knows the frustration of having to replace rusty leaf springs. To put off this inevitability, I use a trick shown to me by a retired naval-aviation mechanic. The method was used to protect aircraft landing gear from prolonged exposure to salt. Take a quart of regular motor oil and mix in a pint of STP oil additive. When thoroughly mixed, it has the consistency of honey. Then, with a firm paint brush, coat every inch of the leaf springs. The mixture is thin enough to work its way into the cracks and crevices, but thick enough to stick to the metal. When allowed to dry for 24 hours, the mixture firms up, and there is little or no loss when you hit the springs with a hose or submerge the trailer at the ramp. In fact, it is durable enough to provide an entire year's worth of protection.

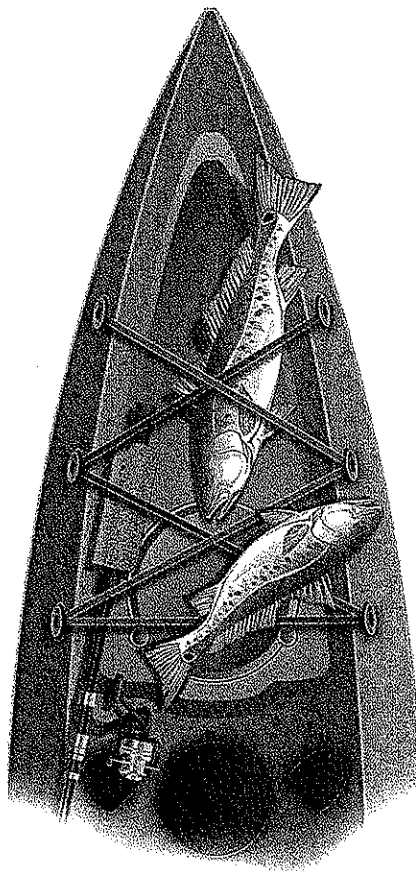
*James Victory
Gautier, Mississippi*



JIG SAVER

My expensive metal jigs always take abuse and seem to stay tangled with each other when I put them in my tackle box or gear bag. To solve this problem, I recently started saving scrap material from my Food Saver vacuum sealer to bag my lures. Before sealing the jigs into the bag, I'll take a small piece of aquarium air-line tubing and place it over the hook points to prevent puncturing the bag. Now my jigs stay razor sharp, organized and away from the salt water, regardless of how bad conditions get — until I need them. Then it's a simple matter of just selecting the color and style I want, cutting the bag and re-rigging. An added bonus: If you cut the bag carefully, you can reuse it.

*Chris Richards
Franklin, Tennessee*



USE YOUR NOODLE

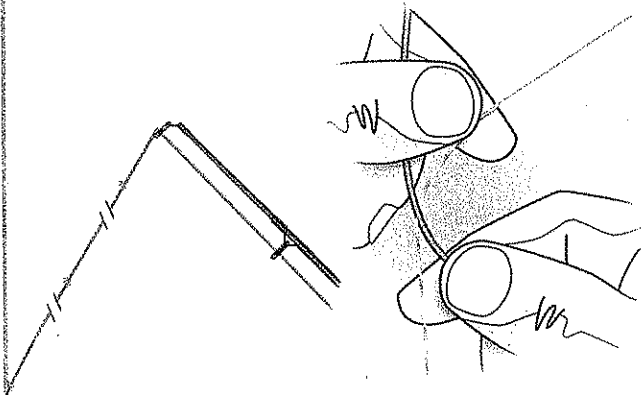
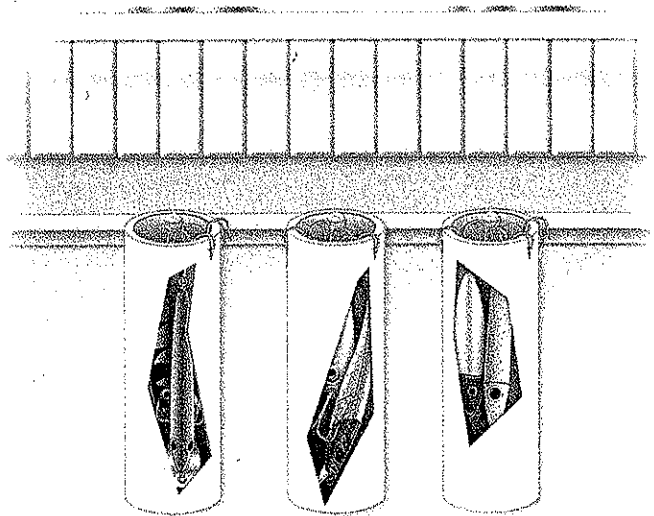
One of the first things I learned as an avid kayak fisherman is that everything needs to be attached to a float — pliers, scales, you name it. Now, I'll never lose another rod and reel again, after coming up with a quick, easy fix to the flotation problem. I buy foam swim noodles at discount stores for about a dollar. They're about 5 feet long, so I cut them into sections. I can usually make 12 or 15 floats for my various gear. For fishing rods, slide the float over the rear grip on the rod handle. The float is short and narrow enough that it doesn't interfere with your hand when casting or fighting fish, and it provides enough buoyancy to save your outfit in the event that you capsize or fall victim to fumble fingers.

*Hamilton Montreuil
Pass Christian, Mississippi*

SAFE AND SOUND

I've tried a number of different lure holders on my boat. Some attach with suction cups or hang from various rails onboard. Regardless of how or where they are mounted, it seemed like I always managed to get hooked on them. So I designed this simple holder that mounts under the gunwale in horizontal rod racks and keeps treble hooks and lures safely inside protective tubes. Start with a length of 3/4-inch PVC long enough to span the rod holder. Then, using pop rivets, attach 4- to 8-inch lengths of pipe perpendicular to the long piece. Place under the gunwales, drop the lures into the short tubes so they hang by one hook point and you are ready to go. It's even possible to cap one of the tubes and use it to store hook baits while moving from spot to spot. It takes about 20 minutes to put together, and the cost is minimal.

*William Dyer
via e-mail*



MARKING THE LINE

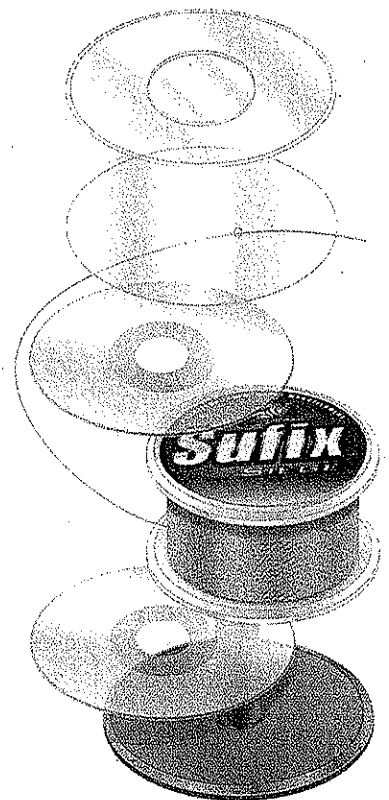
When canyon fishing here in the Northeast, tuna will hold anywhere from 25 to 300 feet below the surface. Once you locate the fish, it's important to get into that zone quickly and accurately. To do this, I use braided line, which I mark every 25 feet. I'll flatten the line with my thumbnail and then take a small needle with a piece of 10-pound white braid or dental floss and pass the needle through the line. I then tie a double overhand knot in it and trim the tag ends short. In addition to offering a visual cue, you can also feel the small bumps as they slide through your fingers. This method should also work well when bottom fishing for grouper, snapper, amberjack and other species.

*Dominick Saninelli
Dover, New Jersey*

SPOOLING UP

When I spool my reels, I often have a tough time with the spool twisting, tangling and often damaging the monofilament or braided line. Here's an easy way to tame the spool and keep it under control. I put the line spool in an empty 50-pack CD holder, with a CD on either side. Then I feed the end of the line through a hole in the CD pack cover, lock the cover in place, set it on the floor or a tabletop and fill it up. The holder provides tension, so the line goes on tightly. You can alter the position of the hole in the CD pack cover to account for line twist when spooling spinning or bait-casting reels.

*Steven McPherson
Seminole, Florida*



SEE YOUR TIPS IN SWS!

Send your original ideas along with a sketch or photo to SWS. If we use them, you'll win a Spheros 8000FA spinning reel or a Banar Boat Bag from Shimano, valued at \$150. Submit to: *Salt Water Sportsman*, c/o Sportsman's Workbench, 460 N. Orlando Ave., Suite 200, Winter Park, Florida 32789, or send via e-mail to tips@saltwatersportsman.com.

