

# How to tie a Windsor knot.

Tie knots fall in and out of fashion just as much as any other garment. Currently the stout triangular knot of a Windsor and the wide city double cut-away collar that does it justice are the loon-pants to the tight drain-pipes of the fashion resurgence of 60s inspired thin tie bodies, four in hand or square knots, and long slim collars.

Fear not, the greatest of all tie knots will return.

## Typing a Windsor

A tie has a "*blade*" or wide end and a thinner "*dagger*" end. It has a flat smooth front commonly worn with a fashionable or classic pattern. But never worn with cartoons. The back has a seam that runs the full length, or underside of the tie. The underside should never be visible in a finished knot.

The aim of tying a Windsor is to construct a symmetrical and balanced triangular knot. It should have a certain width; that is nether too small, denoting that you have used too much dagger in the knot construction, or too fat, announcing to the world that you have become too familiar with the blade end during the act of tying.

### 1. Orientation.

Hang your tie around your neck so that it rests against the nape of your neck with the dagger hanging down on your left side and the blade on your right.

The tie should be front facing outwards. A visible label indicates that you have erred in initial placement. Turn the tie around if this is the case.

It is a common mistake to even up the lengths of the tie prior to commencing the tying act. The two lengths should be adjusted so that the end of the dagger sits just below your breast bone. The blade end should hang below your crotch.

### 2. The Leg Over.

Holding the dagger with your left hand, raise your bent arm up to about shoulder height. Your hand should be grasping the dagger about half way along its length. Your hand should be not too close, lest you might catch a whiff of fingerly odour, and not so far that your thumb communicates by letter. Stretch your right arm down to grasp the lower portion of the blade.

Once comfortable with your starting position, move your right arm over towards your left. You should move your right arm far enough over so that the blade rests comfortably over the wrist of your left hand. The tie ends should be crossed just below your neck. This is referred to as the tie cross and is an important point of reference during the knotting manoeuvre. The knot will be constructed over the tie cross so care should be taken in placing the cross. You should be able to view the cross comfortably looking down without experiencing the effects of crossed vision.

### **3. The Up and Under.**

Whilst maintaining the same posture with your left arm, readjust your right hand hold so that you have grasped the very bottom of the blade end. Bring your hand gently up to touch your throat.

Note that you have almost formed a loop with the blade over your left wrist. Complete the loop by pushing the blade end of the tie up through the tie cross and let it wrap over the upper left end of the tie cross - there should be a reasonable length hanging down. You should be able to release the dagger end with no ill effects.

### **4. The Adjustment.**

Change your grip on the dagger. Now use your right hand, snaking your left hand back out of the tie loop.

Whilst holding the dagger taught with your right hand, you might like to pull out some of the slack in the knot with your left hand using the blade of the tie. Be careful not to pull in too much. If however you discover that your right hand is extending away from you. Stop the manoeuvre and re-read the instructions.

### **5. The Under Done**

Pass your left hand, holding the blade end, under the dagger. Resting the blade, underside facing upwards, on the nape of your right elbow. Looking down at the tie cross, note how the knot twists slightly forming a half conical shape.

### **6. The Over and Out**

With your free left hand reach over the taught dagger and pick up the blade end again. Thread the blade end of the tie through the right hand half of the tie cross so that it falls out across your right breast with the seam still facing underside upwards.

Looking down at the tie you should see the the left and right halves of the tie cross are now symmetrical.

### **7. The Consideration**

You may not have removed enough slack from the tie at *Step 3. The Adjustment* - the blade end of the tie may now be involved in the knot itself. This is not advisable unless you are an English soccer player trying to impress a strumpet in an Essex night club. You may need to start the knot again re-evaluating the vital ratios you have used in this tie construction.

### **8. The Roundabout**

Holding the upturned blade end of the tie in your right hand move your arm across the front (or over) the dagger, ending with your hand close to your left shoulder wrapping the naked knot with the front face of the tie. The tie can rest here for a moment. However your left arm should remain vigilant in maintaining the dagger in its taught attention

### **9. The Upsidasies.**

Again with the blade end of the tie securely grasped in your right hand, lead the tie behind and up through the centre of the tie cross. Once this action is completed, release the dagger from your left hand and let the tie rest against your torso. The blade should now lie flat across the front of the knot and the blade point should rest the width of a thumbnail above your belt.

## **10. The Tuck In.**

Grasping the blade end again in your right hand, retrace your last step, exposing the knot, but keeping the upsides in place. The knot looking down should resemble a neat arrow tip, point facing away from you. Any other shape at this point and it is likely that you may have made a grave error in an earlier judgement.

The blade end of the tie must now be gently threaded in a downward direction under and out of the wrap tied in *Step 7. The Roundabout*. Care should be taken in this step to maintain the integrity of the knot as well impressing on your self the need for good presentation at all times.

## **11. The Final Fling.**

Before the knot is finally pulled tight it is often acceptable to place a dimple in the blade immediately below the knot itself. This can be achieved when adjusting the travel of the knot, and thus its fit and size, by using the first three fingers of your right hand to caress the blade as you perform the adjusting manoeuvre. One finger either side of the blade holding it fastly and the middle finger impressing an indentation in the middle of the blade as the knot mouth closes should suffice.

*There you are, done, and don't you just look awesome.*

No, oh well, knot tying is a gentleman's tradition, it takes time and practise to achieve an acceptable result, like fly fishing and the expression of male emotions.

## **12. The Reveal**

Once the knotting manoeuvre has been satisfactorily completed - the knot size verified according to collar width, blade length falling within acceptable parameters, dagger suitably hidden - the rest of your attire can be attended to. Once properly dressed, and after careful consideration, preferable using a full length mirror or handy trusted companion, it is time to reveal your glorious Windsor knot.

A good entrance is the key to a rewarding tie knot reveal. It should be a well practised manoeuvre performed with veal. A common technique is to burst into a room of ladies, converting the initial shock and surprise, that such an unannounced entry frequently causes, into a sense of awe at your wonderful neck adornment. It is advisable, when involved in such an activity, to announce your arrival to the room with the exclamation "taaaaaaaaaaaaaa daaaaa!"