

# How to Torture Friends and Influence People

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**Evil, Mean, and Nasty Rope Bondage**

## Overview

We've heard a lot about the nice way to tie: comfortable cuffs, nothing around the neck, don't block circulation, and so on... A lot of good that will do when you've got a feisty bottom! So for this class, we're going to talk about the hard stuff. We'll cover ties for takedowns and stressful positions while evaluating the dangers they introduce into the scene. Bring one or two lengths of rope and get ready to play rough!

## Bio

I'm a fun-loving rope geek and sex educator who has found a home in the Midwest kink community. When I'm not traveling to events, I contribute to the Iowa State University CUFFS group, and serve on the board of Minneapolis TNG group Min-KY. Although I'm a relatively new member of the scene, I've presented at numerous events across the country, including Kinky Kollege, Shibaricon, Denver Bound, and Beyond Leather.

As a presenter, I aim to provide a comfortable down-to-earth learning environment for all genders, orientations, and experience levels.

My long list of presentations, events, and class materials can be found at <http://www.kinkfriendly.org>

Enjoy yourselves!

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## Introduction

BDSM is "Outlaw Sex" - it's people getting off by exploring taboos, and otherwise saying "fuck you" to the mores of polite society. Yet, even in the kink world, we have our own taboos. In fact, some of the hottest elements of a scene are the result of pushing the envelope. In the rope world, these taboos are widely taught:

- Don't place rope around your partner's neck.
- Leave enough room for two fingers between the rope and your partner's body.
- Do not cut off circulation.
- Use cuffs that won't constrict during a struggle.

While these are generally good precautions to take, knowing how and when to experiment with them is the key to rough, edgy, and powerful scenes. In this class we'll explore ways to introduce these elements into your scenes while addressing the new risks posed by each.

*Note: This is edge play. Please play within the limits of your abilities!*

### ***RACK The Outer Limits of SSC***

"There is nothing wrong with your television set. Do not attempt to adjust the picture. We are controlling transmission. We will control the horizontal. We will control the vertical... You are about to participate in a great adventure. You are about to experience the awe and mystery which reaches from the inner mind to... The Outer Limits."

- The Outer Limits Opening Narration

It's no accident that I wear my cutting tool on the right side of my belt. It's a personal statement: "I bottom to safety!" What you're about to see isn't a departure from that attitude, though it does go beyond the Safe, Sane, & Consensual (SSC) limits of basic rope bondage into the realm of Risk-Aware Consensual Kink (RACK). While there are inherent risks in any scene, our healthcare providers haven't consented to fixing our mistakes! My advice: Play within your body's ability to heal itself.

### ***Communication, Connection, Intention***

This class sets forth many techniques that you may add to your scenes; however, technical knowledge is a very small part of the equation. Consider your motivation: Do you want a calm but physically demanding scene? Is aggressive and forceful more your speed? How about something wild and fiesty? Do you like to struggle while being tied?

Entering a scene with compatible expectations is key, especially when you may be departing from your usual play style. Be sure to check in with your partner – ask the questions above and think of other ones as we continue.

## Kinky Algebra

Variables make all the difference in the world. Whether you have a well-established play style or like to try something new every time, focusing on one aspect of your scene can dramatically change the dynamic between you and your partner. Consider these variables:

Rope – Using different rope sizes and materials may have the most substantial effect on a scene. Consider the rope's burn rate (synthetic fibers have a higher burn rate than natural fibers), tightness (bungee cords anyone), pressure (twine vs. 3/8" cord), escapability (natural fibers stretch less over time than synthetics), tactile response (smooth nylon vs hard polypropylene)

Involvement – As a top, I enjoy interacting with my partner while they're in my ropes, yet to an escape artist this can be quite irritating. Consider placing your partner in a strenuous position and watching them as they deal with the slow burn and discomfort, or conversely, changing ropes around so your partner can't quite settle into the tie.

Aggression – Taking your partner down and tying them forcefully can add an emotional thrill, while backing off and methodically applying the rope may induce a certain level of anxiety as your partner wonders what's in store.

Association – "Are you the bad guy, or is the rope? Some rope bottoms cringe at the sight of "the itchy stuff" and swoon when they see silk scarves. By only using a certain type of rope as punishment, your scene will start as soon as your bottom sees what you've laid out. Remember: fear is always worse than reality. Also note that it can also be very powerful or distressing to use a special rope in a new manner, but take care with this approach as it could negatively affect your partner's trust or have other unexpected results.

Time – The long, slow ache of a tight hogtie can send your partner on a difficult personal journey, while being unexpectedly bound can be used to exert your dominance in a scene. Imagine the reaction of a partner who enjoys when their ropes are slowly removed when instead, you tear and shred the ropes and leave them with the remains. Time can also be used to add stress to a tie – "you don't get an orgasm unless you're completely out of the rope in 3 minutes"

Placement – "Did you see that guy? He tied around his partner's neck!" "Uh huh, and did you see her eyes roll back into her head... I want to be next!" Applying ropes to arms or legs is one thing, but when you start involving sensitive or intimate areas, the effect is undeniable. Of course the neck is the first place many people consider, but tying your partner's fingers, feet, genitals, or head can be very powerful or irritating.

Position - Japanese torture methods during the Edo period relied on very strenuous ties for extracting confessions or other information out of their prisoners.

Predicament – Closely related to position, is predicament – otherwise known as a choice between something bad and something worse, or having to endure something bad for a pleasurable reward!

Resistance – This is an opportunity for the rope bottoms to add some excitement, or for the switches among us to change things up! Wrestling in the ropes can be a great way to add aggression or fun to a scene, but unexpectedly fighting back while being tied may be unwelcome. This is definitely one to negotiate with your partner!

Tightness – While some bottoms like to be hugged by their ropes, some want to be all but strangled by them! Consider how much mobility your partner has in the ropes.

## **Risky Business**

Positional Asphyxiation – A position that seems fine a first can become a deadly mistake. Citing his exhaustive research, Jay Wiseman has stated that the number one combination of factors that lead to "Bad Outcomes" is being bound and alone. While the media is full of anecdotal evidence to support this statement, it's not difficult to imagine that it's true.

**Always closely monitor someone who is in overly restrictive bondage.**

Nerve and Circulation Issues – In strenuous ties, limbs can and will fall asleep or suffer from reduced circulation. In general this is not an emergency. While it is difficult to completely stop the blood flow to a limb, nerves are very vulnerable to damage. Avoid tight bondage anywhere that nerves are close to the skin's surface, such as joints and upper arms (radial nerve).

Rope Burn – The faster you tie, the more friction you can generate. To avoid this, use natural fiber ropes which tend to abrade skin rather than burn. (Also note, as I've experienced at a few outdoor events, humidity affects friction in natural fiber ropes.)

Stray Limbs – It’s all fun and games until someone gets hurt! When doing takedowns, wrestling, or engaging in other resistance play, it’s important to know that ropes can slip, elbows can fly, and other generally painful things can occur. Take off your glasses, and don’t get upset if an accident occurs.

Mental Distress – For some, frustration and defeat can lead to catharsis, yet for others, it can lead to negative emotions or painful memories. As always, communicate before, during, and after a scene.

Environment – It’s amazing how the wilder a scene gets, the more room it requires! Take a closer look around your playspace for tripping hazards, sharp corners, open flames, or anything else that may lead to an unerotic interruption to your scene.

## **Control**

The more direct control you have over these variables, the faster you can respond to a problem. Consider grabbing a few wraps on your partner’s body harness and twisting them to add pressure. You will have immediate feedback and can respond quickly to any issues that arise. This isn’t always practical, but it’s an invaluable tool. Also, remember the law of diminishing returns. Using two of three of these techniques in a scene is usually enough to blow your partner’s mind while staying in control of the scene. There’s no need to use every trick in the book (or every toy in the house), instead experiment with a few at a time.

## **Emergencies**

When was the last time you used your cutting tool? Practice using your shears, knife\*, safety hook, or other cutting tool when trimming your ropes or sacrifice a piece of rope in the name of science. Knowing how your tool works in an emergency is just as important as having it in your back pocket.

*\*Knives: There is ongoing debate about the use of knives for cutting ropes in an emergency. Personally, I expect my manual dexterity to be pretty poor in an emergency, so I prefer wearing a safety hook (<http://www.benchmade.com>) while I tie.*

## **What?! No New Ties?**

Applying the variables listed above, most ties can be adapted to a mean and torturous counterpart. Of course, ties that are slow to apply might not be good for a takedown! Western style bondage resources have a variety of quick ties that you can apply to takedowns and resistance (“Texas Handcuff”), and Hojojutsu ties can be very strenuous and fast.

## **Temporary Ties**

Remember, the first tie you put on someone doesn’t have to be the last. Restricting cuffs like the lark’s head are generally discouraged; however, in a takedown or as part of a larger harness that reduces the risk of constriction, they are fair game. So, instead of tying your comfy, inescapable, but difficult to tie cuff while wrestling, play dirty with a lark’s head and replace it once they’re subdued!

## **Conclusion**

Armed with these tips, you should have plenty of ideas for adding an edge to your rope work!

Thanks for reading!

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