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Hardware: Ceramic stripping guide, hard chromed, tip top and snake guides  
Colors: Yellow, Blue, Red, Green, Tan and Black  
Price: \$65.00 (Tax, Pre-paid)  
Allow 2 to 3 weeks for delivery

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#4 - #7  
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Yellow, Blue, Red, Green, Tan and Black  
\$65.00 (Tax, Pre-paid)  
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## Using the Loop Knot for Tippetts

LEFTY KREH

IN THE LATE 1960s Jim Green, who is one of the best fly casters and trout fishermen I've had the pleasure of fishing with, joined me on a trip to the Henrys Fork. During the day we were forced to change fly patterns many times to match the hatches. We switched from small flies to large and back again all day, took many fish and had a great time. Then toward evening, fish-feeding activity became furious when the air was filled with insects. I cursed the fact that I had changed flies so often during that glorious day, because I had eaten away most of the second section of my tapered leader and could no longer turn over the tippet properly. I simply couldn't get a good float with the unbalanced leader, and I spent some of the best hatch time rebuilding the last two sections.

That evening, as we sat in the Dude Restaurant in West Yellowstone, I told Jim of my frustrations, and explained that in saltwater fly-fishing we looped leaders to tippetts that were strong enough to take big fish and were quick to attach to our lines. I said I was going to try the saltwater-style looped leaders the next day, and Jim offered to do the same. The results the next day were so gratifying that I have never again used a blood knot, surgeon's knot or any other permanent knot to connect my tippet to the next larger portion of a dry-fly leader.

MANY WELL-READ (but often narrowly experienced) trout fishermen have

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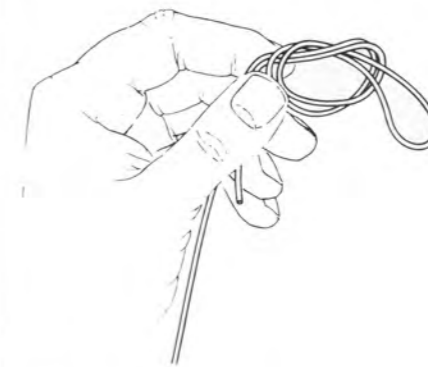
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looked at my loop-to-loop, tippet-leader connection and blanched in horror — muttering things like, "Why would a trout take a fly tied to a knot like that?" My reply is that trout don't go running up leaders to check knots.

The technique of looping on the tippet to the leader works well. I constantly fool the sophisticated trout of the Letort, "gulpers" on Western lakes, many spring-creek trout and other supposedly hard-to-catch trout that "should know better." Here's a list of some of the advantages of looping on the tippet, and following the list I'll describe the simple looping technique.

First, it is quick. Tie a loop in the tippet, then loop it to the next larger piece, and you're ready for the fly. Second, you only have to carry the tippet materials in your fly jacket. I used to carry enough monofilament to build leaders of any size. Third, you are not eating up that second piece of monofilament that joins the tippet. I find that about twice in a year of hard fishing I'll have to replace the larger section. Fourth, the loop-to-loop, tippet-leader connection is much stronger than a blood knot, and usually tougher than a surgeon's knot. Fifth, changing tippetts is simple. Just snip one side of the tippet loop and pull the end free. Sixth, the surgeon's end loop, which is made in both the tippet and the larger section of tapered leader, is simply a double overhand knot. It's something you can learn in two minutes and tie in fifteen seconds.

Here is the method I use for the loop-to-loop tippet. I prefer light lines, 3-through 7-weight for dry-fly work. For such lines I use a butt section that begins with monofilament of from 17- to 20-pound test (about .017-inch diameter). For a tapered leader ending in a 4X tippet, I come down as you would with your favorite taper to 3X (about .008 inch). Then I make a surgeon's end loop in the 3X. I take a piece of 4X tippet



Begin the surgeon's end loop with a simple overhand knot. Illustrations by Tom Russell.

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## Looping Tippetts . . .

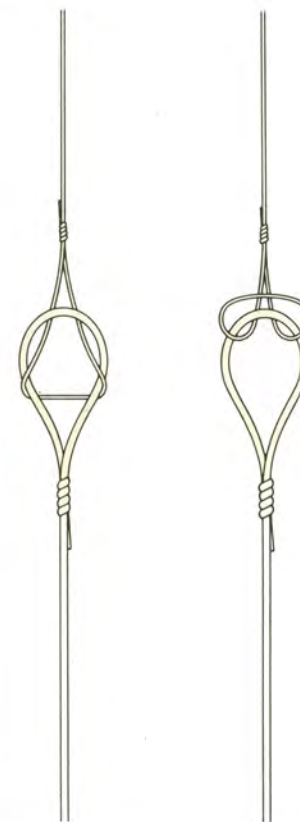


Continue the surgeon's end loop with a second overhand knot, and pull tight.



The completed surgeon's end loop.

about two feet long and make a loop in it and join that properly as shown in the drawing. Be careful not to mistake this loop for a girth hitch, which is a weak knot.



Correct loop

Girth hitch

If I'm using a 5X tippet, I make the same basic tapers (still with the 3X loop)

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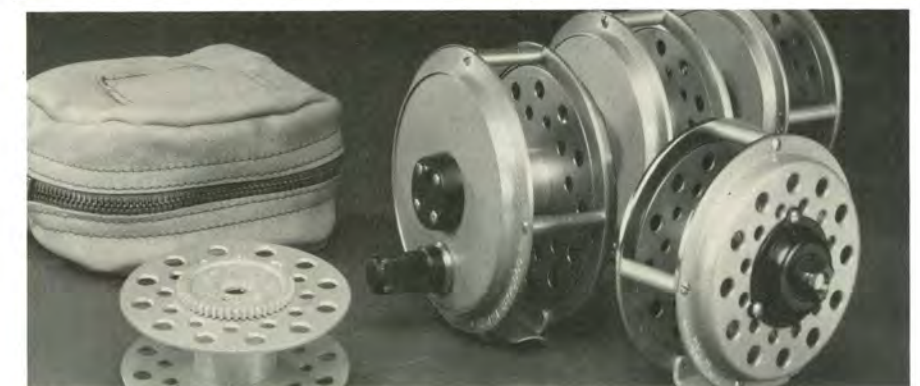
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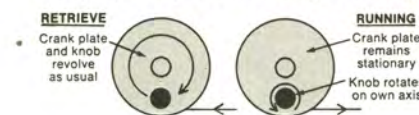
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## Looping Tippets . . .

then join about 32 inches of 5X tippet with a loop to it. I've found that on a 7X or 8X tippet, the looping to 3X is too abrupt, and I get a poor turnover. So, I take a 10- to 12-inch section of 5X tippet, loop one end to the 3X and the other to the 7X or 8X, with excellent results.



Above, an example of a leader tippet of 5X looped to a tapered leader.



Above, looping to 7X or 8X tippets requires the use of an intermediate looped section of 5X.

The method I use to determine the proper tippet length for the specific fly I'm using is one that was shown to me years ago by George Harvey. Make the tippet section a bit longer than you think

is necessary. Then tie on the fly you plan to use and make a presentation on the water. If the tippet straightens—a straight tippet means you're going to get drag—then you know your tippet is too short. If it falls in a pile, the tippet is too long. A properly built tippet is one that falls in a series of S waves that are from 3 to 5 inches wide.

With this simple method of making a leader I am able to catch fish wherever

I go, and I have found it to be remarkably functional, although the idea may disturb some people who seem to think that a trout's brain is larger than a human's brain.

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