

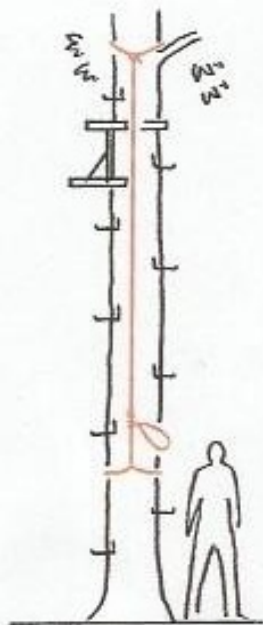
DO IT YOURSELF

SAVE YOUR NECK

Improve tree-stand safety with a better climbing system
by MARK HICKS



A SECURE LINE: Attach your harness to the sliding loop (inset) to ensure your safety at all times while tree-stand hunting.



TIE ROPE SHOULDER HEIGHT AT BASE OF TREE

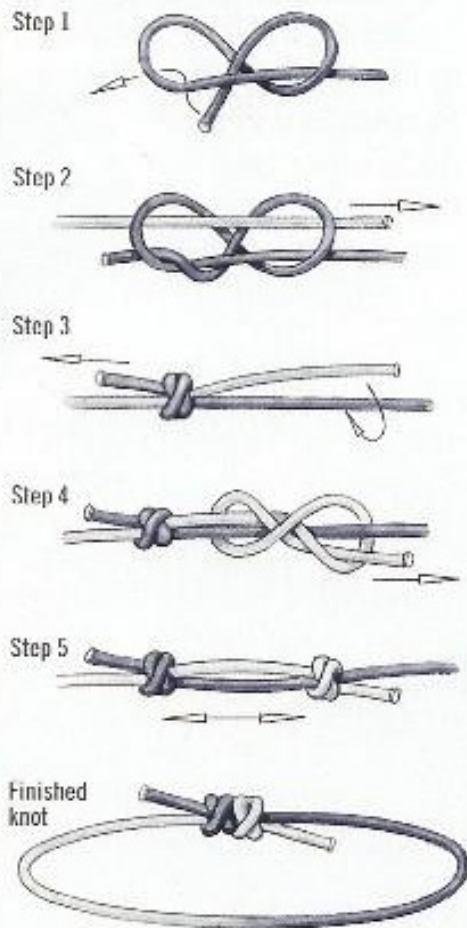
● TREE STAND SAFETY HAS NOTABLY improved over the last decade, thanks in part to better safety equipment, such as harnesses and climbing belts. But these devices can be awkward to use when you're hanging a stand. And even if you use both while you're hunting, you may still be at risk as you get into and out of your stand, because climbing belts often do not fit around the platform.

Bob Troxel, fire chief of Athens, Ohio, ensures his safety at all times when he's using a tree stand by way of a system of ropes and knots that he learned from his rescue training. Follow these instructions to set up this system before hanging your stand, then leave it assembled and use it each time you return to hunt.

(1) First, Troxel ties together the ends of a 2-foot length of 6mm kernmantle mountain-climbing rope (available at outdoor-sports shops and many hardware stores) to form a simple loop. He uses a double fisherman's knot (see illustration below).

(2) Then Troxel tightly secures one end of a 9mm kernmantle rope (it's crucial that this

DOUBLE FISHERMAN'S KNOT



SIMPLE LOOP: Use this to tie the prusik knot.