

No More Nail Knots !

By Tom Deschaine



When I was first introduced to the sport of fly fishing, I was overwhelmed with things to learn. Equipment selection, the art of casting, reading the water, fly selection, entomology and the all important knots --- especially the nail knot! To the novice the nail knot becomes a real challenge. For several years I struggled to perfect the nail knot. I became tired of the knots pulling loose or breaking under fatigue. Out of frustration I began to tinker with a variety of knotless systems. One of which I'd like to share with you in this article. The ***Super Glue*** system!

I wish I could claim this as a personal discovery or inspiration of mine, but I'd be lying. I originally discovered this in an L. L. Bean catalog 18-20 years ago. They sold a little kit that contained a tube of Super Glue, a piece of emery paper and a small needle vice with needle. I tried the system and found that it really worked. I was impressed the first time I landed a really big trout, instead of loosing the fish to a line/leader separation caused by an improperly tied nail knot.

L. L. Bean apparently was not as impressed with the system as I was, because the kit disappeared from their catalog after a couple of seasons. I, on the other hand, found that this new system was so effective that I applied it to all my lines/leader connections. You can put together the necessary items from around the house or with just a short visit to a sewing or fabric shop.

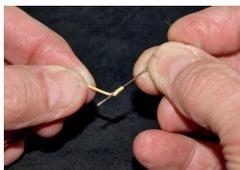
Let me take you through the procedure, step by step and you'll see how really simple it is.



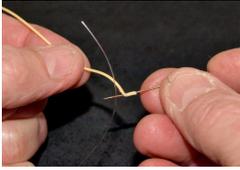
1) Gather the tools and materials you'll need. Needle nose pliers, Super Glue, emery or sand paper, nail clippers, sewing machine needles (variety of sizes) and a thimble.



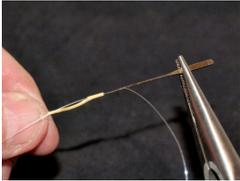
2) Insert a sewing machine needle into the tip of your fly line. I usually start with smaller gauge needles, gradually inserting larger and larger needles to make the hole larger. This is more difficult then you think --- you may want to use that thimble. Penetrate to a depth of 1/8 to 3/16 of an inch.



3) Once you have penetrated to the correct depth, break through the side of the fly line with the needle.



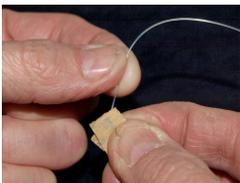
4) Now insert the tapered end (skinny end) of your new leader through the eye of the sewing machine needle. About 4 to 6 inches.



5) Grabbing the head end of the needle with your pliers, pull the needle out of the fly line, bringing with it the tapered end of the new leader.



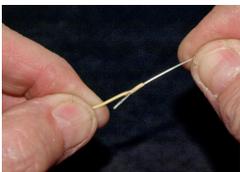
6) Now, manually pull the entire length of the leader through the fly line. Leaving only the last couple of inches.



6) Take your emery or sand paper and 'rough up' the trailing end of your leader. Approximately the last half inch or so.



8) Add a drop of Super Glue to the end of the leader on the spot that you just sanded.

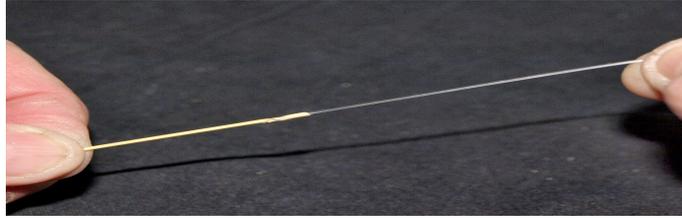


9) Immediately pull the leader through, so that the part of the leader that you just sanded and applied glue to, goes into the part of the fly line that you penetrated with the sewing needle. Allow it to dry for a few seconds



10) Take you nail clippers and trim off any excess leader that protrudes through your fly line.

There, you have it. One, very strong line/leader connection, that is as drag free as you can get. Try the system out and I think you'll be as pleased with it's performance as I am.



I've been using it now for close to twenty years and I can honestly say that I've never had a line/leader separation using this system. No more nail knots for me!

See you on the water....

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