

Transferring a Load from Belayer to Anchor via a Prusik Sling

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WARNING: Failure to use any or all of the devices or systems explained or illustrated in this article in an appropriate manner could result in property damage, injury or death. Expert instruction and constant practice are mandatory. This is not an instructional article. It is designed to accompany professional instruction and practice under supervision.

The initial step in many systems, particularly when belaying from the harness or body is to transfer the weight of the injured person directly to the anchor. This is often achieved through the use of a releasable Munter hitch configuration in which a 7mm diameter, 4 - 6m long Prusik sling or “cordellette” is attached to the main line with a Prusik hitch. Immediately beside the Prusik hitch, a small overhand or figure eight knot is tied. This is to facilitate later attachment of a carabiner and/or pulley. The doubled end of the sling is then tied to a carabiner on the anchor using a Munter hitch. This Munter hitch is then tied off with an overhand slip knot which blocks the Munter hitch from moving, but allows the load to be released under load. The slip knot should then be backed up to be sure it is not released accidentally. This is often done by securing the doubled bight of the slip knot with a further overhand knot. Note that this backup knot is not shown in the following two diagrams.

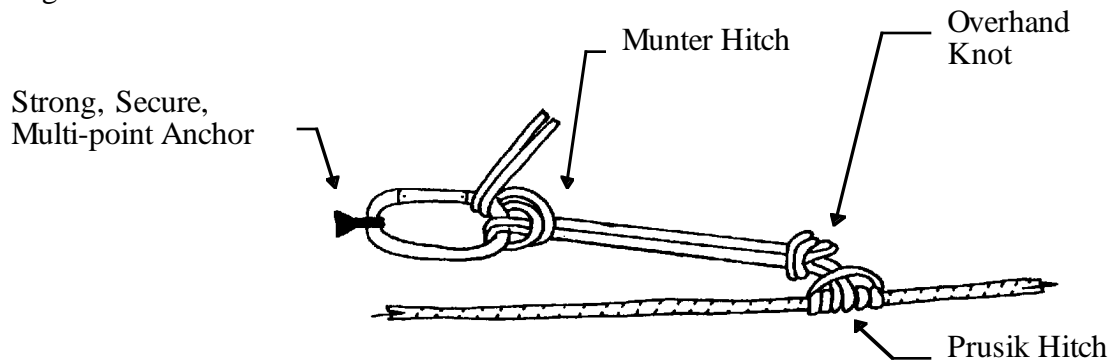


Figure 1 Initial step in transferring load to anchor

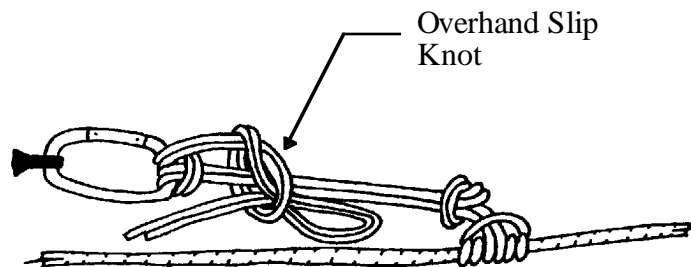


Figure 2 Second step in transferring load to anchor; all that remains is backup knot

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Tying Off a Munter Hitch on a Belay Line A Sequential Article to Accompany Instruction © 2002 Cyril Shokoples

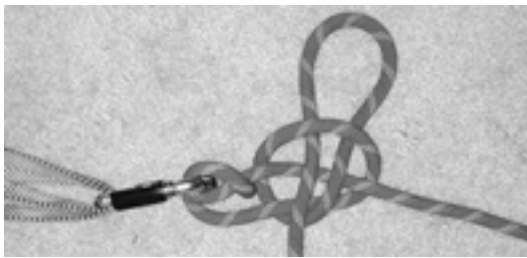
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Step One: Hold the load on the Munter Hitch tightly during the entire process and DO NOT let go of the braking hand, even for an instant.



Step Two: Make a loop of rope exactly as shown.



Step Three: Pass a bight of rope through this loop as shown, creating an overhand slip knot.



Step Four: While ensuring that the load will not suddenly drop, tighten the overhand slip knot you have just made.



Step Five: With the bight of rope exiting your slip knot above, tie an overhand knot around the loaded line. At this point the Munter Hitch is tied off. Some people call this a “Tied – Off Munter Hitch” or “Blocked Munter Hitch” while in the US it is sometimes referred to as the “Munter Mule”. You can now proceed to add additional backup knots or rig a system if required.