UniqueStoreMarket.com

HOME & PRACTICAL | EVERYDAY PRACTICAL

How to Tie Your Shoelaces So They Stay Tied

Tie a bow that stays done up all day, recognise a bad knot at a glance, and choose the right knot and lacing for walking, running or work shoes.

3-day guide · 3 chapters · Self-Directed Learning Framework

Read this guide online, or browse dozens more, at
uniquestoremarket.com

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Every guide on this site is produced with the Self-Directed Learning Framework: instead of an article that explains a topic at you, it turns the topic into a structure you work through — each chapter with one outcome, a starting action under twelve minutes, the minimum you actually need to know, a worked example, a checklist, and exercises using your own situation. No filler, no re-reading required.

WHAT'S INSIDE

01	Check Your Knot: The Bow That Keeps Coming Undone	Day 1 · 10 min
02	The Double-Wrapped Bow for Days When It Has to Hold	Day 2 · 10 min
03	Lacing So the Knot Isn't Doing All the Work	Day 3 · 12 min

Check Your Knot: The Bow That Keeps Coming Undone

> **Outcome:** "I can tell, in ten seconds, whether my bow is the balanced knot or the weak granny knot, and fix it by changing one move."

Micro-start (under 12 minutes)

Tie your shoe the way you always do, then look straight down at the finished bow. Do the loops lie across the shoe, from side to side, or do they point along it, towards your toe and your ankle?

The minimum you need to know

A shoelace bow is two half-knots stacked on top of each other: the starting knot (crossing the laces and tucking one under) and the bow itself (the loops). When those two halves are tied in opposite directions, you get a balanced knot that locks against itself. When they're tied in the same direction, you get a granny knot, which slips every time you take a step. You can see the difference without untying anything. A balanced bow sits across the shoe, with the loops pointing left and right. A granny bow twists so the loops point up and down the length of the shoe, and the knot in the middle looks crooked. If yours does that, the fix is not a new technique. Keep everything the same and reverse just one half. Either start with the other lace on top (left over right instead of right over left), or wrap the lace around the loop in the other direction. Changing one of the two is enough. Changing both puts you back where you started.

Worked example

Worked example: fixing a twisted bow. Someone ties their shoes the standard "bunny ears" way: right lace over left for the starting knot, then wraps the right-hand loop over the front of the left one. The finished bow points along the shoe, and it comes loose twice on a walk to the shops. They change only the starting knot to left over right, and leave the bow exactly as before. The new bow sits across the shoe. On the same walk it doesn't come loose once. Nothing about the laces changed. One half of the knot now turns the other way.

Checklist

- [ ] Looked straight down at a freshly tied bow
- [ ] Identified whether the loops sit across the shoe or along it
- [ ] Changed only one half of the knot (the start or the wrap direction), not both
- [ ] Re-tied and confirmed the loops now sit across the shoe
- [ ] Tested it by walking for at least ten minutes

Exercises

1. Tie both shoes your usual way and note which way each bow lies.
2. Deliberately tie one granny knot and one balanced knot side by side, so you can see the difference.
3. Tie the balanced version five times in a row until it no longer feels backwards.

The Double-Wrapped Bow for Days When It Has to Hold

> **Outcome:** "I can tie a double-wrapped bow that holds through a run or a long day, and still undoes with one pull."

Micro-start (under 12 minutes)

Make the first loop of your usual bow and hold it. Before going further, practise only the next move: wrap the other lace around the loop twice instead of once, and stop.

The minimum you need to know

The common fix for laces that come undone is a double knot: tying the two loops together in a second knot. It holds, but it's hard to undo, and you usually end up picking at it with your fingernails. A double-wrapped bow gives you the same grip without the struggle. The only difference from a normal bow is that the lace goes around the first loop twice, which leaves a doubled gap. You push the second loop through that doubled gap instead of a single one. Two things make it work. First, pull it tight by holding both loops and pulling them apart firmly, not by tugging the loose ends. Second, the balanced-knot rule from Chapter 1 still applies. A double-wrapped bow tied as a granny knot is a stronger bad knot, but it's still a bad one. To undo it, pull either loose end, exactly as you would with a normal bow.

Worked example

Worked example: a lace that won't stay done up on a run. A runner's laces come undone around the third kilometre of every run, so they've started double-knotting them and then struggling to untie them with cold fingers afterwards. They switch to a double-wrapped bow. They start the knot left over right, which gives a bow that lies across the shoe, wrap the lace twice around the first loop, and push the second loop through the doubled gap. They pull it tight by the loops. It holds for the whole run, and one pull on the end releases it at the door.

Checklist

- [ ] Starting knot tied the same balanced way as in Chapter 1
- [ ] Lace wrapped twice around the first loop, not once
- [ ] Second loop pushed through the doubled gap
- [ ] Bow tightened by pulling the loops, not the loose ends
- [ ] Undoes with a single pull on a loose end

Exercises

1. Tie the double-wrapped bow slowly three times, saying each move out loud.
2. Tie it on a pair of shoes you'll wear all day, and check it at lunchtime.
3. Time yourself undoing it, then compare that with untying an ordinary double knot.

Lacing So the Knot Isn't Doing All the Work

> **Outcome:** "I can tighten my laces evenly and use a heel-lock loop, so my foot stays put and the bow isn't under constant strain."

Micro-start (under 12 minutes)

Take one shoe off, loosen the laces all the way down to the toe, then tighten them again one crossing at a time, starting from the bottom. Notice how differently the shoe fits.

The minimum you need to know

A bow comes undone faster when it's carrying all the strain, for example when the laces are slack lower down and your foot slides forward with every step, pulling on the knot. Tightening a shoe properly means working from the toe upwards, pulling each crossing snug in turn. Just yanking the two ends at the top tightens only the last few eyelets. Many sports shoes have an extra eyelet at the top, set back slightly from the others. It's there for a heel lock, sometimes called a runner's loop. On each side, take the lace down through that last eyelet on the same side to make a small loop. Then cross each lace over and thread it through the loop on the opposite side, and pull down. Your heel is held into the back of the shoe, and the knot no longer takes the pull. The lace itself matters too. Round, waxed laces slide against each other more easily than flat cotton ones, so if a bow keeps loosening even when tied correctly, the lace may be the cause.

Worked example

Worked example: running shoes that loosen on downhills. On downhill stretches, someone's feet slide forward inside their running shoes, and the bows loosen every time. They unlace the shoes, re-tighten them crossing by crossing from the toe, and use the spare top eyelet to tie a heel lock before a balanced double-wrapped bow. On the same route, the heel stays in place and the bow is still tight at the end. Because the heel lock now holds the foot, they can leave the lower crossings slightly looser for comfort without the shoe slipping.

Checklist

- [ ] Laces tightened crossing by crossing from the toe upwards
- [ ] Extra top eyelet located (if the shoe has one)
- [ ] Heel lock tied: a loop on each side, laces crossed through the opposite loop
- [ ] Balanced bow from Chapter 1 used on top
- [ ] Lace type checked if bows still loosen when tied correctly

Exercises

1. Re-lace one pair of shoes from the toe up and compare the fit with the other pair.
2. Tie a heel lock on a pair of sports shoes and walk up and down a flight of stairs.
3. Check whether your work or everyday shoes have round or flat laces, and note which come loose more often.

MORE FROM THIS LIBRARY

This guide is one of dozens of free, self-paced guides at uniquestoremarket.com/library. Every guide follows the same structure and is produced with the Self-Directed Learning Framework — see the prompt behind it at uniquestoremarket.com/craft.