

# What you need to know before you begin bondage...

## Safety First

Like any other sport or hobby, bondage is best practiced with an awareness of safety. If the game is played right, every participant wins!

In all sports, there is the possibility of accidents, so here are some recommended "don'ts" for bondage.

- Don't play when you're not alert.
- Don't play when tired or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Don't try things you aren't sure about.
- The front of the neck should never receive pressure of any kind.
- Don't leave a bonded person alone.

## The Two Ways limbs "fall asleep":

- **Circulation** - Poorly done bondage, particularly at the wrists or ankles, will inhibit circulation. The submissive will feel numbness or slight tingling. Sometimes it will feel uncomfortable, sometimes not. Temporary inhibition of circulation is not a problem unless the submissive is feeling pain. Ask the submissive whether they want the bondage adjusted or removed. Their decision is law.
- **Nerve endings** - If bondage is pinching nerve paths, the submissive will feel shooting pains or focused pain. Never interfere with nerve paths. If the submissive believes the bondage is blocking a nerve path, remove the bondage immediately.

Binding the wrists behind the back pulls breathing muscles taut. For submissive's lacking flexibility, the reduced supply of oxygen can cause headaches or fainting. Be alert to the submissive's physical limitations and reactions.

## Time Limits

Healthy participants can enjoy a position for about an hour. If you're not in prime health, try about 20 minutes to a half hour for any given position. If you're trying something new, limit the first exposure to 15 minutes.

To prolong your bondage sessions, vary hand placement, for example, start with hands behind the back, then after a half hour, switch to a hands-front position, etc.

## Safewords

A "Safeword" is a word, sound or action that is used to communicate during a scene. If you are not playing "roles" during a scene, you can just tell each other when you want something, but if you're gagged or "in role," communication can be more difficult.

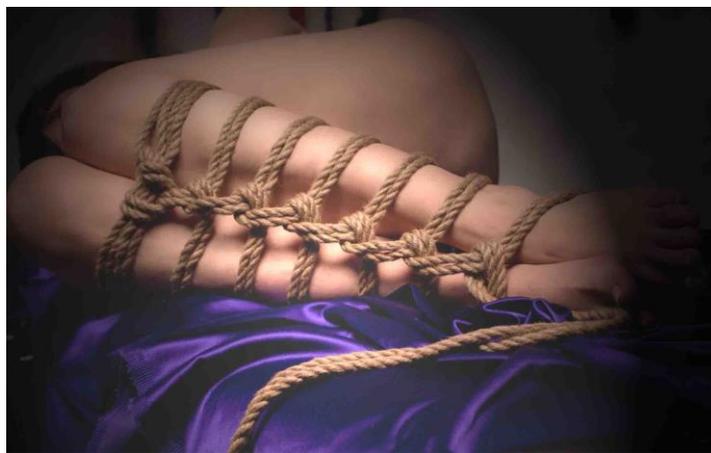
Common Safewords are "red," "mercy," the word "safeword," or humming a specific tune. Safeword actions can be things like snapping your fingers, raising your foot, or dropping car keys from your hand.



## Quick Release

You will need safety scissors when doing bondage. Designed for removing bandages, the scissors have a flat outer side to protect skin when cutting binds. These are perfect for completing saran-wrap scenes.

If you use thick bondage equipment such as leather or fat ropes, keep industrial scissors or EMT scissors on hand too.



## Extended Bondage

Many people have seen pictures or films of bondage and read about bondage and even experienced bondage. But have you ever been restrained or thought about being restrained for a very long time - for hours perhaps?

## There are few things to consider:

- **Position** - You can't hold a strenuous position hour after hour no matter what it looked like in some BDSM porn video. You've got to make sure that the position is one that you can hold for a long time without pulling a muscle or ligament or worse. So - 24 hours in suspension is a myth. You just can't do that without ending up with dislocated shoulders or much, much worse.
- **Safety** - Even though you may intend for this bondage to go on all day or all night, you've got to be prepared to get the submissive out of this bondage in an instant if something goes wrong. (For example - imagine your submissive having a seizure while in bondage and imagine for a moment how fast you'll want them released). It should go without saying that you don't leave someone in bondage unattended - but in case this hasn't occurred to you, DON'T LEAVE SOMEONE IN BONDAGE UNATTENDED!
- **Restraint** - What are you going to use? Cuffs? Ropes? Harness? You've got to think long term here. What will avoid chafing or injury to the sensitive tissues? If you're experienced with rope, you might be able to use it for this kind of bondage - if not, think padded cuffs such as medical Posey Restraints with sheepskin padding. This is what hospitals use to restrain patients long term.
- **Circulation** - In short bondage scenes, circulation is still important but not nearly as critical as it is in a long duration scene. You've got to make sure that circulation isn't cut off. If you cut off circulation to a limb for several hours, the limb will first get nerve damage and then ultimately gangrene can set in and you may be looking at an amputated limb. You have to make sure that circulation is something you keep constant attention on!
- **The bathroom** - In a 2 hour scene where you're going to do 5 or 10 different things, this is no big deal. But, if you're talking hours - how will you deal with her (or him) having to get to the toilet? Not figuring this out in advance makes for a messy scene possibly on the very bed you'd been thinking about sleeping on.

Long duration bondage can be a huge turn on and is a potentially exciting aspect of play. The mind plays games with itself when it's got no other stimulus, so this can result in an intense session for both dominant and submissive even though there might not be as many "intense" moments per hour as there are in other scenes. The mind-effect is cumulative, but you've got to think ahead if you're the dominant and plan out what will happen so you can ensure everyone's safety.

## How to Establish a Safety Word for Bondage

- Establish a red, yellow and green system. Like a traffic signal, saying red means stop immediately, yellow means to pause to check in with each other and green means you're okay and it's safe to proceed. Use these words in whatever way works for you and your partner, as long as you both know what action each word should provoke.
- Come out of character during role-play and use your partner's real name. Instead of saying "Mistress" or calling your partner "Doctor Dominant," for example, you simply say his or her real name and they will know to stop and untie you immediately.
- Establish a visual signal when verbal words aren't possible. If you are gagging your submissive or otherwise obstructing the ability

to speak, have him or her hold something during bondage and drop it if they need to stop the scene.

- Make up a word or phrase that only you and your partner know. Use it for a safety word and agree to stop the scene immediately if your submissive utters it. Then check with him or her to find out what went wrong and if they want to continue the scene or end it for the night.
- Use a weird word or one that you most likely would not use during sex. A word like "aardvark" or the name of your town is not something you normally yell at the peak of ecstasy. Choose something you don't say every day and make its meaning during bondage clear.

### Tips & Warnings

- When one is thinking of binding a partner, you need to be very aware of the position you want to put your partner into. Standing, kneeling, suspended and complex bondage becomes very uncomfortable, causing the person to fatigue very quickly. If you are thinking of doing any of these, watch the time, as 15-20 minutes is the maximum a person's body can tolerate in an uncomfortable position.
- Bearing in mind that when any part of the body is overhead (i.e. arms spread-eagled above the head, legs raised higher than rest of the body) the limbs lose feeling very quickly, due to lack of blood circulation. Ask your partner constantly whether that tingly feeling has started. Once it starts, you need to move them into another position.
- Also keep in mind that body temperatures drop drastically, when one is immobile. Please pay special attention to keeping your bound partner warm.
- Bear in mind that any material made out of a synthetic fibre (i.e. silk scarves, nylon stockings and the like) are very dangerous to use in bondage. The first reason being that they pull tight, making it almost impossible to release the bondage in a hurry. You generally have to cut it lose. Secondly, when pulled tight, the bondage starts to pinch the skin, cutting off circulation. The best bondage materials to use are leather (i.e. belts, cuffs) and cotton rope.
- Please don't buy the gimmicky handcuffs found in most adult shops. They do not have a "double lock", which means that they tend to get tighter and tighter through movement. The best kinds of handcuffs to buy are the real police handcuffs, which have a double locking system. These can be found almost anywhere.
- Do not leave a restrained person alone for any reason.
- If you use a gag on the submissive your responsibility for observing increases. Remember, that the risk also always increases with a gag and make sure your submissive can breathe properly through their nose.
- Another general rule is that you should be able to free a bound person within one minute of an emergency occurs, even if they have fainted. Wise BDSM players keep special "paramedic scissors" or similar items handy to help with this.
- During bondage scenes it is the duty of the dominant to take care of the submissive. It's your responsibility to watch for any breathing problems or signs of circulation problems. Watch not only for lack of breathing but hyperventilation.
- Practice tying and untying the knots you are going to use and never use rope of a smaller diameter than 0.5cm or thicker than 0.7cm on the body.
- Never obstruct the throat with a rope by crossing a rope across the front of the neck. Figure out how to make the rope cross on the back side of the neck. Never tie a rope around the neck.
- Take care in the amount of strain on joints (wrists, knees, back, neck, elbows, shoulders, etc.)
- There is never any need to tie some part of your partner's body so tightly that it "goes to sleep." Watch out for constriction of nerves and blood vessels. Watch for signs of tingling, numbness, abnormal colour, or coldness in extremities. If any of these symptoms occur, loosen the bondage immediately.
- Check the ropes as you are tying for tightness. Always leave it loose enough to get one finger between the rope and the submissive's skin. Check ropes often to insure they don't tighten because of body swelling or twisting.
- Communicate with the bound submissive from time to time to ensure he/ she is okay. Use a safe signal to allow him/ her to alert you of a problem.
- With more coils of rope used around the body or extremities there is less chance of cutting off circulation because there is more surface area used.
- Avoid relying solely on safe words for communication. A safety word is no substitute for responsible BDSM play. Knowing your

partner and his or her facial expressions, physical limitations and tolerances for pain and being bound is more effective than any safe word. Pay attention to each other and combine caring with safety words to ensure a safe and fulfilling time together.

- Bondage creates dangerous vulnerability. It is recommended that you let someone tie you up, blindfold you, or gag you only after you have first done at least two successful BDSM scenes with them that involved no bondage.



### This is how you clean me...

There is always the possibility that bodily fluids will be transferred onto your ropes. Your ropes therefore should be thoroughly disinfected after each and every "play" session to avoid the transfer of AIDS and Hepatitis. You should also try and avoid using your rope on more than one person at a time.

The best way to clean your rope is to place them in a pillow slip, tie an elastic band around the entrance of the pillow slip so that your rope can't fall out. Place this pillow slip in your washing machine (along with the necessary washing detergent), and machine wash at 30 degrees. To make your ropes softer for the skin, add a little fabric softener to the wash load.

Once the wash cycle is complete, hang your rope in direct sunlight to air dry.

### Have fun! Play safe!



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