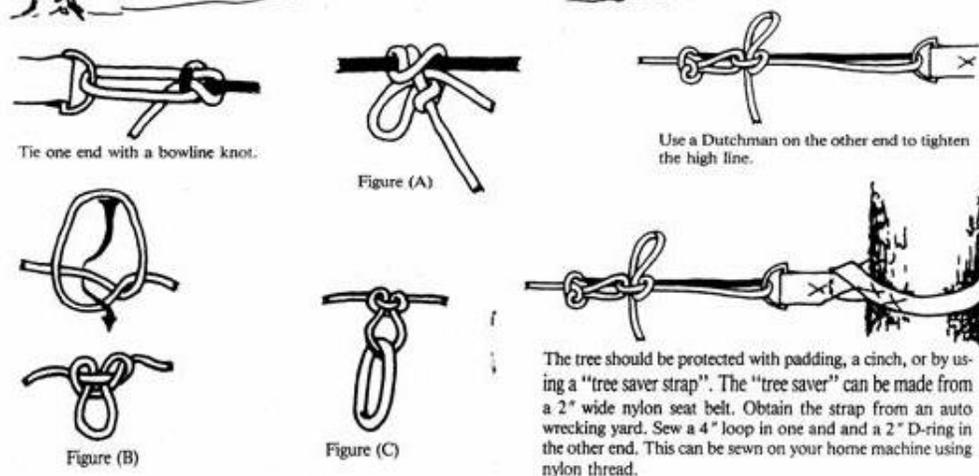
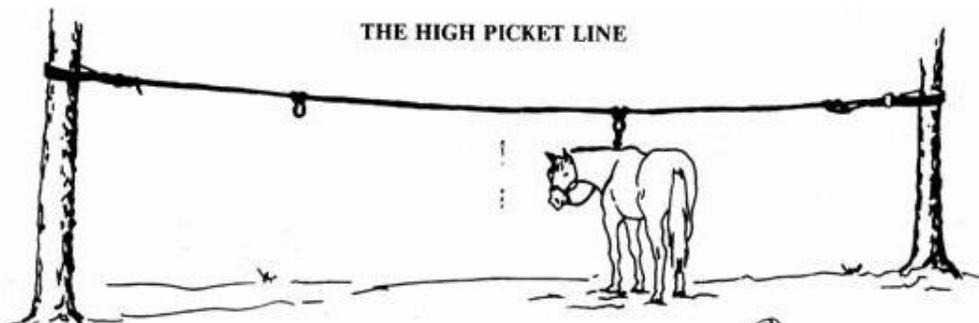


## Highline Highlights

A *highline* or *high picket line* is a rope stretched between two trees to which you tie your horse, providing a safe and practical tying method while camping overnight with your horse. Highlines offer horses the opportunity to eat, walk around in a circle, lie down and even roll while tied. Highlines are the simplest lightweight solution to containing stock in the back country, and when done correctly and responsibly, leave very little evidence that you have been there. Practice at home and both you and your horse will be ready for overnight backcountry camping!



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\* Choose an area that won't be unduly harmed by stock: a dry spot outside of camp with little vegetation under the highline. Avoid tying horses over tree roots, or close enough to a tree for them to rub or chew on it. Choose two sturdy, firmly rooted live trees, at least 12" diameter, and at least 15'-20' apart with no branches to injure your horse. Make sure the ground is clear of any debris that could injure your stock if they lay down or choose to roll.

\* Wrap a Tree Saver Strap, old cinch (never use a lash cinch) or gunnysack around the tree at least

7'-8' high. Secure a 3/8" or 1/2" rope (polyester is strong & doesn't stretch) to the Tree Saver D ring with a quick release bowline knot. Stretch the rope between the two trees.

\* While the line is loose, place knot eliminators, In-Line Swivels or loop knots (picket line, lineman's or butterfly knots) 7' away from trees, with at least 7'-10' space between each horse, or further if necessary, to prevent tangling or fighting.

\* Make a loop (Dutchman's knot) in the line 5'-7' from the unattached tree to create a 2:1 pulley system for stretching the line tight. Run the end of the rope through the second Tree Saver D ring and back to pass through the loop in your line.

\* Pull as tight as possible to take slack out of the line and tie off with a couple half hitches. Pull down hard midway along the highline to stretch it, then untie the end, take up the slack and re-tighten, tying off with half hitches. Tuck any remaining line out of reach of your stock animals. The highline will likely stretch and have slack in it by morning, so re-tighten as needed.

\* Use flat web or leather halters rather than rope halters and use leads with swivel snaps to prevent tangling and injury.

\* Tie the lead rope to the knot eliminator or line loop, just long enough to allow your horse to touch his nose to the ground directly under the knot, when he pulls the line down slightly, to enable him to eat. Any longer, and he might put his foot over the rope, which could cause a wreck and injury. Place his feed under the knot. Haybags can be hung from the highline rather than feeding off the ground, if preferred. At night or while unattended, shorten the leads to prevent horses getting a leg over the rope. Tie so his nose is about 2' from the ground.

\* If your animal constantly paws, hobble train him at home and get him used to being tied for hours at a time before your overnight trip. Use hobbles if necessary on the highline, but use extra caution not to tie the lead too long.

\*\* *Precautions to remember:* \* Never tie a saddled animal to a highline. \* Keep highline high and tight.

\* Use a swivel in line loop or lead rope. \* Keep the lead short enough to prevent getting a leg over it.

However, always keep a sharp knife handy to free a horse in trouble.

\* Before leaving the campsite, inspect the highline area for horse damage. Be sure to fill in any pawed holes, spread the piles of manure, and if possible, spread some cover over the ground scar to assist in regrowth.

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