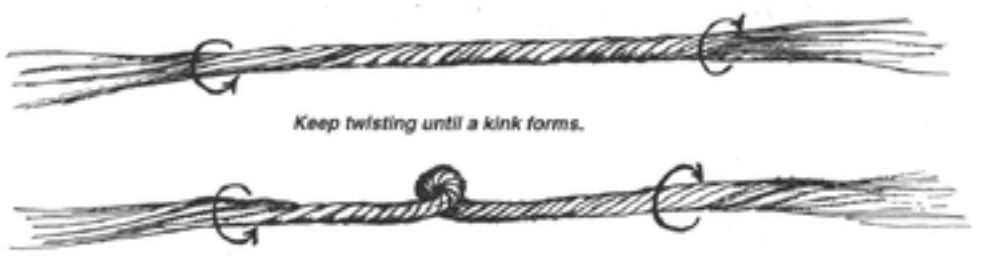
THE CASE OF THE STRONGEST CORD — CORDAGE-MAKING INSTRUCTIONS

MAKING CORDAGE: FINGER TWINING METHOD

1. A bundle of plant fiber half the thickness as the finished cordage was prepared.

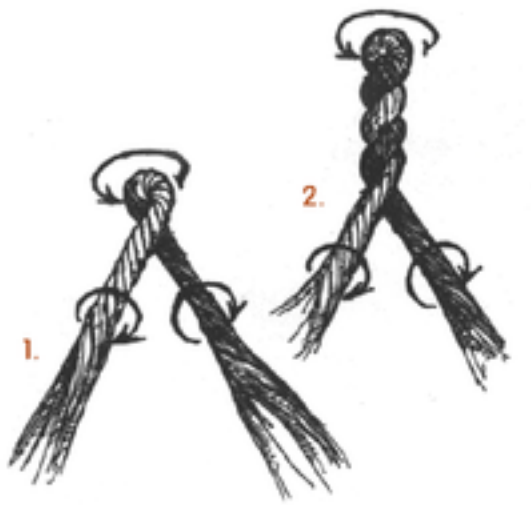


2. Both hands were placed one third from the ends of the fiber bundle. There would be six to twelve inches of fiber between the hands.

3. The fiber bundle was twisted (twined), in a clockwise direction, using both hands. See image above. Twisting the fibers tightly made a single, even strand of cordage.

4. After twisting, a kink would form in the middle of the strand. See image above.

5. As the twisting continued, the kink brought the single strand together and made a double cord. (See numbers 1 and 2 in image.)



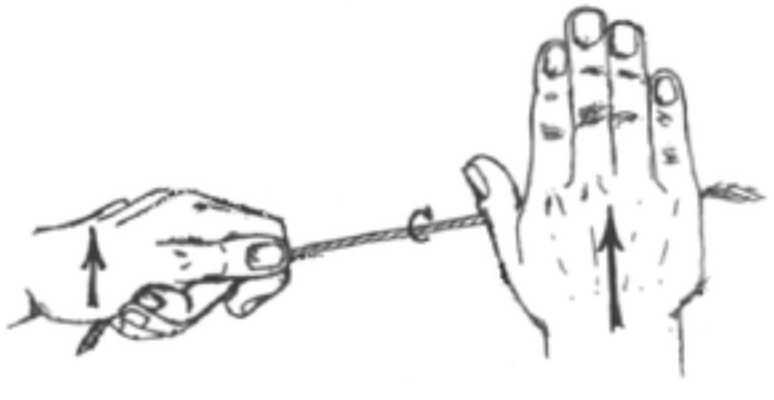
6. Twining the fibers in a clockwise direction produced a S-twist to the strand.

7. Twining the fibers in a counter-clock-wise direction produced a Z- twist.

MAKING CORDAGE: LEG ROLLING METHOD

1. The leg rolling method was started with a few plant fibers.

2. Using the right hand, the fibers were rolled under the palm against the right thigh.



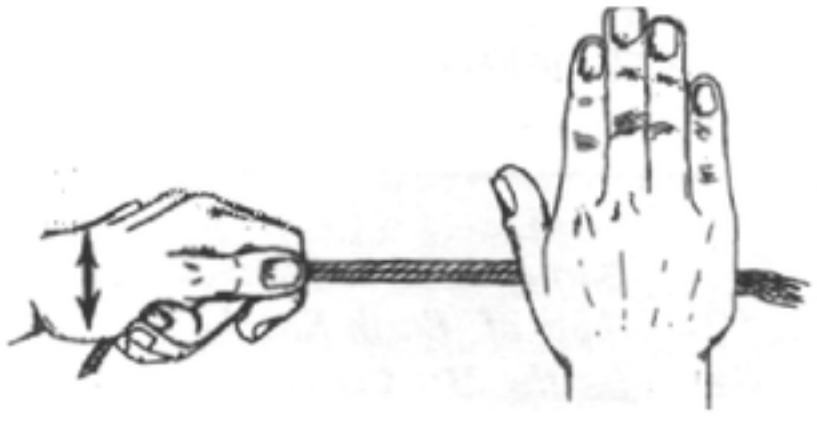
3. Rolling was done with a pushing motion towards the knee. This made a one-ply strand with a S-twist.

4. More plant fibers were taken and twined with the same method.

5. Then the two sections of cordage were held together with the left hand.

6. The right hand pulled the two strands together towards the hip.

7. Pulling the strands together towards the hip made a two-ply cord with a Z-twist.



MAKING CORDAGE: SPLICING

A problem with making cordage was that the fiber lengths were too short for the production of long strands of cordage.

Splicing in new lengths of fiber made long strands of cordage possible. Splicing is a technique where, before the first strand of fibers had run out, new fibers were added into the twining process.

Figure 1: Using either the finger method or the leg rolling method, the strands of fibers were twined until three to six inches remained. Somewhere between three to six inches from the end, a new strand of fibers was placed parallel with the original. These new fibers overlapped an inch or two beyond the cordage.

Figure 2: The new strand was twined in with the original.

Figure 3: The twining continued as before.
The excess overlap fibers were cut or clipped so that the cord was smooth and strong.

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