

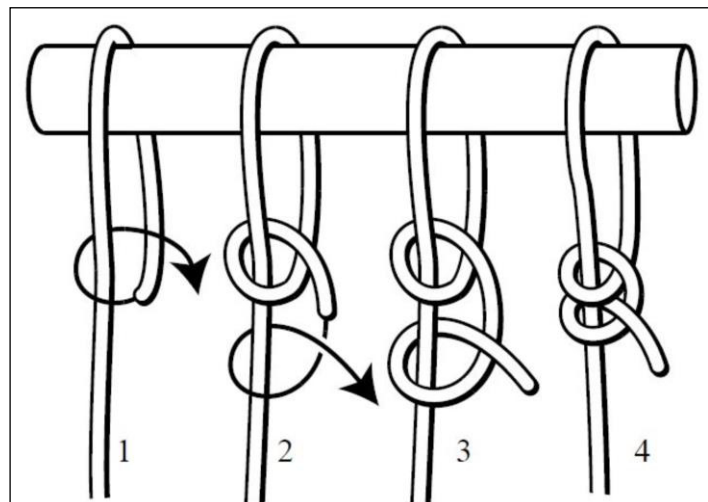
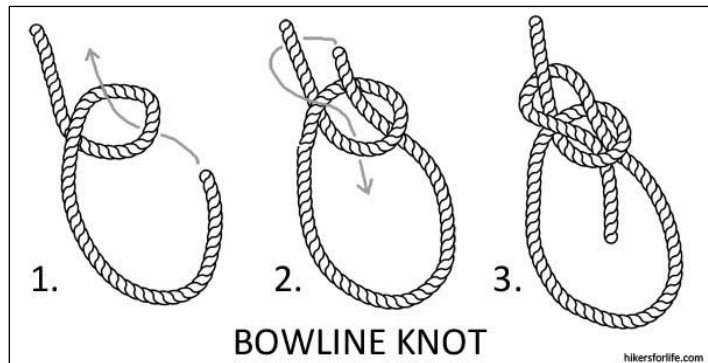
## Bracing With Cord

**When to Brace with Cord:** Bracing a headstone after repairing a break is almost always necessary when working on a tablet marker. The stone is often too thin in proportion to its height to allow it to go unbraced. Sometimes the joint is so rounded that the stone literally won't stay upright without bracing. You can brace with angled boards and clamps. There are many methods and configurations. But one good method that is inexpensive and effective: bracing with cords and stakes.

**Materials Needed:** The only materials needed with this method are 3/8" sash cord and 18" or 24" 1"x2" stakes. Sash cord is good because it stretches little and holds up well in the elements. The 1"x2" stakes are good because their relatively strong to their size and inexpensive. These simple materials make a good alternative in cemeteries where clamps might be stolen.

### Steps to Bracing:

1. Start by making "permanent" loops on the end of several 36" and 48" lengths of sash cord. Two of these sash cords will be used to loop around your tablet marker. The best knot for the permanent loop is a bowline. (We have a bucket of cords so we use different color tapes on the ends of the cords to differentiate different lengths.)
2. Loop the two cords around your stone fairly tightly *without* the stakes. One should be low and one should be high, preferably above and below the repaired break. This can often be done before you affix the stone while it is still on the ground. Use two half-hitches through your permanent loop to cinch up your loop around the stone.
3. Insert your stakes *flat* once the headstone is vertical, two on each side, points up.
4. Rotate the stakes on the front side of the stone 90 degrees to tighten up the cord.



5. Rotate the stakes on the back side of the stone 90 degrees to tighten up the cord even more.
6. Push the stakes gently downward to meet your base to brace your stone from falling forward or backward.
7. To really cinch up the cords, carefully push the stakes on the smooth backside of the stone toward the outer edges. You want to do your stake movement on the backside of the stone so as not to accidentally rub the front of your headstone.
8. Double-check for plumb and that you didn't open your joint during the bracing procedure.

