

# TRAIL TIPS NUMBER 4

## Start With a Bowlin Knot or Make a Set of Grazing Hobbles

*By Terry Wagner*

What a great trip. Everyone made it to camp and you're about ready to turn your mules out to graze in a fresh mountain meadow. You reach for the grazing hobbles only to notice that one has the tongue broken out of one of the buckles. In a recent article we showed grazing hobbles, and in this series of articles, how to tie a bowlin knot. The broken grazing hobble is not a problem if you have a 6-7 foot length of rope handy.

Grazing hobbles are a set of hobbles that allow more length in the connection between the front legs so it's easier for the mule to graze. We have demonstrated how to tie a standard bowlin knot and a duel line bowlin, or to be more exacting, a bowlin on a bight. With the duel line bowlin more than one wrap can be taken on a post, tree or around a mules neck or leg. You tie the bowlin knot into the loops, just as you would tie a regular bowlin.

To make a set of grazing hobbles, simply tie a duel line bowlin knot around both front pasterns, leaving about 10-12 inches between the front legs. If the rope you are using is of a small diameter, take more wraps around the mule's pastern, ending with a bowlin knot. Be sure that the wraps around the pastern are all pulling against the mule with the same amount of pressure. This will prevent cording of the mule's pastern. Now you can turn all the mules out and enjoy your afternoon.



*Start lying a duel line bowlin knot around one front pastern*



*Pass a loop under the duel lines*



*Complete the bowlin knot and adjust the lines around the pastern*



*Do the same on the opposite leg*



*Finished grazing hobble showing bowlin knots*

**To contact Terry Wagner for information on this article or prior articles, e-mail: [terrywagner@wildblue.net](mailto:terrywagner@wildblue.net)**