

# Making a Fid

## What is a fid?

A fid is a wooden, bone or plastic device to hold open the lay (strands) of a rope whilst it is being spliced.

## Why do we need a fid?

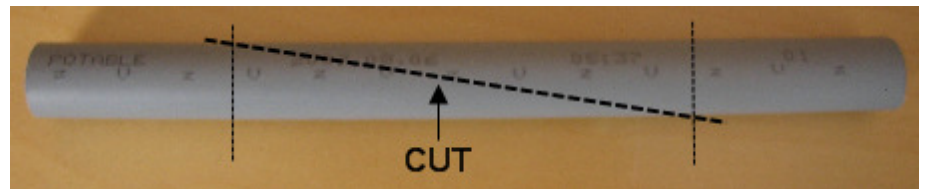
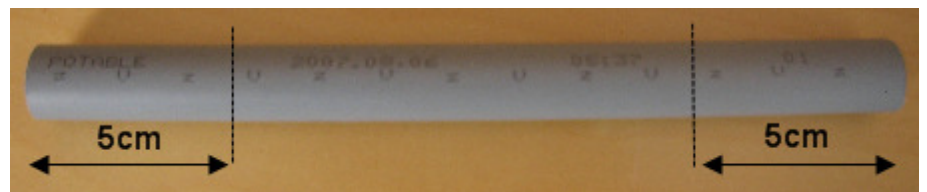
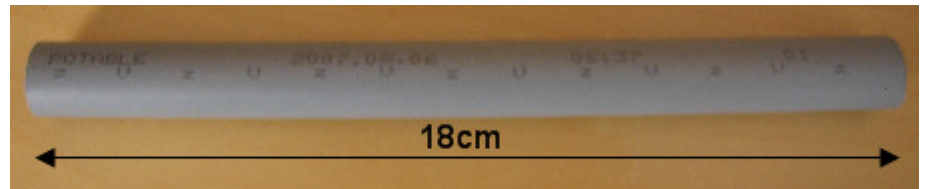
When splicing you need to hold the strands of the rope apart whilst feeding another strand between them. To hold them apart you need to apply quite a lot of force to untwist the rope. For an adult with the typical Scout 8mm lashing rope this isn't difficult, but for a Scout – who's not as strong and is also trying to tie an eye splice or backsplice for the first time – it makes it all too hard.



## How do we make one?

You can make a fid in a few minutes for very little cost. As follows:

1. Get a length of polybutylene 18mm water pipe – this costs about \$3/metre (which would make 10 fids) from any plumbing supplier or hardware store.
2. Cut off an 18cm length with a fine bladed hacksaw making sure that the ends are 'square'.
3. Mark off the pipe 5cm from each end:
4. Cut between the lines as shown using a fine toothed hacksaw:



The cut needs to be straight and smooth. To achieve this clamp both ends of the pipe on top of a piece of scrap wood (so you can cut down into it). Then use the clamps as a 'blade guide' to keep the blade in place whilst cutting vertically down.

5. All that's left is to remove the rough edges from the completed fid using fine emery paper.

