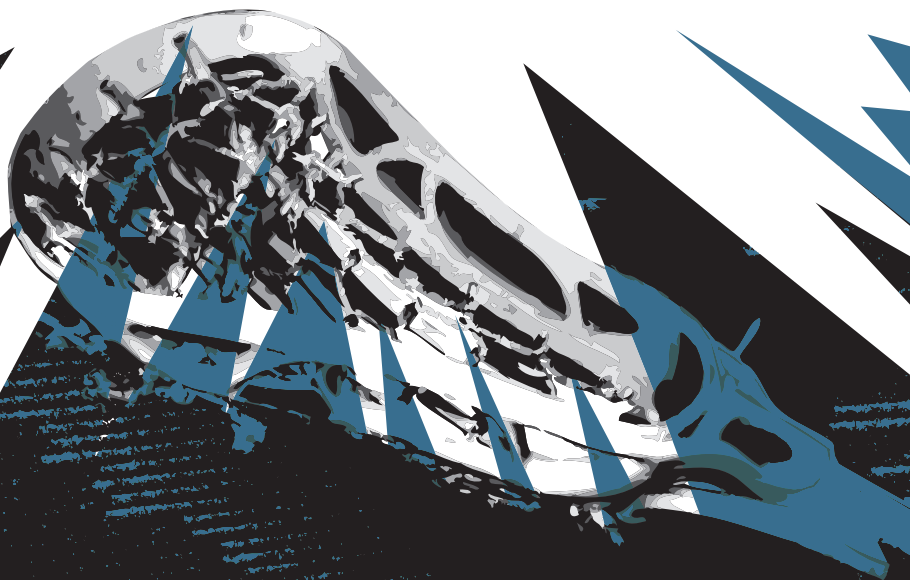


L A C R O S S E

STRINGING MANUAL



TRADITIONALLY STRUNG POCKET

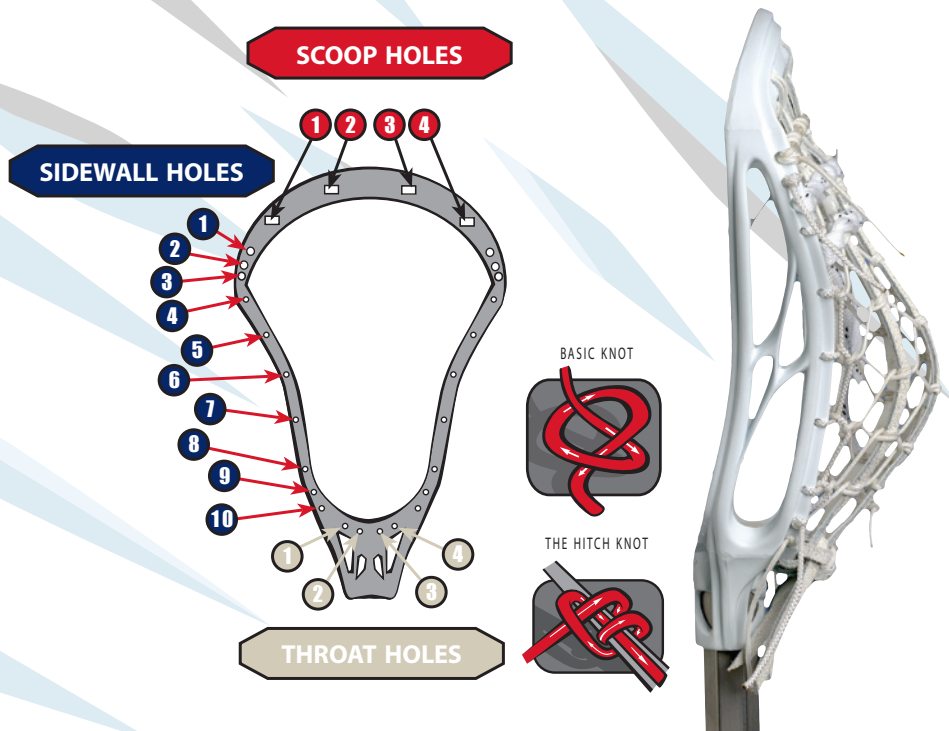


PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT BY THE WORLD'S BEST LACROSSE PLAYERS

GETTING STARTED

I am often asked what kind of pocket I use and why. I have used a traditionally strung pocket my entire lacrosse career. I believe that if you know how to string, break in, and adjust a traditional pocket, it can help your game dramatically. Since I am a shooter, the release of the ball is very important to me. While mesh pockets work for some players, I have found that traditional pockets work best for my style of play. There is no doubt that mesh pockets are easier to string, more consistent, and more durable than traditional pockets, but I feel that the benefits of a well-strung traditional pocket can far outweigh the drawbacks. Here is my method for stringing and breaking in a traditional pocket.

Jesse Hubbard



1. MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE PROPER TOOLS BEFORE STARTING: I use needle-nose pliers to grab and pull strings, a knife to cut, a lighter to burn ends, and athletic tape.

2. IDENTIFYING THE STRING: The sidewall strings (2) are braided cords. The cross-lace is the thin nylon string. There should be plenty of it in the kit. The hockey laces (3) are flat and have black stripes. The shooting string (1) is thick nylon.

3. PREPARING THE LEATHER: After opening your kit, stretch the leathers flat and keep them from bunching up.

4. POSITIONING YOUR UNSTRUNG HEAD: It is easiest to string while you face the back of the stick and with the head on a handle.

SIDEWALL STRINGS / LEATHER INSTALLATION

INSTALL SIDEWALL STRINGS

STEP 1



SIDEWALL STRINGS (PHOTO 1)

Starting at the sidewall string second from the top, loop the string through the outside of the sidewall string hole two holes down. Feed the string through the loop and continue this pattern down every hole ending at the second-to-last sidewall hole. Repeat this on the opposite sidewall. Make sure that the sidewall strings are relatively tight and tied off with knots.



PHOTO 2

STEP 2

INSTALL LEATHERS

LEATHERS (PHOTO 2, 3)

Before inserting the leather thongs, it's a good idea to make sure they are straight and stretched out. Feed the tipped end of the leather thong through the scoop hole until reaching the first slit in the leather. The rough side of the leather should be facing you and the smooth side should be on the pocket side. Feed the tip of the leather through the slits in the thong as shown in PHOTO 2.

Pull the leathers tight and tape them securely to the handle as shown in PHOTO 3. (Alternatively, you can feed the leathers through the lower leather holes, but this will make cutting the leather slot more difficult. More on that later.) Also, I like to tape the loose ends of the leathers around the shaft so that they stay in place.



PHOTO 3

CROSS LACE INSTALLATION

INSTALL CROSS LACE STRING STEP 3

PHOTO 4



PHOTO 5



CROSS LACE (PHOTO 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

There are many different ways to string the cross lace, but the basic idea always remains the same: create "diamonds" by weaving the lace up and down so that it locks around the leather thongs. I have been using the following method for a while and it seems to work for me.

Starting at the lowest sidewall string on the left sidewall, weave the cross lace diagonally back and forth around the first leather and the left sidewall string. Make sure you wrap the lace around the **BACK** of the leather and over the **TOP** of the sidewall string as PHOTO 4 displays. Keeping this pattern is very important. Space the diamonds evenly by weaving around each sidewall loop only once.

When you reach the top of the stick, feed the cross lace through the leather and continue back down the pocket, so you are creating diamonds. This time you should feed the lace around the **BACK** of the second leather and around the **BACK** of the first leather. When you reach the bottom, you should add a small slit in the leather and feed the lace through it as shown in PHOTO 5. If you are using a sharp knife or tool, be very careful. (Alternatively, you can use a small plastic zip tie to fasten the cross lace to the leather.)

Once this is done, continue weaving the lace up between the second and third leather. The lace should go around the **BACK** of the third leather and around the **BACK** of the second leather (PHOTO 6). Once you reach the top, feed the lace through the top of the leather and continue down in the same pattern.

When reaching the bottom, cut another slit in the leather and feed the lace through it (PHOTO 7). Continue with the same pattern back up the pocket, wrapping the lace around the **TOP** of the right sidewall string and around the **BACK** of the fourth leather. Tie off the lace in the top sidewall hole (PHOTO 8). If this is confusing, refer to the pictures and follow them exactly.

CROSS LACE INSTALLATION

PHOTO 6



PHOTO 7



JESSE HUBBARD



PHOTO 8



SHOOTING STRINGS INSTALLATION

INSTALL SHOOTING STRINGS

STEP 4

PHOTO 9



PHOTO 10



PHOTO 11



PHOTO 12



PHOTO 13



THE SHOOTING STRINGS (PHOTO 9, 10, 11, 12, 13)

I like to use cross lace for my top. Shooting string. I lay it across the pocket twice and then add the twist for the third time. I think the tension of the cross lace gives me the best release. For the second and third shooting string, I use hockey laces woven as PHOTOS 11, 12, and 13 illustrate. These hockey laces give me the "hold" and smooth release that I need. I like to have my shooting strings evenly spaced and progressively looser as you go down the pocket. Hooping strings are very subjective. Experiment with different types. Some people use all hockey laces and some use actual nylon "shooting strings".

Remember, there is no correct way to string shooting strings. If it works for you, then it's good.

TRADITIONAL POCKET INSTALLATION

BREAKING IN THE POCKET

STEP 5

PHOTO 14



PHOTO 15



PHOTO 16



PHOTO 17



BREAKING IN THE POCKET (PHOTO 14, 15, 16, 17)

I think that the break-in period is the single most important aspect of producing a high-performance pocket. It takes me usually 2 weeks of pocket-pounding, cradling, passing, and shooting before I would consider playing in a game with my stick. The strings need to break in and stretch out before you can expect the pocket to hold the ball and throw. The first thing you want to do is loosen the leathers and sidewall strings. Then beat the pocket in and see how deep it gets. You may need to tighten the leathers up once you have beaten it in a little. Once the cross lace grabs the leathers, your pocket will take shape and get deeper. Notice the difference between the pocket in PHOTO 14 and the pocket in PHOTO 15. I usually have to tighten the shooting strings after throwing because these strings stretch dramatically. Gradually tighten them so that you have a nice smooth release. The top shooting string should be the tightest, the second one should be a little looser, and the bottom one should be the loosest while still providing tension (PHOTO 16 and 17).

Remember, learning to string takes patience and practice, but it can be very rewarding. The stick is your tool and it needs to be fine-tuned in order to maximize your performance. When your stick is performing well on the field, you will definitely have more confidence. Good luck and kick butt.



POCKET POUNDER™