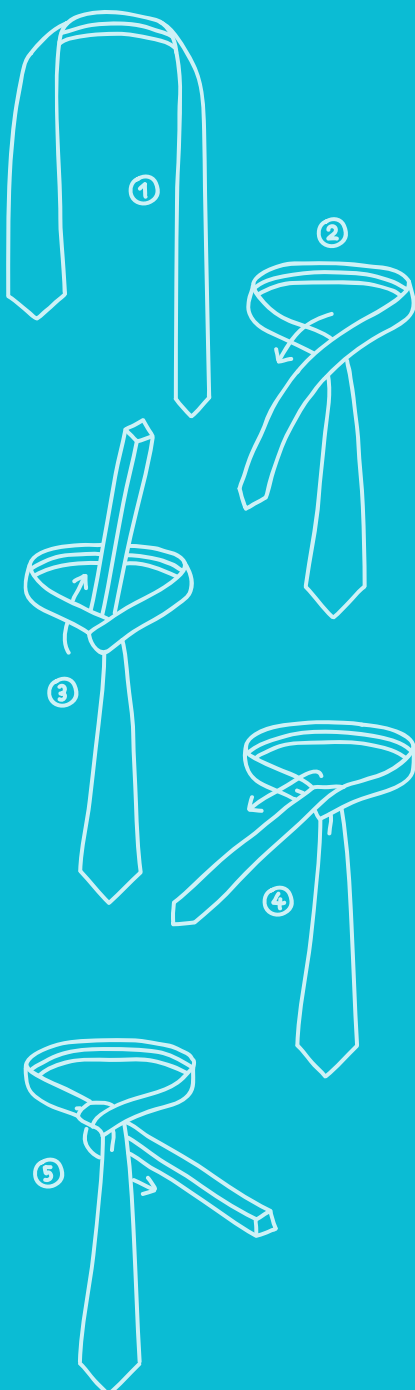


All Tied Up

with Shiraz Khan

The gentleman's neckwear represents a quintessential requirement of formality. It's often the difference between what's considered smart and what's considered smart-casual.

This can bear many forms, such as cravats for that country look, or perhaps bow ties for black-tie events. However, a staple classic is the tie. Apparently, the necktie evolution started with King Louis XIII, who hired Croatian mercenaries who wore a piece of cloth around their neck for function (tying up the top of their jackets) as well as for decorative effect.



CROATION NECKTIE

The cravat, as it is now referred to, was the first formal piece of neckwear and went through several modifications to come to the three most commonly worn as above-described. Although it must be said variation does indeed exist, but not always for the better!

Floppy Bow-tie



Photo: Tie Mart (tiemart.com)

As history stated, in the early 1900s a tie was a 'must-have' clothing accessory for men, and I would say it is a 'must-have' accessory for men today still. There are a plethora of different knots and their forms, but this will provide a rough guide to the key main types.



Photo: Tie Mart (tiemart.com)

Four-in-hand knot

This is the simplest of knot types. It literally requires the larger side of the cloth to be longer than the shortest side, and requires one overlap and a thread-through. It provides a small, inconspicuous knot which can often be uneven but looks great with a cutaway collar.



Photo: ties.com

Half-Windsor knot

This is again a common tie form, providing a medium-size knot which is reasonably even and relatively straightforward to do. Usually for semiformal occasions and medium tie widths.



Photo: ties.com

Full Windsor knot

Then the next most common—you guessed it, is the full Windsor. This provides a very symmetrical knot which is large in size and generally is the common 'banker' type knot that you will see.

Works very well with club ties, just as the half-windsor does. Although, doesn't look great with a thin collared shirt.

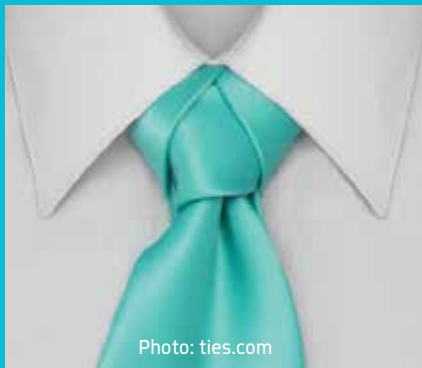


Photo: ties.com

Café knot

This is where it starts to get interesting: Knots that appear to be inside-out. In these cases it is generally the thinner arm, also known as the tail, that does the majority of the work. This provides a medium-sized knot which is even. Looks great on plain or block-coloured ties.



Photo: ties.com

Eldridge knot

Finally and perhaps my favourite knot—that good old boy, the Eldridge. For those movie fans out there, the first place I saw this was with the Merovingian



in *Matrix Reloaded*. It was the knot! It is medium-sized, again uses the tail for all of the folds, and requires a bit of patience as it is complicated. It's rather fancy, not really for day-to-day—but, hey, you can wear it to the gym if you like. Here is a picture of it.

So that is my breakdown of tie knots. For those who are interested in learning how to tie these knots, if you pop over to YouTube, there is a channel called TieHole ([youtube.com/user/tiehole/videos](https://www.youtube.com/user/tiehole/videos)) which includes some excellent tutorials on how to do the ties. ■



**Enjoy and see those fancy knots soon.
Shiraz**

