

String Serving

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Serving a string by winding thread around it is done to protect the string from wear and tear in vulnerable areas, prolonging its life. The area where the fingers pull the string is served on all types of bowstring.

Starting the serving

Serving can be done using a reel of serving thread. Various materials are available, the most used being soft twist nylon. A serving tool which releases the thread under tension can make the job easier. Uniform tension is vital throughout the job and needs to be very tight to avoid loosening of the thread in use.

Having marked the desired location of the serving on the string, hold the bow horizontally over your knees with the string uppermost. Serve from left to right, winding the thread over the top of the string. *NB: All the winding and finishing of the serving continues in this same direction.* To start, open a gap between the strands of the bowstring half an inch from the left end of the area to be served and insert the end of the thread a couple of inches. Form a loop over your left forefinger and begin winding the thread tightly over the top and around the bowstring, covering the loose end as you go.

Lay 12 closely packed loops tightly around the string with the loose end inside. Then, keeping the loops under tension, pull the free end of the thread tight and trim off the excess. Continue tightly wrapping the string till you reach half an inch from the end of the area to be served.

Finishing off the serving

The diagram may assist in finishing off the serving securely. Keeping the winding under tension, make a large loop in your left hand that will be big enough for the reel or serving tool to pass through. Continue to wind 12 times around in the same direction, still winding over the string but *inside* the big loop. These turns don't have to be tight, but the big loop itself must be held tight to avoid any of the served area loosening.

Lay the reel at your left with the thread along the string. Now transfer the loop from your left to your right hand and wind it around the string, covering the thread from the reel as you go. Having wound 12 loops tightly and closely around the bowstring you will be left with a loop in your right hand. Lift the reel and pull this loop through the last half inch of the serving. Cut off the thread close to the bowstring.

