

## The Redrock Readiness Newsletter

Episode 9: The 411 on 550 Cord

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“My son, keep thy father’s commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck.”

--Proverbs 6:20-21

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Hi guys! Maybe it’s just us, but watching the Olympics fiasco in Russia (or following its Twitter feed @SochiProblems) makes us think about emergency preparation. In this case, Sochi is an example of what NOT to do! There are Olympians over there are lacking shelter and water—two cornerstones of survival!

Today we’re wrapping up our overview of tools with the ever-popular **550 cord bracelet!**

Danielle has been getting a few queries about her electric blue 550 cord bracelet. 550 cord was originally used for parachute suspension lines in World War II (which is why it’s sometimes referred to as parachute cord), but it’s still used today by the US military due to its **reliability and toughness**. Strangely enough, somewhere along the way bracelets woven out of this military-grade rope have become something of a fashion accessory. (Beau: I find this incredibly funny.)

550 cord gets its name from **the load-bearing tension it can hold before breaking**—550 pounds. There’s a lot more to this bracelet than meets the eye: **if you unravel a properly braided 550 cord bracelet, you get several feet of tough line** you can use in an emergency. (Or you can use the Beau method and just **keep a couple of spare lengths or spools around** for an emergency.)

550 cord can be bought at **REI, Sports Chalet, military surplus stores, or online** (Danielle: that’s where the superfancy colors are!). You’re looking for the **7-strand nylon cord**, not any synthetic junk.

Important note: **DO NOT USE THIS CORD FOR ROCK CLIMBING OR RAPPELING!!!**

Beau: So a little background on 550 cord bracelets. Way back in the dark ages (1990’s) yours truly was a humble little Medic with the US Army. 550 cord was used for everything: **tying things to other things, tying up people, tying people to other people**...and making “**dummy cords**.” Dummy cords were used to secure sensitive items (night vision goggles, radios...basically anything expensive) to certain forgetful privates. Tying equipment bodily to them directly kept their stuff from being lost...mostly. If their stuff got lost after that, hopefully they’d be lost with it!

There are plenty of **YouTube videos** out there that can teach you how to braid your own bracelets—just do a search for “Paracord Bracelet” or “550 Cord Bracelet” and let the arts and crafting begin! And don’t think you have to stick to bracelet-sized weaves: you can really go wild and make small tires out of the stuff!

Until next week, stay warm and be safe!



Beau has threatened to send me to Kitty Rehab for my alleged tuna addiction. Now, I don’t have an addiction, I can quit anytime I want to. I just don’t wanna!!

Since Beau is no longer enabling me, I’ve had to take matters into my own two little paws. My first attempt failed (Beau could hear the electric one starting up), so I stole his military P38 can opener. After sneaking some time on Beau’s smartphone (because he STILL won’t buy me my own! :( , I found this video on how to use the P38!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tCY6n5Mcgk>

With a little practice, all the tuna will be MINE!!1