

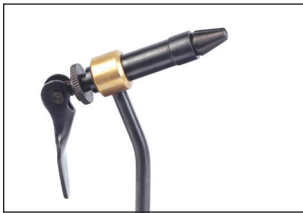
Tying The Woolly Bugger



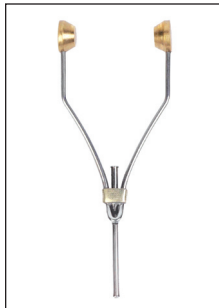
The woolly bugger is a versatile fly that can be used in many different fishing situations. It is also a good fly for beginners to learn to tie. The skills that are required in order to tie the woolly bugger are fundamental for the tying of many more difficult flies.

The woolly bugger is a suggestive pattern, rather than an imitative one. This means that it suggests or looks like many food items but does not necessarily imitate anything specific. Therefore, material colors can vary.

Tools



Vise



Bobbin



Scissors

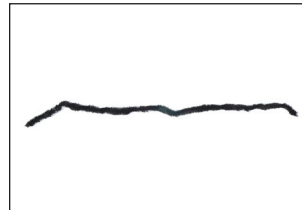
Materials



Hooks (Size #8 or #10 wet nymph hook)



Thread



Chenille



Hackle



Marabou



Head cement or clear nail polish



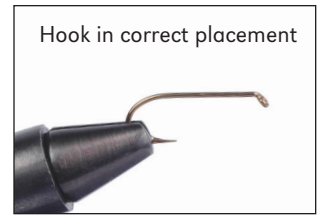
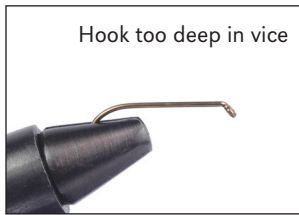
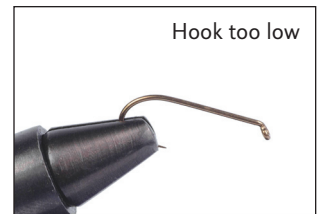
MinnAqua is the statewide angling and aquatic education program of the Minnesota DNR, Division of Fish and Wildlife.

This is a step-by-step approach to tying the wooly bugger. The skills that will be focused on will be wrapping, tying in materials, and finishing the fly.

1. Securing the Hook into Vice

Inserting the hook into the vice is the first step in tying the wooly bugger. When inserting the hook, it is important to keep these things in mind:

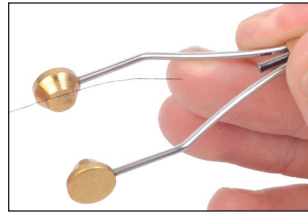
- The shank of the hook is level
- The hook is inserted the right depth into the vice
- The vice is attached at the right location (lower bend) on the hook



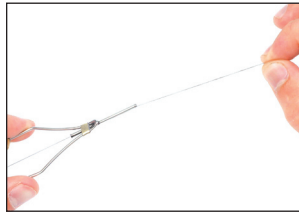
2. Setting up the Bobbin and Thread



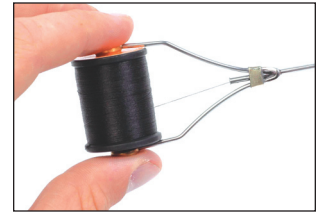
The bobbin is the fundamental wrapping tool in any fly tying. Before tying can begin, you must guide the thread from the spool through the bobbin.



Peel off approximately 5 inches of thread from the spool. Insert the end of the thread into the tube on the bobbin. Push the thread through and pull out at



least 5 inches past the end to ensure it doesn't back out. Some people use an extra tool called a threader to help guide the line through the tube.

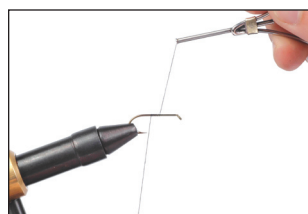


Insert the spool of thread into the bobbin, making sure the open line does not fall back through the tube. Pull the thread tight.

3. Starting the Thread onto the Hook



After the hook is secure in the vice and your thread is on the bobbin, the next step is to start wrapping the thread onto the hook. Hold the loose end of the thread against the hook shank with your left hand.



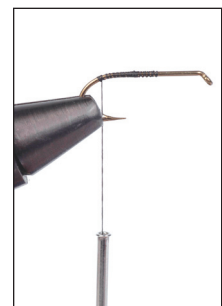
Wrap the thread over the hook and around the shank toward the eye. The correct technique is to wrap the thread away from you going over the hook and then toward you coming underneath it. Do this at least five times.



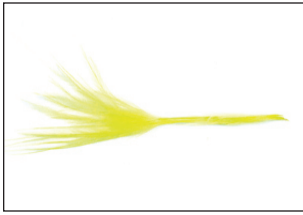
Next wrap the thread back toward the hook over the previous wraps. After the thread is secure, trim the free end of the thread near the hook.



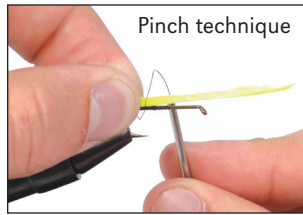
Continue to wrap the bobbin and thread toward the rear of the hook until the thread is slightly down the bend. If you let go of the bobbin it will hang near the barb of the hook.



4. Tying in the Marabou



Choose a piece of marabou. The color can vary. Wet your fingers and slick down the piece of marabou. Place the marabou along the shank of the hook with the free ends at the bend of the hook.



Pinch the marabou near the eye of the hook. This is the amount of marabou that will make up the tail of the fly. Move your hand and the marabou to the back of the hook where your bobbin is hanging.

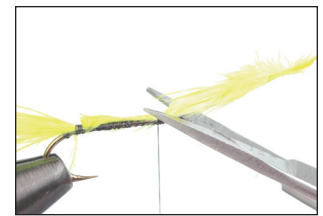
The next step is to tie in the marabou using the pinch technique. With your thumb and forefinger pinching the marabou against the hook shank, wrap the thread around



the hook and inside of your thumb and forefinger. This wrap should be loose when going around the hook and then the thread should be pulled tight. Repeat this at least three times.

Lift the stem end of the marabou up away from the hook. Wrap the thread in wide loops toward the eye of the hook.

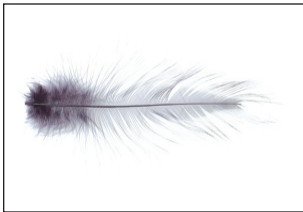
Use the pinch technique again to secure the marabou to the hook near the eye. Make sure to stop



both the thread and materials a short distance from the eye to ensure they can be correctly secured when finishing the fly.

Wrap the thread back to the bend of the hook, securing the marabou in place. Trim the marabou in front of the eye of the hook.

5. Tying in the Hackle



Select a piece of hackle feather that is approximately 4 inches long. Make sure to use the part

of the feather that is clear of fuzz, which may be found near the stem of the feather.

Hold the hackle with your thumb and forefinger at the tip. Use your other hand to pull the fibers below your thumb against the grain.

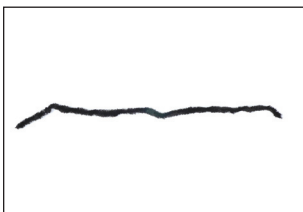


Hold the feather over the hook with the tip pointing to the eye of the hook.

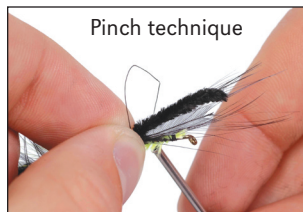
Align the hackle so that the separation, where the fibers go in different directions, is over the bend of the hook. Use the pinch method to tie the hackle in place.

Do not wrap the hackle yet!

6. Tying in the Chenille



Select a piece of chenille approximately four inches long. Lay the chenille along the top of the hook in the same way as the



marabou and hackle. Secure the chenille at the bend of the hook using the pinch technique.



Make wraps along the length of the material toward the eye of the hook. This will secure



both the hackle and the chenille to the shank of the hook.

7. Wrapping the Materials

Materials should be wrapped in the opposite order they were tied in. This means you should wrap the chenille first, and then the hackle.



With the thread and bobbin at the eye of the hook, take the chenille and make tight wraps along the shank of the hook toward the eye. These wraps should be close together but not overlap and should end

a short distance from the eye where the thread and bobbin are located.

When the chenille is at the same place as the thread, lift the excess material up away from the hook at an angle. Take the bobbin and make a few wraps directly behind the material on the vise side. Do this at least three times and then trim the excess chenille. Do not cut the thread!



Make a few extra wraps with the thread to secure the material to the hook and cover the end of the chenille.



With the bobbin and thread still hanging near the eye, take the hackle and begin wrapping toward the eye. As you do this, the fibers from the hackle will protrude out from the hook. This technique is called "palmering." Wrap the hackle in the grooves between the wraps of

chenille. You should only make six or seven wraps before reaching the bobbin and thread.



Tie off the hackle using the same method used to tie off the chenille. Trim the excess hackle and secure the material with a few more wraps.

8. Finishing the Fly



To finish your fly you will want to make several half-hitch knots where all the materials are tied just behind the eye of the hook. You can use a tool call a whip finisher to do this, but you can also use your fingers.

Take your left hand and hold the bobbin. Wrap the thread around your right forefinger making a loose loop.



Carefully slide the loop off of your finger and onto the hook near the eye. Tighten the loop a short distance back from the eye of the hook. Repeat this process at least three times. Cut the thread as close to the fly hook as possible.



Take the fingernail polish and put a small amount near the head of the fly where you tied in the materials and tied the half hitch knots. You can do this with the brush from the nail polish or with a toothpick. Make sure to keep the nail polish right near the head of the fly otherwise it will seep back



into the materials and damage the fly. Let it sit in the vise for a few minutes to let the nail polish dry.

You just tied your first fly! The wooly bugger can be used to catch trout, bass, sunfish, and many other species of fish. Go wet your line and see what you catch!

Practice tying additional wooly buggers to improve your skills. There are many variations to this fly so experiment with different colors to see what works best for you.

