
Net handling simplified: Put your net on a card!

Susan R. Blackshaw

As a new bander, I discovered there was a lot I did not know about the finer points of banding. Handling the net, especially on a solo basis, was difficult. With a little thought and experimentation, I believe I have found the answer!

To get started, begin with the net already set up (the back yard is perfect). First, close the net as you would for taking it down. If using sectional poles, remove the upper half of the poles, leaving the net stretched between the lower poles. Using a common metal shower curtain ring, gather the loops or rubber bands and secure them in the ring at one end of the net. With a second ring, repeat the process at the other end of the net. Do not remove the net from the poles. With "H" card in hand, remove one end of the net from its pole and clip the shower curtain ring onto the card or slide it over one of the projections. Maintain tension to keep the net off the ground. Walk slowly toward the other pole, turning the card end over end, winding the net onto the card as you go, and guiding any overflow of net bagging smoothly onto the card. When you reach the end, remove the loops or bands from the pole and secure the whole net with a rubber band around the entire card. Leave your poles where they are for a few minutes more.

At this point, you can make a simple device for spacing your poles. Get a ball of heavy string or twine and make a knotted loop in one end. Put this loop over one of the net poles. Now, unrolling the string as you go, walk to the other pole. Pull the string until it is firmly stretched from pole to pole. Make a corresponding loop in this end of the string and cut it free. There should now be a line of string stretched between your poles. Start at one end of that looped string and roll it around four fingers as you walk back to the first pole. Take the last few rolls around the body of the rolled string so you finish with a neat, securely-rolled ball of string. Take down your poles.

Now you are ready to set up. Select your banding spot (you may want to rehearse in the backyard first). Drive your first net pole into the ground. Remember the string? Put a loop of that string over the net pole. Carrying your other net pole, walk to the end of the string. Drive your second pole into the ground at the end of the string. Your poles are now correctly spaced. Re-roll your string back into its secure little ball and pocket it.

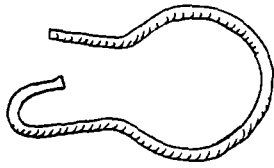
Now for the net. Pick up the "H" card and remove the securing outer rubber band. Put the end bands, still locked in the shower curtain ring, over one pole. Maintain tension on the net to keep it clear of the ground. **Back** slowly toward the other pole, unwinding the net as you go, until you reach the second pole. Put your end bands over the pole and unhook the shower curtain rings. If your top trammel is marked for identification, you will be able to align your loops easily on the poles at this point. Put on your top poles and open your net!

With very little practice, you will be able to set up your net and take it down very quickly with a minimum of snarls, tangles, tantrums, or tribulation. ☞

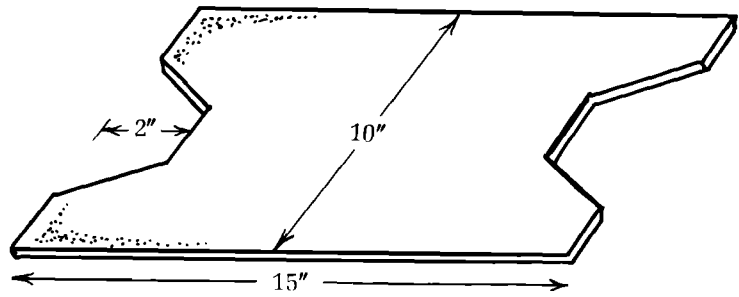
1333 Westmoreland Ave., Syracuse, NY 13210.

"H" card construction: Plexiglas — or any sturdy, lightweight and waterproof material — is suitable for the card. A jigsaw or similar fine-toothed saw can be used to cut the pattern. Sand all edges smooth. The illustrated dimensions will handle five-meter nets. Modifications may be required for larger nets.

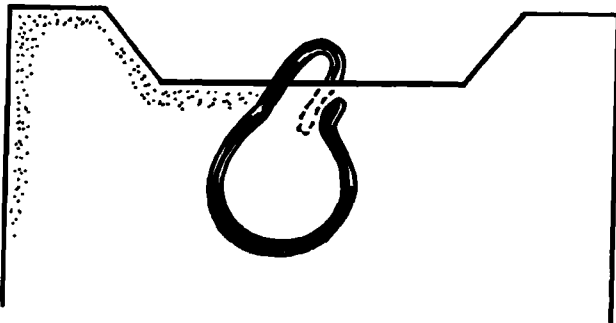
Shower curtain ring



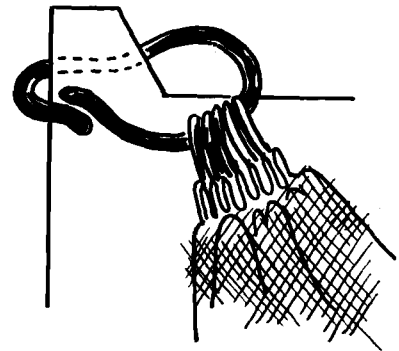
"H" card



Shower curtain ring will fit over the end projection



Or it will clip onto the card



A net wound up around the card.
More than one net can be wound on one card.
The entire card can be put in a plastic bag
to protect against snags.

