

How to Tape an Ankle

PURPOSE: The purpose of a proper ankle tape is to secure the foot and ankle in a position where it is less likely to roll, or invert. The roll, or inversion, stretches the joints restraining ligaments which normally hold the joint stable, and it causes them to either stretch or to tear, thus reducing the restraining stability of the joint. At it's basic nature, a successful ankle tape should be comfortable yet restrictive, and functional while protective.



THE ANKLE TAPING PROCESS

While there are several different styles of ankle taping that vary based on individual preference and the individual needs of the athlete and the athletic trainer, the following is intended to provide the reader with the basic attributes that are prevalent in most ankle tapings. For questions regarding specific athletes or conditions, contact your Certified Athletic Trainer.

POSITIONING

The ankle should be positioned where the foot and toes are pulled back towards the shinbone. This position is known as dorsiflexion.



PREWRAP

Prewrap is designed to aid the athlete in comfort. By reducing the friction between a flexible ankle and an inflexible ankle tape, the athlete's chances of receiving a blister are reduced. Likewise, make sure that the prewrap is free from wrinkles, as this will also be likely to irritate the athlete's skin and cause blistering.



ANCHOR STRIPS

The first anchor should be attached half on the skin of the shinbone, and half on the prewrap. Consecutive anchors should follow down the shinbone with the same half on, half off principle until the tape arrives just above the large knobby bone on the outside of the ankle.



FIRST HEEL LOCK

The heel locks are designed to pull the ankle away from the inverted, or rolling position. The first heel lock starts on the outside of the ankle, proceeds across the long arch of the foot, down around the outside of the heel, and back up to the top center of the ankle.



SECOND HEEL LOCK

The purpose of the second heel lock is also to pull the ankle away from the inverted, or rolling position. Start on the top, center of the ankle, and go out, away from the body. Follow around the



back of the ankle, and then cross the inside of the heel from the bottom of the achilles tendon to the base of the heel bone, around the lower portion of the bottom of the foot, and back to the top center of the ankle.

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FIGURE 8

The figure of 8 continues the process of pulling the foot away from the inverted, or rolling position. Start on the outside of the ankle, just like the first heel lock. Move across the top center of the foot, around the bottom of the long arch of the foot, back to the top center position, around the inside of the shinbone, continue around the outside of the shinbone, and finish back at the top center position.



BASKET WEAVE

The basket weave utilizes the strength of a webbing pattern to continue pulling the foot away from the inverted, or rolling position. It consists of two different strips, the stirrup and the horseshoe.

Stirrup: Start on the inside of the shinbone, on the first anchor strip, and pull the tape down towards the heel, around the foot, and up the outside of the shinbone to the outside of the first anchor.

Horseshoe: Start on the inside of the ankle, just below the inside knob of the shinbone, and go around the back of the lower ankle to the outside knob.

Repeat: Alternate between stirrups and horseshoes until you have 3 of each. Each successive stirrup should be half on the previous stirrup, and each successive horseshoe should be half on the previous horseshoe.



CLOSING STRIPS

The closing strips finish the ankle tape. Start at the top center of the ankle, and apply an anchor strip all the way around the lower part of the shinbone, just above the bony knobs of the ankle. Place the next anchor on the top half on the first strip. Continue this process until you have reached the top of the ankle tape.



As always, contact your Certified Athletic Trainer; Darren Lunow, at (918) 346-7800, if you have any questions or concerns.