



How To Sew With An Awl

Learn to sew with an awl.

Written By: Brittany McCrigler



INTRODUCTION

So you've got your [Patagonia Expedition Sewing Kit](#) and you're ready to hit the trail. But before you go, how about getting to know the tools you're taking along on your adventure?

You never know when you're going to need a repair in the rain, at night, at 10,000 feet.

An awl is a tool that allows you to sew through very thick materials. It takes a bit of practice to master, but once you have it down you'll be ready to repair boots, webbing, and packs on the fly.



TOOLS:

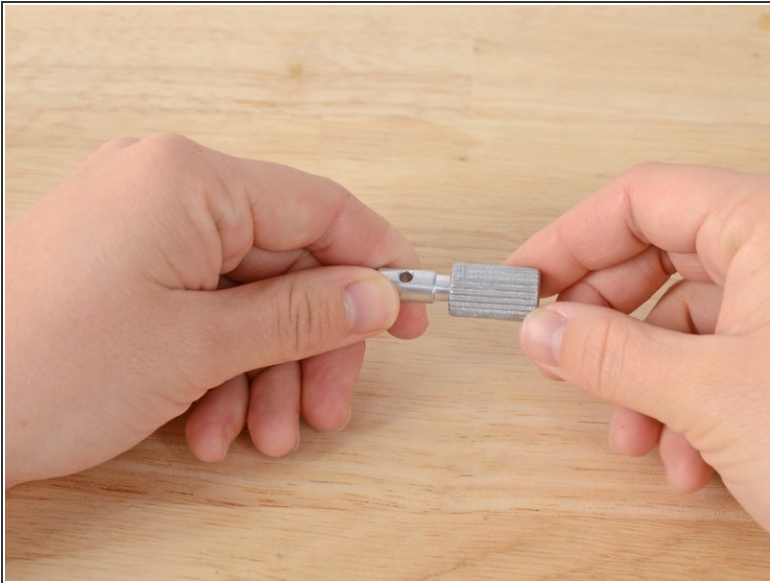
- [Awl](#) (1)



PARTS:

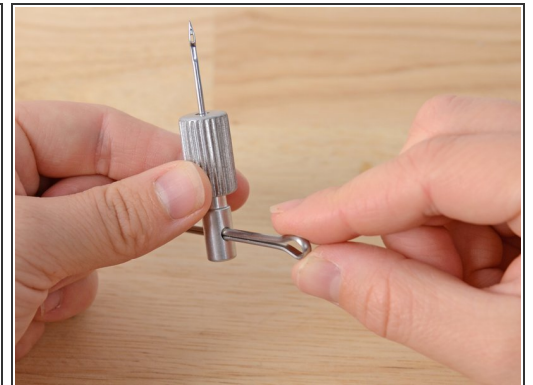
- [Spool of Thread](#) (1)

Step 1 — How To Sew With An Awl



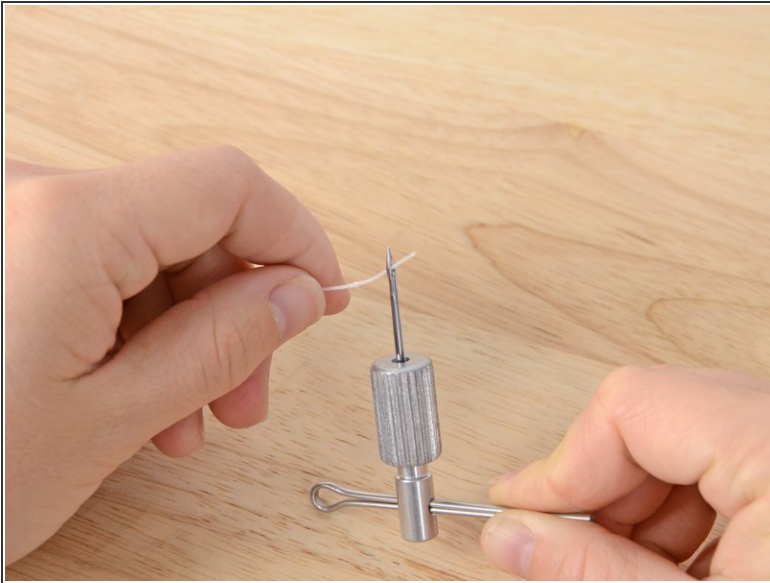
- Loosen the awl by holding the smooth end and twisting the ridged piece counterclockwise.

Step 2



- Insert the needle into the ridged end of the awl, with the eye facing outward.
- Retighten the awl by holding the smooth end and twisting the ridged end clockwise.
- Insert the [cotter pin](#) into the hole in the smooth end.
- ❗ The cotter pin provides a nice handle for working with the awl.

Step 3



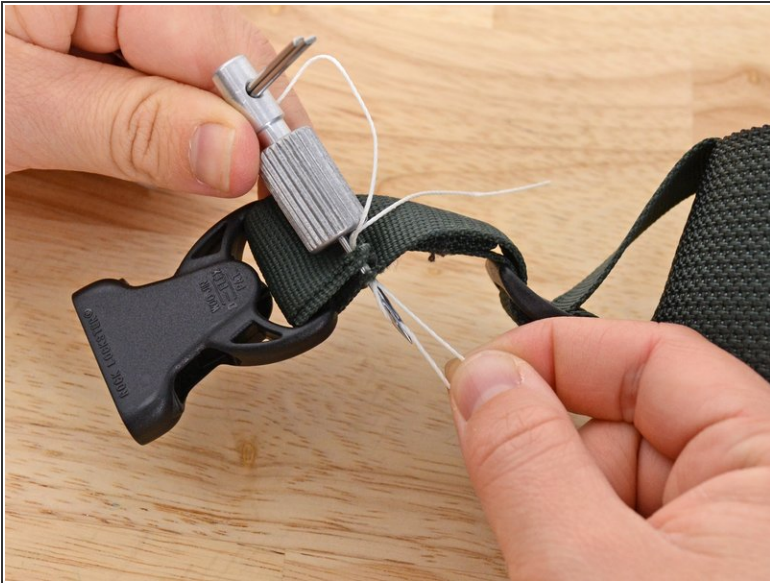
- Thread the needle with very thick thread.
- Align your material. In this case we are resewing the webbing holding a buckle in place.

Step 4



- Stab the threaded needle of the awl through all the layers of fabric you are sewing.
- ⚠ Thick material is very hard to puncture. Be careful not to puncture yourself in the process.
- ℹ If you are having difficulty puncturing the material, you can use a vice to hold the material in place, or place something on the backside of the material to puncture into. A rubber eraser works great.

Step 5



- Pull the short end of the thread through the material, so that it dangles free on the other side of the material.

Step 6



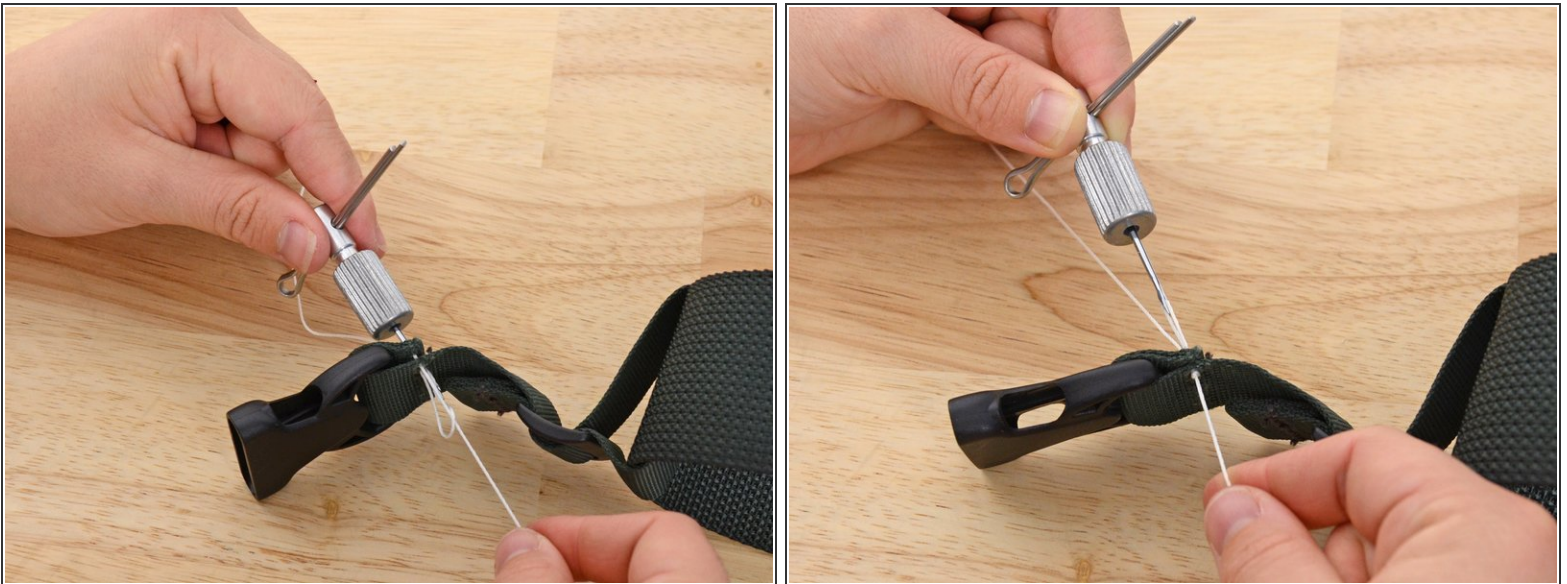
- While holding on to the short, free end of the thread, carefully pull the awl back through the material.
- ⓘ The short, free end of the thread should stay on the other side of the material.
- Continue holding the short, free thread, and puncture the material again a short distance away, moving along the material you are sewing.
- ⓘ This distance will become a stitch. Try to keep your stitch length short and even.

Step 7



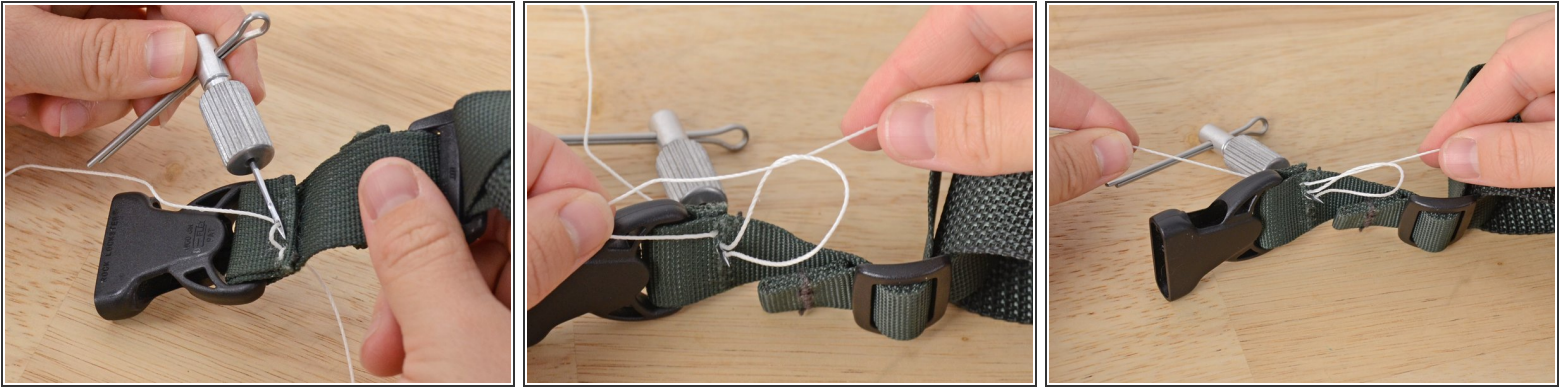
- Pull the thread from the eye of the needle, creating a loop.
- Put the short, free end of the thread through the loop you just created in the thread.

Step 8




- Holding the short, free end of the thread taught, pull the awl back out through the material.
- Pull both ends of the thread taught.

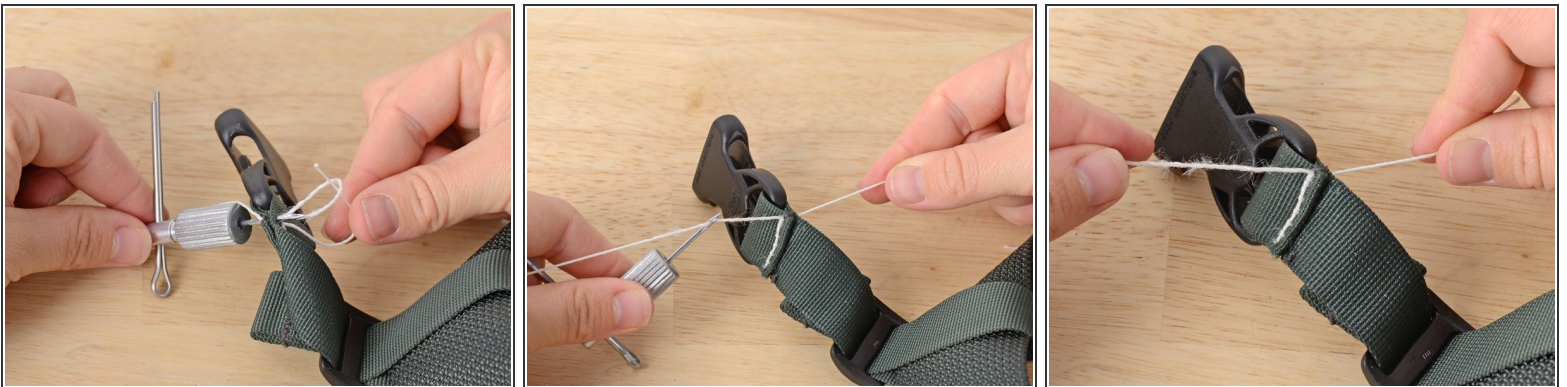
Step 9



- Continue reinserting the awl, creating a loop of thread from the eye of the needle, threading the short, free end, and removing the awl to create your stitches.

 While you are getting the hang of it, refer back to steps 6-9 of this guide.

Step 10



- When you come to the end of your material, take one last stitch.
- Clip the end of the thread that runs through the needle, leaving enough length to tie a couple of knots.
- Remove the awl.

Step 11



- Tie an overhand knot with the two ends of the thread.
- Pull taught.
- Tie another knot or two to secure the stitching.

Step 12



- Clip the threads, and admire your handiwork.

