

How to Wrap Puttees

by O’Ryan’s Roughnecks,
27th NY Division, 107th Infantry

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In a uniform replete with uncomfortable features (tight, standup collar and breeches) no feature of the uniform is more uncomfortable than puttees. It is also one of the most distinguishing features of the Doughboy uniform and when done correctly nothing looks sharper. Improperly wrapped puttees give the overall impression of sloppiness. If not done correctly they will be loose, will unwrap and fall down around the ankles. Puttees should cover the area from the ankle all the way up to the back of the knee.*

1) Start with the puttee rolled up with the tie tape to the inside of the wrap. Begin the wrap on the inside of your leg (just above the ankle bone) and wrap around the front of your leg to the outside. Complete two wraps tightly this way.



2) After completing two wraps around the top of the shoe, bring the puttee up from the inside of the leg, across the front to the outside of the leg just below the knee. Wrap twice there and bring the puttee back down across the leg, this time from the inside of the leg below the knee to the outside of your leg at the ankle. In other words you have made an "X" across your shin.**

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3) Now continue to wrap the puttee upwards, overlapping each wrap by half and pulling tightly. Tight is the key. Even if they are uncomfortable to start they will stretch slightly. The final wrap should be neatly parallel to the ground and the triangular portion with the tie tape attached should be to the outside or back of the leg. (You may have to move your starting point slightly to achieve this. Trial and experience will soon show you where you need to start so that it will end in the correct spot.)



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4)Wrap the tie tape around the center of the last puttee wrap, pulling it tightly as you go. Tuck the free end back under to hold it in place. Again, experience will show you the best way to keep it held tight. Avoid knotting it. They are hell to untie, especially if they get wet.



Always remember to wrap from the inside, across the front of your leg to the outside.
That means each leg is wrapped in a different direction.

NOTES ON ABOVE

*You NEVER see pictures of Doughboys with their puttees extending only half way up the leg. This presents a problem for the reenactor with large calfs. The solution is an extra puttee. Find one that matches the pair you wear. Cut the extra one in half and sew each half to the bottom of the pair you use.

** Some reenactors eliminate this step without any problem. See what works for you BEFORE YOU TRY IT IN THE FIELD.

ALTERNATE METHOD

Start from the bottom and wind tightly. After 3 or 4 wraps rotate the roll (in your hand) 180 degrees while in the back of the leg and do it every time you get to the back of the leg. After a few trials you should get the hang of it. What this does is stretch the outside edges of the legging more then the center and this keeps it snug.

(This alternate method came from a gentleman who served in the Army in the 1920's when puttees were still worn)

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