



Conclusions from a comparison of rope-cutting tools

A [Port d'attaches](#) (Paris rope collective, [Fetlife](#)) initiative,
led by [@Pavese](#) with help from [@May_Dosem](#) in November 2025.
English translation edited by [@andemira](#). Original French available [here](#).

Our comparison project

In the shibari community, it is important for the rigger to have access to a pair of scissors capable of cutting rope in an emergency (such as fainting, fire, etc.). However choosing the right tool is complicated, as there are many options available and no comprehensive comparison to help evaluate them.

Therefore, this year Port d'attaches allocated part of its budget to purchasing and testing a wide range of scissors recommended online, in order to determine which are the most effective. The goal was to provide an initial comprehensive analysis that community members can rely on when purchasing their own equipment.

The testing protocol

Important: Port d'attaches is sharing here its own opinions and observations, which are necessarily subjective. Additionally, the gear and its manufacturing processes may have changed since the test date (November 2025). Always do your own research before purchasing rope gear, and only use equipment that you have personally tested and approved.

The testing protocol and results [are available here](#). Here's a summary of our conclusions:

Jesco scissors : a basic solution

Traditional medical scissors (the “Jesco” model as we call it in France) are ubiquitous in the shibari community. They're simple, sold for around €3, and work quite well for cutting rope. They aren't the most efficient at cutting, nor the most comfortable to use, and certainly not the most durable, but they remain a good choice, especially at that incredible price.

Their Chinese knockoffs, sold on Temu for 30% of the usual price in Europe, also cut ropes quite well. However, the three pairs of scissors ordered from Temu were all significantly smaller than standard medical scissors, which raises serious doubts about their long-term durability.

XShear: by far the best scissors we've tested

To level up your gear, **during our testing one tool stood out in a big way: [the XShear 7.5](#)** ("Heavy Duty Trauma Shears"), originally designed to cut through bandages, wetsuits, motorcycle gear, and more.

These shears cut through rope like butter. Even compared to other high-quality shears we've tested, the difference was enormous. They're simple, ambidextrous, easy to use, and extremely sturdy. All for €40. (Their [smaller version](#), which we also tested, is excellent as well but seems a bit less safe.)



On the other hand, Leatherman's [Raptor Rescue](#), sold for over €100 and sometimes described as the Rolls-Royce of rope cutting tools, cut through jute strands just fine but nothing more, while being quite painful on the hands to use. In fact, for this usage we didn't notice any significant difference in effectiveness compared to its Chinese knockoff, which sells for one-tenth the price. But since the tool's reliability is a key factor (you'll be using it in emergency situations—it's not the time for it to break), it's not necessarily a great idea to buy a cheap replica from an untraceable seller.

Strap cutters: a tool to avoid

Finally, the test revealed just how unsuitable strap cutters are for shibari. Their blades are more exposed than with scissors, and to cut rope you have to make a sawing motion or pull extremely hard toward you (at the risk of something else getting caught in the blade when the rope cutter suddenly releases). A lot of effort and increased risk... for a worse result than even basic scissors.

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