



03 Belly-Flying Turning

Pre-requisites

To learn how to turn left and right while belly-flying, you first need to be able to belly-fly in a neutral body position, hold that position stable, and control any unwanted forward or backward movement.

Objectives

The primary objective is to be able to safely and successfully demonstrate a left and a right turn while belly-flying, aiming to remain in control, stable and in the center of the wind tunnel throughout.

Preparation

You will start in the center of the wind tunnel, off the net, facing your coach. Your coach will give you a signal to turn either left or right. You should plan the timing of your stop based on what turn you are doing (90°, 180°, 270° or 360°) and how fast or slow you are turning. Obviously, the faster you are going, the sooner you will need to begin your movements to stop. Once you have stopped, you can then start a turn in the opposite direction.

You should be stable and under control throughout all of your turns, using the skills you already learned to stay in the center of the wind tunnel.

Technique and drills

Turning (Basic)

Beginning in your neutral position, you will first learn to turn only using your upper body.

Bank your shoulders, allowing the airflow to be deflected, creating the power to turn

As you bank your shoulders, make sure that your spine continues to remain straight at all times and avoid bending your spine to one side or the other.

Maintain your arch position throughout the turn.

Manage the position of your legs during your turns to prevent any unwanted forward or backward drive during your turns.

To stop the turn, you will need to reverse your movements and start a turn in the opposite direction. Doing this will allow you to stop the turn fairly quickly.

If you over-turn or under-turn, you'll need to adjust the point at which you started your movement to stop. For example, start slightly sooner if you over-turned or slightly later if you under-turned.

Once you've stopped the turn, return to your neutral position.

Turning (Advanced)

You will begin these turns in your neutral body position.

For the advanced turns, you'll move your upper body and your lower body simultaneously.

The goal will be to rotate around your center point. To do this, you'll move your upper body and lower body in opposite directions at the same time.

Your upper body position for this turn will be the same as for the basic technique.

Deciding which shoulder will be the lower shoulder will depend on which knee is the lowest knee. For example, for a left turn, your left shoulder will be lowered and your right knee will be lowered.

As you lower the knee down in to the airflow, angle your lower leg placing the inside of your lower leg in to the airflow. Doing this will create a rudder effect that will help create more power for your turn.

Balancing your upper body and lower body movements is important in order to create an even rotation. Typically, you will require slightly more movement for your lower body than your upper body as there is more mass in this area to move.

When you make any movements for your turns, whether you are starting or stopping, both movements should be introduced together at the same time, even though one is slightly more powerful than the other.

The technique to stop your turns is similar to your basic method with regard to switching from one to the other and also with regard to over-turning or under-turning.

Once you've stopped the turn, return to your neutral position.

Post-Flight Questions/ Suggestions

- How did your performance match the initial objectives?
- Were you stable throughout your turns?
- Were you able to stop at any pre-determined point?
- What did you feel comfortable with and what can you improve on during the next session?
- Were you able to control turns using both the basic and advanced methods?

What Skill Level Is Next?

Once you can successfully turn left and right with control and stop correctly on any pre-determined heading, then you should begin to learn belly-flying up and down (slow and fast fall rate). Continue to improve your turning skills. Work on the advanced method. Make your turns a little faster each time you fly, while staying in control at all times and keeping all of your inputs, starts and stops as smooth as possible.

