



13 Walking

Pre-requisites

Prior to learning how to walk inside the tunnel, you will first at a minimum need to be comfortable completing all of the eight points of motion while belly-flying. Also, if you are planning to begin learning to sit-fly after learning to walk, you will need to be able to comfortably back-fly all of the eight points of motion. These skills, along with a safety briefing on walking and being in a vertical position in the tunnel, will prepare you for learning this skill.

Objectives

The primary objective is to be able to safely and successfully enter the tunnel on your feet, and comfortably walk forward and backward using the airflow to assist your movement while avoiding fighting your body against the wind. You will also learn how to use your arms to control the speed of your movements, understanding how they can assist with moving sideways and with controlling your heading. These skills will be key elements in helping you be successful with all of your upright flying (for example, sit-flying).

Preparation

You will start in the doorway facing the airflow. Once your instructor signals you to enter, you will step in and approach the center of the tunnel. Your instructor will have you adjust your heading so that you are not facing a doorway, or have one behind you, as these can present an obstacle when learning this skill. During the early stages of learning how to walk, you will notice that the wind speed is set low to help you with control. Once you have demonstrated control and stability, the instructor will raise the speed of the wind in small increments.

Technique and Drills

Keep these key elements in mind when learning this skill

Forward

- Begin in a neutral position with your body completely straight and not leaning onto the wind at all
- Keep your arms bent and tucked into your torso
- Your hips should remain over your feet the entire time to keep you planted to the net
- While flexing around your hips, lean your upper body back, placing the top of your spine and shoulders on to the airflow, this will direct the airflow, causing a forward drive
- As you feel the “push” of the wind moving you forward, you will begin to take small steps in that direction as you normally would when walking
- To stop the forward movement, switch your position past the vertical, neutral position and lean forward, placing your chest on the airflow while at the same time adjusting your footing to stop moving



Walking - Neutral

13 Walking

Technique and Drills

Keep these key elements in mind when learning this skill

Backward

- Begin in a neutral position with your body completely straight and not leaning onto the wind at all
- Keep your arms bent and tucked in to your torso
- Your hips should remain over your feet the entire time to keep you planted to the net
- While flexing around your hips, lean your upper body forward, placing your chest and the front of your shoulders onto the airflow. This will direct the airflow, causing a backward drive
- As you feel the “push” of the wind moving you backward, you will begin to take small steps in that direction as you normally would when walking
- To stop the backward movement, switch your position past the vertical, neutral position and lean backward placing your upper back and shoulders on the airflow while at the same time adjusting your footing to stop moving

Advanced Walking

- As you begin to feel comfortable walking forward and backward, the instructor will increase the speed of the wind closer to more free fly type speeds
- As the speed of the wind increases, you will notice each input you make has more power and can produce much faster movements
- Be sure to control your body position to avoid contacting the walls
- You can raise your arms up above your head and as you lean in to the wind, the extension of your arms will be an extension of the wing you are flying, creating more power, which is more speed
- You can place your arms down on to the wind similar to the position of sit-flying and begin to learn how to utilize your upper body for movements while still walking

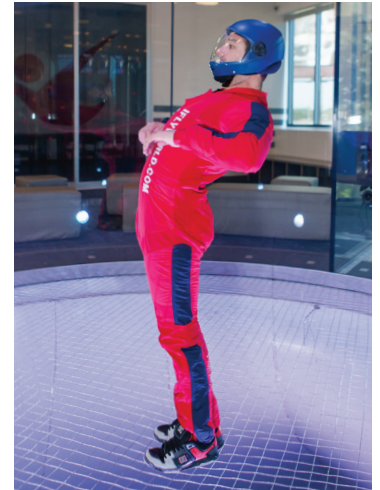
Post-Flight Questions / Suggestions

- How did your performance match the initial objectives?
- Were you able to maintain stability throughout, remaining on your feet and in control at all times?
- What techniques did you feel comfortable with and what can you improve on during the next session?
- Were you able to increase the speed of the wind and continue to stay in control and use your arms extended to feel the extra power?

What Skill is Next?

If you're learning how to walk in order to coach belly-flying, then we encourage you to learn the neutral back-flying position next or learn how to transition from your feet to your neutral belly-flying position and then back to your feet again. Discuss these with your instructor.

If you are progressing down the free-flying path, you should already be confident back-flying, so the next skill you will learn is the neutral sit-flying position. Discuss with your instructor what skill is the best for you to begin learning next.



Walking - Forward



Walking - Backward

