



16 Back-Fly Turns

Pre-requisites

In order to begin learning back-flying left and right turns, you must be proficient in the neutral back-fly position. “Proficient” means that you can fly the neutral back-fly position in a controlled and stable way and you can control both forward and backward movement.

Objectives

The primary objective is to be able to safely and successfully control both left turns and right turns and to be able to stop the turns on a pre-designated heading.

Preparation

At the beginning, you will start on the net to demonstrate the correct neutral body position. Following the neutral position, you’ll adjust your body position to start a turn in a specific direction. Then once you’ve completed the rotation, you will adjust your position to stop the turn. You’ll practice this on the net, rotating in both directions. Then we’ll increase the wind speed, allowing you to perform the same skill off the net.

Technique and Drills

Keep these key elements in mind when learning this drill

Beginner (on the net)

- To start a turn, point both ankles in the direction you want your lower body to travel. Your thighs should remain at 90 degrees to your torso with your torso straight throughout.
- To start a turn with your upper body, based upon the direction you want to travel, rotate one arm, placing the palm of that hand into the wind while extending that arm to “push” your upper body in the opposite direction. Your opposite arm will bend with your hand above your head and again, rotating the wrist so the palm of your hand is in the airflow.
- To stop the turn, reverse those moves to create a drive in the opposite direction, and maintain that position until the rotation has stopped.



Turning with Legs



Turning with Arms



Turning with Arms & Legs

16 Back-Fly Turns

Technique and Drills

Keep these key elements in mind when learning this drill

Intermediate (off the net)

- To start a turn, point both ankles in the direction you want your lower body to turn. Increase the angle of your legs by slightly bending at the knee, lowering your ankles to use all of lower leg to help the turn. Your thighs should remain at 90 degrees to your torso with your torso straight throughout.
- Similar to the basic technique, position your arms to create the movement for the required direction.
- Coordinate the use of both your upper body and lower body positions to aim for a more center point turn. Ensure that the lower body is positioned so its drive is opposite to the drive created with your upper body.
- To stop the turn, reverse the positions of your lower and upper body to create a drive in the opposite direction and maintain that position until the rotation has stopped.
- Begin to include picking up grips after each turn and also presenting your leg grips to your coach for grips to be taken.

Advanced (off the net)

- Start and stop the turns with coordinated use of your upper and lower body.
- To increase the level of difficulty, you can practice turning and adjusting altitude to a pre-determined height at the same time, once you have mastered up and down movement.
- You can also learn to move forward / backward while you are turning.
- Prepare some back-fly routines with your coach to build specific formations.

Post-Flight Questions / Suggestions

- How did your performance match your initial objectives?
- Were you able to maintain control throughout each turn? Were you able to stop with control on the correct heading?
- What techniques did you feel comfortable with and what can you improve on during the next session?
- Increase the difficulty level from beginner to intermediate or from intermediate to advance.
- Try multiple turns in succession – e.g. 90° left, 90° right, 90° right, 90° left.

What Skill is Next?

Once you are able to turn left and right with control and you are able to stop on heading with control every time, the next step in the progression is to learn back-flying, forward and backward movements.

