



## 18 Back-Fly Side-Slides

### Pre-requisites

Before you begin to learn back-fly side-sliding, you will first need to be very comfortable in your neutral back-fly position, off the net at moderate to fast wind speeds, with controlled turns, forward, backward, and up and down movements. At this point, it's likely you will already know how to enter and exit the tunnel on your back, but it is not required.

### Objectives

The primary objective is to be able to safely and successfully side-slide from one side of the wind tunnel to the other, under control the entire time, maintaining a consistent altitude and heading, without contacting the wall at any time.

### Preparation

You will begin back-flying, off the net, at approximately waist level. You should be close to one side of the tunnel and positioned so that you are not facing with your head close to or pointed toward any doorway, as these are obstacles you want to avoid that are sometimes hard to see when you are back-flying.

### Technique and Drills

*Keep these key elements in mind when learning this skill*

#### Basic

- A side-slide will consist of combined movements with your upper and lower body
- For your lower body, rotate both feet so your heels are pointing in the direction you wish to travel
- Push your trailing arm away from your body slightly and your leading arm will shift to a position above your head to create drive for your upper body
- Manage your inputs so that you maintain a consistent heading
- Turn your head slightly so that you look in the direction of your side-slide
- Oppose all inputs in order to stop the slide
- You should plan to stop your slide early enough so that you don't come in to contact with the wall on the opposite side



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#### Advanced

- A more advanced side-slide requires techniques to provide more body pitch which in turn produces a faster result. Keep in mind that the faster you travel, the sooner you must apply a stopping force so that you don't contact the tunnel wall
- Similar to the basic technique, you will need to combine upper and lower body inputs for the best results
- To increase the drive with your lower body, you will slightly bend your knees, driving your heels down in to the airflow as well as rotate your lower leg so that your shins are in the airflow, creating a wing surface from your feet to your knees
- To increase the drive with your upper body, push your trailing arm away from your body slightly, but rotate your leading arm so that your palm is now by your leading hip facing down to the airflow, and driving that elbow down in to the wind
- You can rotate your shoulders slightly, so that your leading shoulder is lower than your trailing shoulder
- All of your upper body inputs should be positioned so that your leading elbow through your shoulders to your trailing hand are close to being in a straight line

### Post-Flight Questions / Suggestions

- How did your performance match the initial objectives?
- Were you able to maintain stability throughout, maintaining a constant speed, heading and altitude?
- Did you feel the difference in power from the basic to the advanced technique?
- What techniques did you feel comfortable with and what can you improve on during the next session?

### What Skill is Next?

During the entire time you are learning back-flying skills, you will continually improve on the last skill you learned as you learn a new skill. It is common that you will learn how to enter and exit the wind tunnel on your back early on in your back-fly progression. If this is the case, then it is advisable that you become very comfortable flying all of the back-flying skills at wind speeds that you will likely be learning to sit-fly at. Discuss this with your instructor.

The next skill to learn at this point can either be the basic sit-flying position or 2-way back-flying. Both are extremely important skills to develop, especially if competing in free-fly is your ultimate goal!

