



61 Head-Down In-Face Carving

Pre-requisites

Head-Down In-Face Carving is among the first of the dynamic movements for free flying bodyflight. First, your instructor will give you a briefing that will cover all of the safety aspects of this movement, along with the basic information for beginning Head-Down In-Face Carving. Prior to learning this skill you will need to have Basic Head-Down checked off, and be in control of Intermediate Head-Down skills for movement. Additionally, it is helpful to have started learning the “Shelf” style flying position position, along with the Sit-to-Head Back Flip transition training, though these skills are not required.

Objectives

The primary objective is to be able to safely and successfully carve around the tunnel on your head, while facing the center of tunnel. Having this position down pat will allow you to start carving with others, and is one of the fundamental skills of dynamic flying routines.

Preparation

You will need to begin in a Head-Down orientation, positioning yourself near the wall, allowing for a small amount space for clean airflow behind you. If you are comfortable in the Shelf position, then switch from your neutral daffy position when you are ready to begin.

Technique and Drills

Keep these key elements in mind when learning this skill:

Basic

- Side slide towards the wall to begin
- Turn to face the center of the tunnel once you have begun moving
- Add in forward drive from your hips to maintain the same distance from the wall
- Add small inputs from arms/legs/torso to manage your speed and altitude
- Look in the direction of your carve

Pro-tips

- The initial side slide can also be accomplished by turning slightly towards the direction you wish to go, starting a small forward drive, and then turning your shoulders back towards the center of the tunnel. This allows the momentum of the drive to get your carve started.
- The more neutral your Shelf position is during the carve (vertical torso, arms and lower legs flat to the wind to balance each other out, head back to reduce drive), the slower you will go. The more relaxed your Shelf position is during the carve (arms nearer your side, legs straighter, head not pulling back), the faster you will go.



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- If you find yourself bumping against the wall more and more, arch your hips to increase your forward drive and keep your shoulders and head pointed towards the center of the tunnel until you pull away from the wall.
- Carving can be done with your head looking in any direction, but where your head looks can change where your shoulders are pointed, so be aware of this effect on your carve while you continue to carve.
- At first, carving can make you dizzy. Rest assured that this sensation goes away after only a little while as your eyes adjust to the moving visuals. Some people prefer to look at the wall during this stage, others prefer to allow their eyes to focus on a point closer in, causing the walls to blur more. Figure out what helps you the best during this learning stage.

Post-Flight Questions / Suggestions

- How did your performance match the initial objectives?
- Were you able to maintain stability throughout while maintaining a constant speed, radius, and altitude?
- What techniques did you feel comfortable with and what can you improve on during the next session?

What Skill is Next?

Once you are carving at a consistent speed, radius, and altitude, start to mix it up a little. Faster to slower, up and down, tighter turns in a small circle and larger turns using the whole tunnel. Learn to carve in both directions, and then begin learning to switch between directions. The key to much of this is controlling where your shoulders are pointed, so don't be afraid to feel them out and get comfortable with how they influence your carve.

