



74 Belly Carving

Pre-requisites

Before learning how to belly carve, you will first need to be sure that you are a very comfortable at belly flying, ensuring that you can confidently move in every direction comfortably, without any concern. It will also be helpful to have comfort in flying on your belly while being able to fully rotate your head from one side to the other from a neutral position and then also rotating your head from a neutral, looking forward position, to looking down and slightly behind you all while maintaining the same position within the flight chamber and not drifting toward the tunnel wall. Being confident at moving your head from side to side and back and forth and understanding how to control yourself will help in overall control while learning to carve.

Finally for the head up or out facing belly carving maneuver, it will be very useful that you have some experience either knee flying and that you are confident flying the belly to back, back flip transition.

Objectives

There are two main objectives that are covered within belly carving, each having their own unique skill set based upon which belly carving maneuver you wish to accomplish:

Carving with head close to center:

- To carve on your belly in a consistent circle around the tunnel with your head toward the center of the tunnel, eventually looking down and behind you.
- This technique should be done utilizing the correct body positions, with special attention paid to your legs, a long body position when necessary and the correct amount of de-arch in your chest at the appropriate time.

The carve should be performed in both directions in order to be considered mastered.

Carving with head close to wall:

- To carve on your belly in a constant circle around the tunnel with your head away from the center, close to the tunnel wall and your knees close to the center.
- This technique should be done utilizing the correct body positions, with special attention paid to your legs, a long body position when necessary and the correct amount of de-arch in your chest at the appropriate time.

The carve should be performed in both directions in order to be considered mastered.

Preparation

To begin, simply initiate a carve in any direction. Subsequently, increase your level while maneuvering your body toward and through the center of the tunnel.

As you cross the center of the tunnel, begin your descent to continue a carve in the opposite direction.

Once you feel comfortable flying this drill, try to time the switch to follow a proper dynamic line, making sure you always look in the direction of your carve.

74 Belly Carving

Technique and Drills

In order to be successful with this skill, keep these elements in mind

Carving with head close to the center:

- Begin in a belly flying orientation and start a rotation and slowly work your position as to slightly raise your body from a horizontal orientation.
- In the beginning, your Instructor may support you or act as a reference point to help you throughout the maneuver.
- Aim to master the understanding of how to control the speed of the rotation and building correct body position habits.
- Monitor the position of your hips, raising them (slight de-arch) as the rotation begins to pick up speed and then lowering them as you slow to stop.
- When you come to a stop, plan to remain the same distance from the center and still facing the center to either begin again in the same direction or start a rotation in the opposite direction.

Technique and Drills

In order to be successful with this skill, keep these elements in mind

Carving with head close to the wall:

- Begin in a belly flying orientation and start a rotation and slowly work your position as to slightly raise your body from a horizontal orientation (head high)
- Initially your position will be mainly flat and focusing on learning the technique with your upper body to create the majority of the drive for the rotation around your knees.
- As you become comfortable controlling a flat rotation, you will begin to increase the speed of the rotation along with the pitch of your body closer to a knee flying position.
- Continue to manage the position of your body in order to balance the correct inputs to create a smooth, controlled carving motion.
- When you come to a stop, plan to remain the same distance from the center, still with your head close to the wall to either begin again in the same direction or start a rotation in the opposite direction.



Belly Carve, In-Face



Belly Carve, Out-Face

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Post-Flight Questions / Suggestions

- Were you able to maintain the correct body position?
 - Did you maintain a consistent level and shape of the carve?
 - Are you comfortable carving in both directions at the appropriate wind speed?
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What Skill is Next?

Now that you are comfortable on your belly, carving at slow to moderate wind speeds, either flying one of the techniques or having confidence flying both, you will next, if you haven't begun already begin to learn the same low speed skill, back carving, although it is possible that you may have learned these two skills simultaneously. Depending on if you have learned one element of belly carving or both will depend on which skill you learn next at an increased wind speed. Belly carving with your head close to the center is the pre-requisite skill for learning head down out-face carving and belly carving with your head close to the wall is the pre-requisite skill for learning head up out-face carving.

