



82 Back Carving

Pre-Requisites

Before learning how to back carve, you will first need to be sure that you are a very comfortable at back 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 back 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 upward position, to rotating your head back to look 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, it will be very useful that you have some experience with the back to belly, back flip transition along with being comfortable performing a back to belly, front flip transition.

Objectives

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

Carving with head close to center:

- To carve on your back in a consistent circle around the tunnel with your head toward the center of the tunnel, looking behind you toward the center of the tunnel.
- Completed utilizing the correct body position, with special attention paid to your legs, a long body position when necessary and the correct amount of arch throughout your spine at the appropriate time.
- This carve should be performed in both directions in order to be considered mastered.

Carving with head close to wall:

- To also carve on your back in a constant circle around the tunnel with your head away from the center, close to the tunnel wall and your feet close to the center.
- Completed utilizing the correct body position, with special attention paid to your legs, a long body position when necessary and the correct amount of arch throughout your spine at the appropriate time.

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

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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 back 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 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.

Carving with head close to the wall:

- Begin in a back 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 horizontal 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, with a more feet down stance.
- 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.



Back Carving with Head Close to Center



Back Carving with Head Close to Wall

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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 back, 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, belly carving, although it is possible that you may have learned these two skills simultaneously. Depending on if you have learned one element of back carving or both will depend on which skill you learn next at an increased wind speed. Back carving with your head close to the center is the pre-requisite skill for learning head down in-face carving and back carving with your head close to the wall is the pre-requisite skill for learning head up in-face carving.

