

FOUNDATIONS OF FLIGHT | BACKWARD MOVEMENT IN A SIT



Brought to you by Niklas Daniel and Brianne Thompson of AXIS Flight School at Skydive Arizona in Eloy. Photos by Brianne Thompson. Information about AXIS' coaching and instructional services is available at axisflightschool.com.

Prerequisites

- ▶ Proficiency in belly- and back-flying
- ▶ Ability to transition over the legs from a belly position to a sit position.
- ▶ Ability to sit-fly in the neutral position

Execution

Start in a comfortable sit-fly position oriented perpendicularly to the aircraft's line of flight.

A jumper uses three sections of the body—the torso, the hips and the legs—to drive backward while in a head-up orientation. A flyer can apply inputs from just one of these sectors to make a small movement. Eventually, the flyer can begin to combine these inputs to move farther and more quickly in the backward direction. By combining all the inputs, a flyer can cover vast distances (which is useful on angle jumps).

Torso

Although counter-intuitive, you need to tilt your torso forward from the waist in order to go backward while flying head up. Expose your chest to the relative wind.

Hips

Your hips have a large bearing on your body's structural integrity, so you must engage them properly. From a neutral position (hips tilted forward with your tailbone pointed toward the horizon behind you), move your hips back. Think of sticking your butt in the air.

Legs

Most beginning sit-flyers assume a wide-leg position because they feel that it makes them more stable. However, keeping the knees very far apart causes the hip flexors to lock up and the torso to lean forward, which makes the jumper move backward. Use an



old bad habit to your advantage: Move your knees to wider than shoulder width to help you intentionally move backward. Remain cognizant of the position of your knees and feet relative to your waist. You want to have a defined break at the hips, but don't lean over so far that you fall to your belly.

Helpful Hint

If you find yourself falling to your belly during this exercise, watch the placement of your arms: Keep your elbows at shoulder level and feel the air pressure on the inside of your biceps and forearms. Keep your head level, and resist the urge to look at the ground.

The authors intend this article to be an educational guideline. It is not a substitute for professional instruction.