WINDSURFING uk

Simon BORNHOFT

COACHING SPECIAL

Simon WINKLEY

WINDsurfing uk

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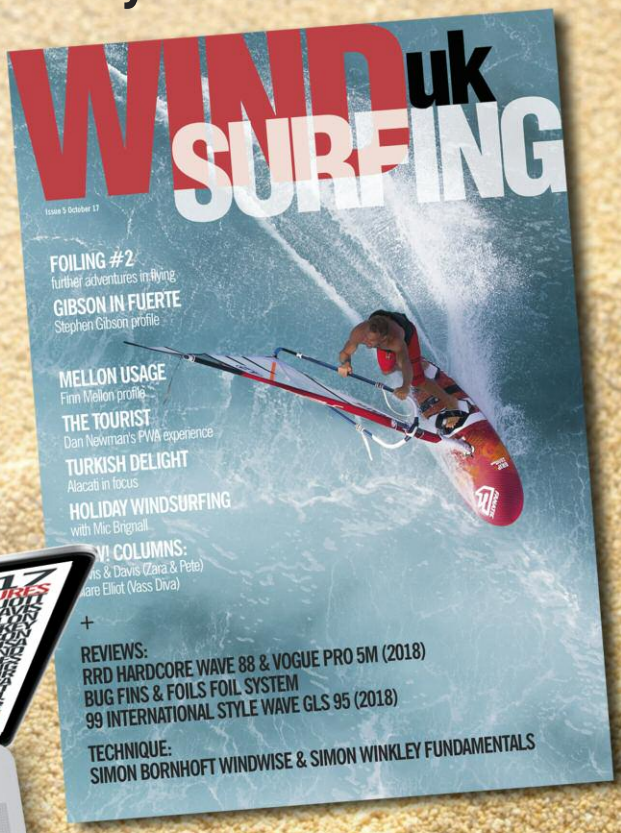

WINDuk SURFING

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DECEMBER 2017

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FOR YOUR VIEWING PLEASURE…

For many windsurfers the thirst for knowledge is tangible. As a technique led sport windsurfing's progression relies on imparting this info to aid sailors marching up the skills ladder. With windsurfing being so established there are plenty of recognisable faces and celebs from all corners. Pro coaches are also widely known, with a large number of these hailing from UK shores. One of those instantly recognisable oracles is Simon Bornhoft. With a long history in windsurfing, as both competitor and coach, Simon's enthusiasm and expertise helping sailors improve is what keeps his punters coming back for more.

During brainstorming sessions for Windsurfing UK we knew we wanted a household name for our technique section. Simon and his Windwise brand are perfectly aligned to WSUK's values so we were stoked when he agreed to come on board.

Another often overlooked element of windsurfing coaching articles are windsurfing's fundamentals. Newbies sometimes struggle to grasp these first time round. Having another respected teacher deliver this essential reading was also a 'must have' from WSUK's point of view.

Simon Winkley is a relatively new name of the pro coaching scene but with a wealth of teaching experience, regular contributions to the RYA and a whole heap of clinics in the bag we couldn't think of anyone better to put these 101 teaching articles together, thereby helping all you early days windsurfers push on.

Having had great feedback from readers we thought it a good idea to gather all of 2017's technique articles together as one complete package. What you're looking at and reading is that very thing: a grouping together of both Simons' efforts from the last five issues of Windsurfing UK. This is the perfect resource for and reference point for your windsurfing progression. Download, print and keep next to your windsurf gear as a handy coaching booklet.

Simon and Simon will both be back in 2018 with more Windwise and fundamentals coaching articles to help get you over that next windsurfing hurdle. If you want more of what the two S's offer, in person, then book yourself onto one of their courses. Believe us when we say you won't be disappointed.

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WHEN WILL WE

Words and pics:
Simon Bornhoft

Windsurfing UK is stoked to welcome to fold UK pro windsurfing coach Simon Bornhoft. Simon's Windwise technique courses have been helping sailors improve, across the globe, for many years. In the first of a new coaching series Mr B imparts valuable knowledge in the hope of getting you to the next level of your windsurfing career.

Over to Simon...

LEARN?

When in coaching mode it takes barely a couple of seconds to identify the exact reason why someone is struggling to achieve their specific windsurfing goal. It could be struggling to 'back strap', tack, gybe, coping with challenging conditions or even learn the most complicated move. The 'reasons' light up like neon lights, it's always very obvious, sometimes from hundreds of metres away or before the sailor themselves knows it! The challenge and satisfaction of coaching is identifying the 'reason', but far more importantly helping as may people as possible to make the transition from tragedy to triumph.

Fitness, health and attitude influence what we'll achieve, but realistic progression is possible if you understand how the sport is essentially made up by two guiding principles: a handful of core skills and some very specific actions combining them together. Engage with this ethos and follow the Skills Training System that we'll passionately role out over the coming months and progression is yours! If not I'll be your caddy for the day! I say that after having the pleasure of coaching Moira Bastow who, at 85 years young, has learnt to carve gybe a sub 100L board - without a caddy!

This issue our Windwise series outlines the defining factors that help and hinder progression and sets the scene for your improvement. We'll also give you some homework to try out until next time. So here goes…

1. The blind alley

It's often said time on the water is key, but I beg to differ. Who's heard or said, "I've been windsurfing for years but still can't gybe or tack a small board?" Conversely, newbies and those who to find a learning pathway can make big changes in much shorter periods of time. And yes it is possible to cure 'bad habits'. What counts is what we do with our 'time on the water' – just going windsurfing doesn't make you much better.

2. Windsurfing is too much fun!

Windsurfing, especially when you reach the blast 'out and back' stage, feels incredible! Zipping about fine-tuning stance, control or studiously trying 20-30-40 tacks, gybes or whatever lights you up, is great fun, but actually hugely limiting. Say there's one moment during a crucial skill or move that's stopping you from succeeding, that 'moment' rarely lasts a second or so. That's say 30-40 seconds per day specific learning time! That's maybe 20-40-60 minutes per year 'learning'. Practicing 'light wind freestyle' doesn't do much either. Many can helitack in a Force 2, but they get hammered in anything brisker. I believe lasering in on very specific skills training exercises (light and strong wind) increases ability far more swiftly. Not grasping this concept leads to plateaus or bad habits…

3. Honesty "How do I know if I'm doing it right?"

What we think we're doing is often not the truth. Whether it's being videoed or coached, seeing what's actually going on is crucial for progression. So to remedy this major issue, we've developed Windwise 'Touch Points' to 'feel' and know whether you're in the game, exaggerating or planing aimlessly down that blind alley.

4. Counter intuitiveness and human nature

Windsurfing is incredibly counterintuitive and human nature often doesn't help us. When things get tricky we naturally look at what we're doing' and pull, hug or get too close to the rig. Both of which instantly destroy the two fundamental principles of windsurfing 'Vision' and 'Opposition'. To overcome human nature we'll also use Touch Points and Skills Training exercises to develop the proprioception to react intuitively and especially counter intuitively when needed.

WINDWISE SKILLS TRAINING SYSTEM

1. Key principles

We have two defining principles 'Vision' and 'Opposition'. Whether everyone realizes it or not they form the foundations of pretty much EVERYTHING we do on a board. All that's written below, plus any 'tip' you hear or use should support these two principles. Essentially we should 'look where we want to go' and constantly lean, angle or move the body to 'oppose' the force, power and movement in the rig. Often it's exaggerated more than you imagine, sometimes it's subtle and yes, like all 'rules', there are a few times when we break the principle 'code' for a particular effect (we'll say when and why).

2. Core skills

We have a very small selection of core skills, primarily...

- **'7' Stance Range –** 'Changing gear' for early planing, straps, blasting, gybe set-ups/exits and jumps.
- **The 'Warrior' –** specific skills for dry tacks, gybes, helis, wave riding, 360s and optional freestyle.
- **Shifting and Switching –** specific foot movement for tacks, gybes and helitacks.
- **Rig Rotator –** hand movement whenever a rig is 'swung' or rotated.

We'll select, train and massively exaggerate the core skill(s) depending on what we're learning.

3. Skills training exercises

Hugely important are our Windwise Skills Training exercises that reinforce the key principles, develop core skills and massively increase the time spent learning the parts that beach banter or 'tips' do not reach.

Extreme upwind downwinders
Combines virtually aspects of every single windsurfing move in ONE exercise.

Clew first beach starts
Crucial for all gybes, wave riding, helicopter tacks and feasible freestyle.

Beach start gybe
Links into rig rotators and is essential if you're struggling with gybes and even loops.

Warrior uphaul and hover
A stance/action that's the fabric of dry fast tacks, wave riding, Helitacks, front to sail, 360s and many spinny freestyle moves.

Rig rotator 360
A hand movement for gybes, duck gybes and wave riding.

4. Touch points

Our Windwise touch points are used throughout to keep you 'honest', encourage exaggeration and help you 'feel' whether you're getting it right.

Summary

Using Windwise **key principles, core skills, skills training exercises** and **touch points** you'll increase your current learning speed, build interchangeable and linked 'skills' to speed up your current and future aspirations.

HOW TO develop your vision touch points with a tack

To finish we're going to touch on one commonly promoted and simple principle: VISION. But we'll use a touch point to ensure you know you're honestly doing it, as human nature forces 'us' to look the wrong way. To illustrate this we'll us a tack, in time you'll use these touch points all the time.

Key principle vision

Helps us direct body and board, and enables a more stable foot change. Here's how to sort it the Windwise way!

Skills training exercise purely for vision touch points when tacking

Sail upwind looking forward and putting your chin on your front shoulder (pic 1). Then look back downwind and placing it on your rear shoulder (pic 2). Feel the chin 'touch' both shoulders and do it 40-50 times until you feel totally comfortable on any board doing it. We've added the **Touch Points** for hands and feet, but for now focus on CHIN ON SHOULDER and get amazing at it. When tacking you'll 'intuitively' want to look down or at the kit, which is a disaster. Learn to keep your chin on the correct shoulder and you'll act counter intuitively just when you need to.

TACKWISE
Upwind approach

Sail upwind and very briefly (yes VERY briefly) place your chin on the 'front 'shoulder and look upwind until the board marginally slows.

Set up

Vision: standing tall, turn your head EARLY, well before passing through the wind, and place your chin on the REAR shoulder, yep REAR shoulder and earlier than you ever thought! Glue it there! Do everything you can to keep that chin on your 'REAR' shoulder before you move your feet and right through the tack. Why? Because your rear shoulder becomes the FRONT shoulder and looking forward and not at your feet or rig is 90% of making a tack!

Opposition: rig back, body forward.

Touch points: chin on REAR shoulder, front hand by boom clamp, front foot wrapped (touching) around mast base, (rear foot in front of front straps).

Go early!

Vision: keep head on REAR SHOULDER!

Opposition: push the mast across and BACK as the body moves across and remains forward.

Touch points: chin on REAR shoulder, new front hand near boom clamp and new front foot wrapped around/touching mast base.

Exit

Vision: keep your chin on what has now become the FRONT SHOULDER!

Opposition: rig back, lean body forward to keep stable.

Touch points: chin on shoulder, new front hand near boom clamp, replaced 'wrapped' front foot feeling mast base.

Bring the mast forward last. The big tacking mistake is looking at the rig and pulling it forward far too soon = massive nose sink!

We'll cover fast tacking fully another time, but no matter what 'style' you currently use, try this touch point and ask yourself was your chin constantly on that rear shoulder throughout 90% of the tack? You'll find how 'chin on shoulder touch point' is instrumental in sailing upwind, gybing, helitacks, easy wave riding – be it windSUP or wave board – and other whizzy tricks.

Simon says:

Next month we continue our quest for your windsurfing greatness. In the meantime, any technique queries, questions or suggestions contact info@windwise.net.

UNHOOK & HOLD ON

"COULD HOW YOU UNHOOK BE HOLDING YOU BACK?"

SIMON BORNHOFT WINDWISE

Words: Simon Bornhoft
Pics: Windwise

Simon Bornhoft explains why getting brilliant at seemingly basic skills can be a game changer for your windsurfing.

TASK:
Sail fast downwind, unhook and sheet in without losing speed or control…!

Level:
Beginner to expert.

Why:
Develops stance, control, gybing, jumping, beg-expert wave riding and setting up for 'moves'.

Key Principles:
Vision and Opposition

Core Skill:
'Sunken 7' Stance Range

Windwise Touch Points:
Backhand down the boom / Back foot on windward and leeward rail / Sail Touching Knee!

Counter Intuitive Moment:
Wanting to lift hips, stand up and carve too soon.


SIMON BORNHOFT
WINDWISE
GUL
DAKINE

SIMON BORNHOFT WINDWISE

At Windwise our Skills Training ethos develops very specific, seemingly basic actions and shows you how to take advantage of them. Stumbling on the core skills or not setting up properly in pressure situations creates a domino effect that makes everything else physically and technically harder. This Skills Training exercise develops your stance range, control and takes you into transitions (tacks, gybes and so on) with the pack stacked in your favour! So, quite simply we're going to develop on how you unhook – yes UNHOOK! You may 'feel' you know this or 'have it sorted', but remember, what we 'think' we're doing isn't always the case. Plus get amazing at it, reaps huge benefits!

WHO'S THIS FOR?

If you can plane in the harness and want to avoid future bad habits – **DRILL THIS SKILL!**

If you're learning to plane into and out of gybes – **THIS IS PARAMOUNT!**

If you've aspirations for duck gybes, 360's, jumping, wave riding or feasible freestyle moves – **MASTER IT!**

WHY LEARN IT?

It's a global problem! Before, during and after unhooking many people excessively lift their hips and 'sheet out' (as in photo opposite). This plays havoc with the apparent wind as an 'open sail' acts like an instant brake, slowing the board in marginal winds or making it harder to tame than a fired up dragon in punchy conditions or chop.

Q. What's The Goal?
A. SAIL FAST DOWNWIND, SET UP & UNHOOK keeping control of the clew!

Q. How Do I Learn It?
A. Windwise Skills Training of course.

Repeat Stage 1-3 again and again. Initially start on an upwind line. As confidence builds master a faster downwind line.

Windwise Touch Points: Set yourself high standards by making them a **MUST!**


GUL

HOW TO SET UP UNHOOK & REMAIN

Vision 1-3-5: Look forward and through the turn.

Opposition 1-3: 'Oppose' the rig's power by leaning the body outboard in line with leeward front strap.

Stage 1
'Sink that 7'

To sail broad (120-145 degrees off the wind) fast in control, hunker down! Sink super low, hunching that '7' stance back and down into the harness. Suck your core muscles in and down to pull the harness line in. Feel your back push into your harness to accentuate that Sunken 7 stance to pull in and down on that boom. Extend the front leg and crucially flex the rear leg to sink the backside to literally just above the water.

TOUCH POINT: Move the clew/rear hand 30-40cm down the boom before unhooking. Use a piece of tape as a reminder!

Stage 2
The Unhook

Before, during and after unhooking hold that 'Sunken 7' and pull down on the boom even harder to drop the line out – don't lift the hips (you will, but try not to). Keep the hips outboard and extend the front leg to push the board away from you. This is very counterintuitive, human nature makes us want to stand up.

AM I DOING IT RIGHT? Check your front leg/foot and the board is right out in front of you, not underneath you.

Stage 3
Unhooked & Holding On!

Staying outboard, pulling down on the boom, locks the mast foot down and enhances control. After unhooking, slide your back foot out of the strap place it on the windward rail Touch Point. Hold it there for 2-4 seconds to get settled – don't come up or over the board! It should look and feel like you're blasting along normally but you've no back strap or harness line, nothing else changes.

TOUCH POINT: Back foot next to strap on windward side of board 1st! You won't end up doing this every gybe but practicing it develops your skills base.

IN CONTROL

SKILLS TRAIN AGAIN & AGAIN

Repeat Stage 1-3 over and over without actually gybing. Slow motion for Stage 1-3 stage (50-60m or 3-4-5-6 seconds) is the game changer. Most people come up far too quickly (like instantly) and step across causing the sail to open up, rather than having the luxury to turn the board downwind by pushing through the front foot rather than trying to turn down wind with the carving foot.

CARRY ON GYBING 'The ultimate gybing Touch Point!'

To really test if you've mastered unhooking, here's a gybe defining Touch Point test! Dry gybers turn downwind with the clew pointing back towards the wind. So, can you sheet the clew in so that the foot of the sail touches or comes very close to the inside carving knee?

TOUCH POINT: You won't do it on every gybe, but Skills Train if you want your sail to go light in a gybe.

Set Up To Sheet In

In your low 'Sunken 7' unhooked position, slide your back foot across to the leeward side – But DON'T move your body across onto the inside/leeward/carving rail yet! Counter intuitively keep the hips 'outboard' (see photos) otherwise you'll never be able to sheet the sail in! Extend the mast arm, but pull in (towards the body) and back (towards the tail) with the clew arm to sheet in and twist the boom like a set of bike handlebars.

TOUCH POINT: Slide back foot to the leeward rail, next to the back strap – don't come over to carve yet!

Can You Fully Sheet In?

As the board bears away, 'gradually' sink the hips low and directly over that flexed rear knee & ankle on the leeward rail to carve. Don't lean excessively forward, just drop the inside hip down over the ankle. Play a game! Can you get that clew hand in, back and towards the tail until the sail brushes your leg?

OPPOSITION: Note how the body is BACK and the mast is FORWARD

WINDWISE TOUCH POINT: If sail briefly touches the knee you're sheeted in!

Look & Lean

We'll finish the gybe another time, but once that sail touches/approaches the knee it's time to 'LOOK & LEAN' into the turn and LEVER the mast/rig the opposite way to the body. Note how the clew hand is close to the head just before, during and after the foot change, all of which makes the rig rotation easier and more successful.

Getting Air

Setting up well, unhooking smoothly and sheeting in, enables you'll to control power, pace and heavy chop!

Simon says...

We'll go through the carving part and rig rotation with future Skills Training Exercises. But to help me help you, practice the Sunken 7 Set Up, low unhook and gybing Touch Point to allow me to transform your gybes and a whole lot more!

Unhook & Hope

Here's Windwise client James Shirley (right in pic) and myself (left in pic) 'setting up' for a gybe. James's domino effect kicks in early. Blasting he's a slightly too upright (1st domino), unhooking he's stood up (2nd domino), he rushed to carve, sail opens up (3rd domino). He loses the clew (4-5th domino), flexes his front arm too much, then can't sheet in, change his feet or rotate the rig. I've saved him from the last shot when all the dominos fell over. James's reaction to these photos. *"Wow! I really can't believe how upright I am and how open and sheeted out the sail clew is!"*

Sunken 7 Set up, Unhook, Hold On + Sheet In

Spot the difference! James sunk the '7' for longer on set up, more slowly came across onto a pre-placed rear back foot. All of which makes it easier to push with the mast arm and pull with the clew arm to sheet in – he planed out!

WINDWISE TOUCH POINTS COMPLETE:
great work and great gybe James!

Send Simon...

a question or suggestion to info@windwise.net!
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info@windwise.net
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SIMON BORNHOFT
WINDWISE

WARRIOR

Words: Simon Bornhoft
Pics: Windwise

CONTENT: DERIVED FROM THE RESULTS AND FEEDBACK OF THOUSANDS OF CLIENTS I'VE HAD THE PRIVILEGE TO COACH, THANK YOU ALL

In keeping with the Windwise ethos of breaking the sport down into the most important transferable and trainable skills, Simon Bornhoft illustrates the importance of a 'Warrior' stance which is dynamic action that is instrumental in pretty much every windsurfing turn, transition or aspirational move - be it basic tack, frustrating gybe, first time wave ride, turning a '350' into a 360, venturing into the waves or so many spiny freestyle moves. Regardless of your level and especially if you struggle with shorter board tacks, gybing or have any aspiration to do anything other than blast up and down - you need to understand the importance of the 'Warrior'.

Who's this feature for?

Beginner-Improvers:
Uphauling, tacking and your very first gybes!

Improver-Intermediate:
Fast tacking, making and planing out of gybes, plus turning on flat water or waves.

Intermediate-Advanced:
Wave sailing, Up/Downwind 360s, Helis and the majority of Freestyle.

WARRIOR... IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU!

When blasting along we generally adopt a '7' shaped stance, then, like changing gears on a bike to suit varying terrain, we either straighten (light winds) or sink (strong winds) our '7' to adjust to variations in the rig's power and board speed. Plus, when blasting along, we should be looking forward over an extended-straightened leg-knee. However, when it comes to turning, this is often reversed and we need to look (and often lean) over a flex leg-knee and this is where your 'Warrior' stance comes in!

Q. So what exactly is a Windwise 'Warrior' stance?

A. Look at the two photos on the opposite page and how they differ!

Pic Blasting '7' Stance

"Looking forward over an extended leg and straightened knee"

For early planing straighten the 7 by locking the hips and tightening the torso. In higher winds we sink the '7' more outboard by dropping the hips and digging the heels to control acceleration. In both situations we are 'looking forward over an extended front leg'.

Pic The Warrior

"look and lean over a heavily flexed leg and knee"

At Windwise we call this our 'Warrior' stance, which is really more of an action than a position. It is a profoundly important skill that is linked to so many successful transitions and moves. As ever, it is juxtaposed with another key Windwise principle 'Opposition' which means levering the, mast/rig in the opposite way to the body to create counter balance. So in the apex to end of this tack for example, I'm looking where I want to go and leaning over a heavily flexed leg-knee = WARRIOR.

Q. Why the name Warrior?

A. If anyone has done yoga they will know a similarly looking and named pose which creates a powerful, strong and dynamic stance – hence Warrior! In recent years we've be heavily emphasizing this Warrior concept at every level. We have always taught the 'warrior' mantra/position yet we feel it needs far more prominence and significance as we've had truly phenomenal success with our clients' speed of learning.

Blasting '7' Stance

The Warrior

WARRIOR IS EVERYWHERE!

Look closely at this montage of photos you'll see the WARRIOR proliferates throughout the sport.

Warrior Fast Tack

Warrior Mid Gybe

1. **Looking (chin on or near shoulder) where you want to go and end up.**
2. **Leaning or tucked over a heavily flexed knee.**
3. **Mast/rig is raked the 'opposite' way to the look and lean.**

Back Side Wave Ride

Front Side Wave Ride

Downwind 360

Warrior Lay Down Gybe

Warrior Duck Gybe Exit

NB. Quite often the arm nearest the head is flexed.

Warrior Loop

Freestyle

HOW TO TRAIN YOUR WARRIOR

No matter what your level or aspirations, here's how to start to get to grips with your inner warrior. Keep it simple, exaggerate and most importantly enjoy!

Windwise Warrior Key Points

Obviously you won't take one hand off during a move, but this shot fully exaggerates the concept. Try this on any board or rig to get the idea first.

1. Look in the direction you want to go + Windwise Touch Points = chin on or very close to shoulder.
2. Lean over a heavily flexed knee.
3. Lever the mast/rig the opposite way.

Warrior Skills Training

With the warrior concept in your mind, blend it into whatever transition you're trying to learn.

Warrior Uphaul

I've always suggested we need to change the way beginners are taught to uphaul (all over the world). Standing with your feet across the board, across the wind, with the rig elevated out of the water at 90 degrees to the board, might work on your first few days on the water but it is a disaster in stronger winds, rough water or smaller boards it is NOT a 'secure position'!!! From now on promise me you'll use your Warrior stance and, just as importantly turn the board much more into wind (never across the wind), so that the rig comes out of the water from the back to the front of the board.

Warrior Tack Exit 2

At the end of your tacks, don't rush to bring the rig forward, keep the sail towards the tail, and adopt a look, lean and lever Warrior stance/action to get stable first! (We will do a full feature on how to transform your tacks using Warrior shortly)

GybeWise

Check out the February issue of WindsurfingUK for the gybe entry and using touch points to help you sheet in properly. For the mid section of non-planing and full carve gybes, when stability and control are required for a swift foot change, look how the Warrior concept comes into play = LOOK, LEAN (over a flexed knee) LEVERING the rig the opposite way is central to a clean foot switch, which should always replace the carving foot right on the rail.

Windwise Gybing Touch Points

Clew hand well down the boom, pulling in and down on the boom heavily.

Rear foot toes on rail next to rear strap, try to replace carving back foot during switch. Before releasing rig, front hand slides towards the mast.

New front hand well down the boom.

Look (chin near or on shoulder)

Lean over a flexed knee

Lever the mast out of the turn as the rear placed clew hand pulls down HARD!

Q. When do I switch the feet?

A. Start dead downwind and keep in 'warrior' pulling in and down massively on the clew hand.

Q. When do I release the rig?

A. Rotate the sail just after passing dead downwind to exit on a broad reach. Keep looking forward and drop low over the newly placed rear foot.

Flat water wave riding

You can do this planing in the straps or in marginal winds on a WindSUP or large Freeride. In both situations use your warrior mantra when turning or carving up or downwind. This helps you understand the basics of bottom turning (like going through a gybe) and top turning like heading upwind for a tack).

Turning downwind (like a gybe or basic bottom turn on a wave) watch how the body looks and leans over a flexed knee. The body and rig then switch sides to transitions from the downwind position to the upwind position (like a top turn on a wave) by re-establishing the warrior mantra on the new side.

SIMON BORNHOFT WINDWISE

OUR WINDWISE OFFER!

If you have read this and thought it all seems quite simple, I kind of knew/do this already, you're right, but what we are saying is put all your money on Warrior for your moves and turning a board. Massively accentuate it, enjoy it, focus on it and get amazing at it. In fact we believe in it so much, that if you come on a Windwise course and mention this Windsurfing UK feature and we can't improve your tacks, gybes and other moves using this Windwise Warrior concept, we'll give you your money back!

Next issue we will radically change your tacks and gybes using your Warrior Stance!

SEND SIMON...

a question or suggestion to info@windwise.net! If Windwise answer it in Windsurfing UK, you'll get a fab Windwise Rash Vest!

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THE WARRIOR TACK

'COACH OF THE YEAR', SIMON BORNHOFT EXPLAINS WHY TACKING BECOMES FRUSTRATINGLY HARDER IN STRONGER WINDS OR A COMPLETE LOTTERY ON LOWER VOLUME BOARDS. BUT, MORE IMPORTANTLY, DEMONSTRATES HOW A WINDWISE 'WARRIOR' TACKING STYLE WILL NOT ONLY DRAMATICALLY IMPROVE YOUR TACKING SUCCESS RATE BUT ALSO MAXIMIZE YOUR SHORT BOARD CONTROL, UPHAULING, GYBING, WAVES AND ANY ADVANCED MOVES YOU'RE TRYING TO DEVELOP. TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE? WELL, WHETHER YOU'RE A TERRIBLE OR TERRIFIC TACKER, READ ON; SO MANY HAVE BEEN SURPRISED AT WHAT A DIFFERENCE THE 'SYSTEM' CAN MAKE

Who's this feature for what's it related to?

Beginner-improvers-intermediates: Uphauling,tacking, fast tacking, short board tacking, hovering, gybing and control.

Advanced-freewave-wave-freestyle-pro: All of the above, plus wave sailing, up and downwind 360s, helis and the majority of feasible and incomprehensible freestyle too.

Check out the SBW feature from our last issue to get more Warrior info…

The windsurfing pathway kicks off with beginners being taught the 'Classic Tack' where the sail is raked back and 'pulled' over the tail, causing the board to turn through the eye of the wind. The sailor 'nips round the mast' and twists the rig forward to sail away. Good Vision, neat footwork and constant Opposition is vital to maintain counter balance. We still sometimes teach the Classic Tack and, with lots of practice, it can become fast and achievable on small boards, provided you can master that horrible wobble and tendency to nose sink. Yet many sailors always struggle on smaller boards and decide to leave tacking to the nimble persistent types. Also, I'm now convinced a variation in tacking style will do wonders for your windsurfing. Tacking on even small vessels is possible for everyone, especially if you use our Warrior system

'Warrier' tack – why does it all go wrong?

Words: Simon Bornhoft
Pics: Windwise & PhotOcean

SIMON BORNHOFT WINDWISE

The issue that drives most people crazy is over sinking the nose and basically flying off the front. Even if you scramble it together and save a dismount, the skills you're using are really only applicable to 'saving a tack'. At Windwise, we seek to dramatically enhance your success rate and also impact your gybes, yes gybes, and many other transitions by the way you uphaul and tack!

Q. Who is the Warrior tack for?

A1. If you're struggling or have given up on tacking, our Warrior tack will get you there!

A2. If you can Classic tack on most boards, but aspire to more advanced skills, a Warrior tack eases you into wave riding, turns up and downwind 350s into 360s and without question, improves freestyle ambitions.

A TACK OFF

Classic Tack v Warrior Tack

Essentially, a 'board' and 'sail' tack only ONE way, and that is by 'pulling' or 'pushing' the clew over the tail. The action of the sail passing low over the tail is THE action that turns the board 'through the eye of the wind'. So, the question is not how does a board tack, it's how do WE tack and WHEN do we force the clew over the tail? Both tacks use the same Key Principles of Vision and Opposition and the same Touch Points for feet and hands and it is really important to state they are THE most important factors when tacking, which we've always taught.

But we basically have two choices as to the timing of when we make our move. Either, as in the Classic tack, we turn right through the eye of the wind, make our move and twist the rig forward to exit of the tack. Or in the Warrior tack, we make our move earlier just before we go through the eye of the wind, end up every so slightly 'front to sail' but keep the rig LOW AND BACK throughout the whole tack, then PUSH OUT on the clew hand to turn the board downwind. After trialling and testing it over and over with clients, I believe this Warrior tack is more applicable to most people who want to tack well and improve their overall sailing. It's a win-win in our book, hence going down this route very passionately in recent years.

Classic tack



Windwise Warrior tack

Short Board Warrior tack

Classic tack After sailing and looking upwind, the head turns and the clew is pulled over the tail. The board is turned right through the wind before moving the feet. Once on the new side and through the wind, the rig is twisted forward and sheeted in (rig forward – body back) to turn the board downwind and sail away. Great in light winds, on big boards, but becomes very difficult on lower volume sticks as we've just illustrated.

Windwise Warrior tack So, sail upwind but don't worry about trying to go 'right through the wind'. Before the board slows down completely or starts to get that horrible wobble in no man's land – make your move across to the other-side of the board. To create space on the new side and avoid being back-winded, force the mast/rig low, back and towards the tail. Then, and don't be tempted to bring the mast forward, keep it BACK, clew almost in the water, and adopt an exaggerated forward facing Warrior stance. Wait a second, before PUSHING the clew hand back, down and away from you to pass the clew over the tail. Think body forward – rig back the opposite to a Classic tack ending). You'll be far more balanced and find you can turn downwind by pushing away on the clew/rear hand rather than pulling the rig forward which is what normally results in walking the plank off the front.

Short Board Warrior tack Ramped up and planing, note how the clew is not pulled over the tail on entry. This keeps momentum, stability and actually makes it easier to move the sail. It is vital to resist pulling the mast forward mid tack and exit. Rake it back and low towards the tail as the body accentuates Warrior to push OUT on the rear hand, which actually raises the mast to sail away.

THE WARRIOR TACK

Principles, core skills and touch points

Land Warrior entry and set up

Vision: Very briefly look upwind, then as early as possible plant that chin on the REAR shoulder. Keep it there no matter what happens.

Opposition: Rig drops towards the tail, body steps well forward and as upright as possible.

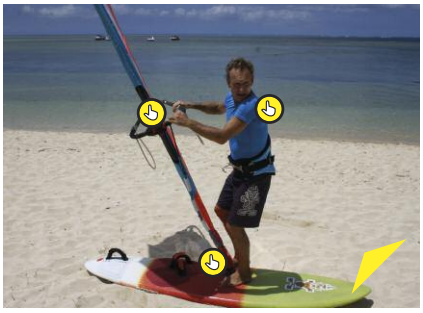
Set Up: Head up, tight torso, front foot wrapped around mast base. Rear foot next to or just in front of rear straps, all toes pointing down the board.

Entry touch points check and say, "Hand, head, foot and 'feel' them."

1. **Front hand** touching boom clamp.
2. **Front foot** wraps right round and feels the mast base.
3. **Head-Chin** on rear shoulder.

WISEWORDS

Only use the Warrior stance for the exit, be as upright as possible going into the tack, it makes it easier to move the feet. Over weighting and anchoring on the rear foot going in makes it really hard to move your feet and leads to pushing hard off the back foot too much, which sends you running off the front with your rig.



Land Warrior mid tack shift & switch of feet

Vision: Turn your head FAST with chin planted on rear shoulder. It quickly becomes the front shoulder.

Opposition: Rig is forced across the board and, crucially, low and BACK towards the tail as the body moves across the board.

Shift and switch footwork: Head high, chin on the shoulder. As the head turns, the feet and hands move together. Switch your feet exactly, and create a new front hand on the boom close to the mast clamp. Push the mast the opposite way to the body with an extended front arm. If you look at, hug or pull the rig towards you at this point (very common), you'll be in!

Entry touch points check and say, "Hand, head, foot and 'feel' them."

1. **Front hand** transfers to new side touching the boom clamp.
2. **New front foot** replaces the old front foot wrapped around the mast base. Feel the new front foot pointing forward, ideally touching the mast base. The new back foot takes a massive step back down the board.
3. **Head-chin** has become the new front shoulder – look forward!

Land Warrior exit

Vision: The rear shoulder has become the front shoulder – keep looking up and forward!

Opposition: Keep the rig raked back over the tail as the body leans forward. Say, do, accentuate 'rig back-body forward'.

Warrior stance: Super wide foot spread, head high, hips low, looking and leaning over a heavily flexed knee.

Entry touch points check and say, "Hand, head, foot and 'feel' them."

1. **Front hand** touching or close to boom clamp.
2. **Front foot** feels the mast base on windward side.
3. **Head-chin** planted on front shoulder looking forward.

Counterintuitive moment and human nature

Throughout the tack it's human nature to look at and pull the rig forward or into the body. Resist, instead look forward and force, push the rig 'across your body' and 'back' towards the tail…Settle into Warrior quickly, wait… and then with the clew near the tail, **push OUT with rear hand.** It's this action that turns the board downwind and raises the rig.

WARRIOR TACK summary

If you've read this and thought, just keep chin on rear shoulder, keep the rig back a lot and lean forward in Warrior to exit, the answer is yes! Simple things done well = results!

At this point you have a choice?

At this critical moment mid tack, when tacking often goes wrong, you have a choice A or B?

Classic tack dismount

A. You may learn and we've taught many people to bring the rig forward and sink back low to turn down, but it so often ends up like this.

Warrior tack success

B. Think only of keeping the rig BACK and never bring it forward! Settle quickly into Warrior, look forward, wait… and then push out on your rear hand to elevate the mast and sheet in!

WINDWISE WARRIOR SKILLS TRAINING EXERCISES

To increase your success rate in tacking develop your Warrior look, lean, lever, with these exercises.

Warrior uphaul

I've always suggested we need to change the way beginners are taught to uphaul. Standing feet next to mast base, across the wind, rig elevated at 90 degrees to the board, might work on a lake – but it is NOT a 'secure position' in breeze, lower volume kit or a moving pitch! Promise me you'll use your Warrior stance and, just as importantly, turn the board more into wind, never, ever across the wind. You can also learn to hover in Warrior to catch waves or hold a position.

Nose sink training

Vision: Look forward and sail right into wind. Keep the rig away from you and angled towards the tail, edge the feet forward and sink! Quickly shift the feet back to save it.

Upwind downwinder tack ending

If you have done our upwind downwinder training you'll know that you can simulate the Warrior ending without actually tacking. Remember this simulates then ending NOT the beginning, where you need to be more upright.

1. Adopt a wide foot spread, look forward chin on shoulder.
2. Rake the sail back, drop into accentuated Warrior to turn into wind.
3. With hands right forward, imagine trying to get your harness hook in front of the mast, rake the rig back until the sail 'touches' your rear leg.
4. When contact is made, push out hard on the clew hand. You should feel the board turn downwind and the mast rise up into your hands to sail away.


Warrior laydown

Warrior NPCG & carve gybe


Warrior 360


Warrior wave

More reasons to Warrior tack

We'd love to teach you Warrior tacks in person and then enhance your sailing, be it gybing, waves or freestyle, here's what you can do.

Gybing Warriors

Warrior is used in different levels and stages of gybing. Chin on shoulder, looking, leaning over a flexed knee, levering the rig back!

In laydowns the rig is raked fully back, the body leans forward in Warrior.

In both non-planing and planing gybes, crucially, before and during the foot change, the body is in Warrior, Looking (chin on shoulder), and Leaning into the turn over a flexed carving knee with the rig/mast angled-Levered the opposite way - clew hand pulled in tight!

Freestyle and waves

So often in waves and all freestyle Warrior is pivotal in every sense.

Downwind 360 endings require an extreme Warrior 'tack ending'.

In waves, like this backside wave ride, Warrior is the way and it feels great!

Full on Warrior to carve that board into the wind!

The Warrior tack ending finishes a duck tack.

Warrior upwind 360

Warrior duck tack

WINDWISE WARRIOR SKILLS TRAINING EXERCISES

Here's why things go wrong...

Q. Why do I get back winded when I go 'round the mast'?
A. You're either not far enough upwind before you move, or most likely, you're just jumped to the downwind side and not forced the mast across the opposite way enough and back down towards the tail.

Q. Why can't I move my feet?
A. Body mechanics. If the front foot isn't wrapped right round the mast base and the rear foot isn't facing down the board, it's really hard to move the feet and the body has a tendency shoot off the front.

Q. Why do I fall onto the sail?
A. This is a good problem to have! But it's usually because you're looking at the sail. So yes, make sure you slide the sail low towards the tail, but disengage the body and Look & Lean forward in Warrior to take the weight off the rig.

Q. Why do I just get stuck in no man's land?
A. Usually means you went right through the wind before making your move or you're not getting the rig back enough and the body forward enough to have something to work with.

Q. I keep finding the board tips over to leeward.
A. Check your touch points. It means the new front foot is not touching the mast base on the new windward side. Always talk through the touch points 1-2-3.

SIMON BORNHOFT WINDWISE

SIMON SAYS...

I don't expect you to go out and get this straight away. When we coach it takes a little while to get your head around it. But stick with it, progress has been fabulous and so many people have transformed their tacking and so much more. Don't get bogged down in detail, accentuate vision and opposition and use the touch points to self coach and help accentuate that Warrior stance to look, lean and lever!

We'd love the opportunity to teach you so you can experience what this has done for literally hundreds of windsurfers. Join us for a UK session or one of our incredible overseas experiences to find your inner Warrior!

SEND SIMON...

a question or suggestion to info@windwise.net! If Windwise answer it in Windsurfing UK, you'll get a fab Windwise Rash Vest!

Simon Bornhoft Windwise 'Coach of the Year' 2018 overseas dates just announced!

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WARRIOR FEET

HOW TO 'SHIFT & SWITCH' DURING GYBES, TACKS & HELITACKS

YOU COULD BE AT THE APEX OF A CLATTERING GYBE, TEETERING HEAD TO WIND MID TACK OR HELI, WINDSURFING OFTEN REQUIRES US TO SWITCH THE FEET AT THE LEAST FAVOURABLE MOMENT. SIMON BORNHOFT EXPLAINS HOW TO GET YOUR WINDWISE FOOTWORK SYSTEM WORKING FOR YOU!

WORDS COPYRIGHT: SIMON BORNHOFT WINDWISE
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Shifting and switching
Changing your feet for Gybes, Tacks and Helicopter Tacks.

Who's it for?
Beginner to pro, we all need to keep practicing these skills!

Windwise core principles:
Vision and opposition

Core touch points:
Inside rail for gybing, mast base for tacking and helis.

Relevant to:
Next stage of Unhook Holding feature in February 2017 issue
Warrior Tack feature in July 2017 issue

We've all hesitated, stumbled or become unbalanced during a tack, gybe or helicopter tack. We can blame the wind, sail size or wrong wetsuit, but poor vision, no opposition and misplaced feet account for many a dismounts! This month's Windwise feature, 'Shifting and Switching', uses our Windwise Touch Point concept to train a more dependable foot change.

SIMON BORNHOFT WINDWISE

What exactly is shifting and switching?

Shifting and Switching a specific hip and foot movement to swap feet mid transition. It's easy to watch a gybe, but harder to identify which Touch Points and forces are being applied.

First, try this exercise. Stand with your weight evenly distributed on both feet. Look ahead, lean forward slightly and try to take your right foot off the floor – tricky? Now, try Warrior – 'touch' your chin on your left shoulder, look to the left, lean left and shift your left hip over your left foot, heavily flexing the left knee – should be easier to lift your right foot off the floor? Now imagine for a gybe levering the rig to the right (as in photos) and pulling down on a boom would enable you to exaggerate Warrior and help move the feet gybing at speed!

SHIFTING & SWITCHING TOUCH POINTS FOR GYBING

We've made big noises about the value of Windwise Touch Points and none more so your foot switch mid gybe.

System says, *"In light winds, your front foot could be out of the strap just behind the mast base. But whenever possible, keep your front foot IN the front strap, even when off the plane!"*

On land and water, say these out loud and 'feel' them!

"One – rear hand down the boom"
Clew hand down the boom, gradually pulling in and down towards your head, mast arm pushes out of the turn.

"Two – rear foot on rail"
This is a park lane, build all your hotels on it! Whether it's a planing or non-planing gybe – toes on the rail next to BACK strap. This guarantees carving and gives plenty of room to change the feet. Even in light winds, practice this to create the memory for stronger winds.

"Three – chin on shoulder and LOOK"
Chin near, or for training, actually touching the rear shoulder to guarantee you to look into and through out the turn!

On the next spread we go through the whole action!

SHIFTING AND SWITCHING IN GYBING

GYBE SET UP
Unhook & hold on!

On a broad reach in controllable winds or close reach in over powered winds, set up 1,2,3…

Touch Point 1 = "Unhook, clew hand down boom"

Touch Point 2 = "Back foot on windward side, wait, then onto leeward rail – TOES NEXT TO REAR STRAP"

Touch Point 3 = "Sheet in and blast downwind.

Pic G1a. "Back foot out of strap, momentarily on the windward side"

GYBE SET UP
Back foot across!

Touch Point 1 = "Clew hand down boom"

Touch Point 2 = "Back foot slides over to leeward rail – TOES NEXT TO REAR STRAP"

Touch Point 3 = "Sheet in to bring sail close enough to touch the rear leg!

G2a. "Toes right on the rail, very close to rear strap, DON'T BRING THE BODY RIGHT ACROSS YET"

WARRIOR CARVING
& hip shift & foot switch

Gradually lean over into an accentuated Warrior stance will engage the rail.

"Look" through the turn to where you want to go.

"Lean" the whole body in Warrior – head, hip over that flexed knee!

"Lever" the rig progressively out of the turn pulling in and down on the clew hand.

Pic G3a. Accentuate that clew hand Touch Point, by bringing the clew hand in towards the head and DOWN as the mast arm extends.

Getting these foundations right hugely increases your success rate.

WARRIOR CARVING
& foot change

Whilst maintaining that Warrior stance, looking and leaning over the flexed rear knee, the hips shift and drop, the old front foot slides out of the strap and switches heel first across the board – just after the dead downwind / apex of the gybe. Switch super quickly and right across to the rail. Whatever you do DON'T look at your feet.

Pic G4a. Switch that rear foot, by virtually knocking it out of the way, immediately stepping forward with the new front foot.

Rig Release

Place your new front foot on windward rail just behind mast base. Keep low and back.

Very Important Touch Point: Slide the old front hand right up to the boom.

Vision: Look out of that turn, chin STILL on what has become the front shoulder!

Touch Point: New front hand reaches underneath to grab boom between mast and harness line.

Pic G5a. If it didn't happen straight away, shuffle that rear heel close to the rail.

Sunken 7
Planing exit

The secret is to NOT stand up (very common). Stay low, through a flexed rear knee and ankle after the foot change. LOOK forward, accentuate the 'Sunken 7' and whip the rig forward to sheet in as soon as possible!

Pic 6a. Exit on a broad reach for maximum speed and control, so feet early and rig earlier than your think to avoid rounding up!

Simple summary:

Practice in the garden, counting through each Touch Points!

1. Clew hand down the boom, gradually! Pulling in towards head, extending mast arm forward and out of turn.
2. Rear foot toes on rail.
3. Chin on 'rear' shoulder look through the turn.

Warrior Stance, pulling down on boom throughout.

Wide 'Sunken 7' to release, rotate and sheet in.

A lazy, short step with inboard feet and poor vision kills your gybes!

COMMON QUESTIONS

Q. Won't the tail sink with my back foot towards the tail?
A. It usually means the front arm is too flexed (no opposition), the rig's sheeted out or the rear leg is too straight.

Exception to the rule
Racers on very wide, parallel, hard railed board, put their rear foot further up the rail for laydown gybes and to engage sharper rails.

Q. When do I change my feet?
A. Ideally, fractionally after the dead downwind stage of the gybe. The faster you're going and the more you want to plane out, the earlier the foot change should be.

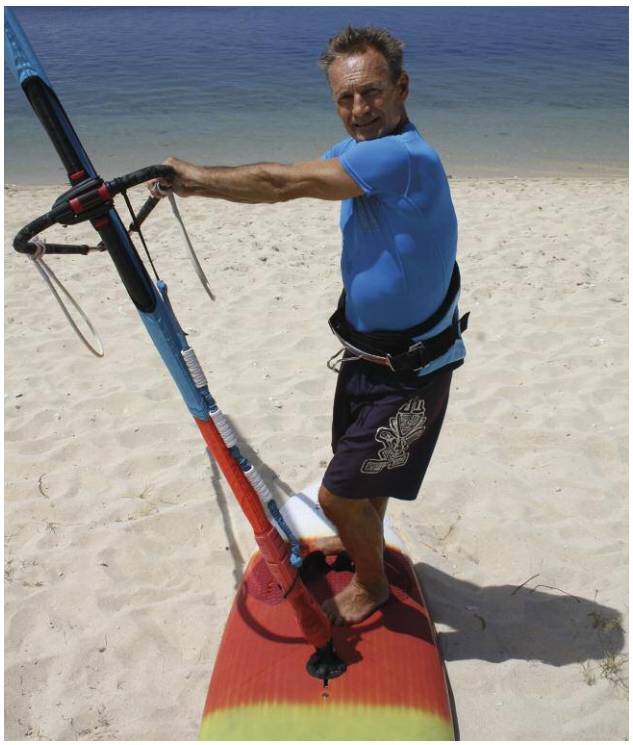
Q. When do I rotate the rig?
A. ALWAYS ON BROAD REACH after the foot switch and…..

If you're planing post Shift & Switch, rotate the rig within a split second of the new front foot hitting the deck.

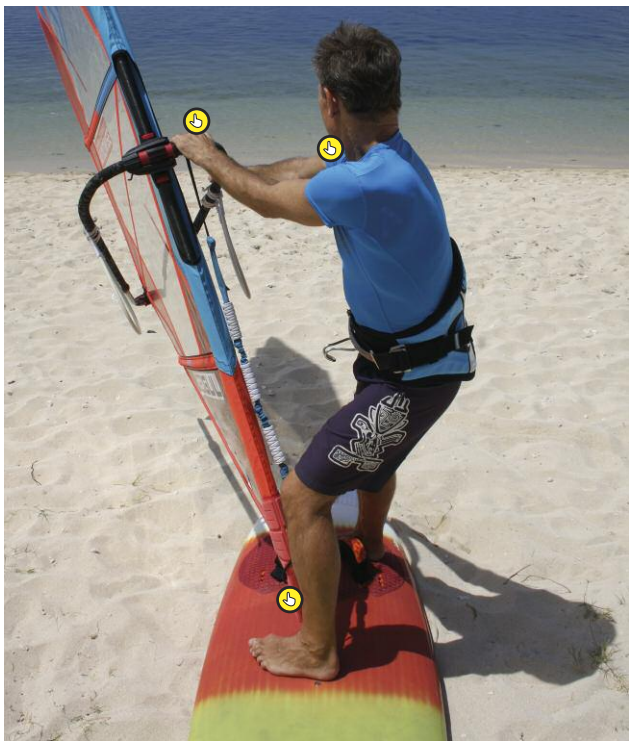
If you've slowed down post switch, remain 'Clew First' (meaning, sail on a broad reach with the rig at 90 degrees to the board), settle and then rotate the sail.

SHIFTING & SWITCHING IN TACKING

Here's a close up view of the Foot Switch from last issue's Warrior Tack. It's virtually identical to the gybe, except the 'switch' happens behind rather than in front. As ever, practice on land and count loud the touch points!



Sail upwind, look briefly forward, rig back body forward.



Set Up & Touch Point Check First!
TP1. One – Front hand touching boom clamp.
TP2. Two – Front foot wraps right round and 'feels' the mast base.
TP3. Three – Head-Chin on REAR shoulder.

Footwork

Before moving, it's vital to bring the rear foot just in front of rear straps, with both feet pointing down the board, even if for a split second.

Shift & Switch Footwork

As the head turns, the feet and hands move together. When switching, knock the old front foot out of the way as you simultaneously push the mast the opposite way to the body with an extended front arm. Look at, pull or hug the rig, (very common) and you'll be getting wet.

Touch Point Re-check

TP1. Front hand transfers to new side, close to the boom clamp.

TP2. New front foot replaces the old front foot wrapped around the mast base. Feel the new front foot pointing forward, ideally touching the mast base. The new back foot takes a massive step back down the board.

TP3. Head-chin has become the new front shoulder - look forward!

Warrior exit: Super wide foot spread, head high, hips low, looking and leaning over a heavily flexed knee.

Straight 7 Ending

To finish, push out with the clew hand to turn the board downwind and sail away in a straight, upright 7. As ever, keep looking forward.

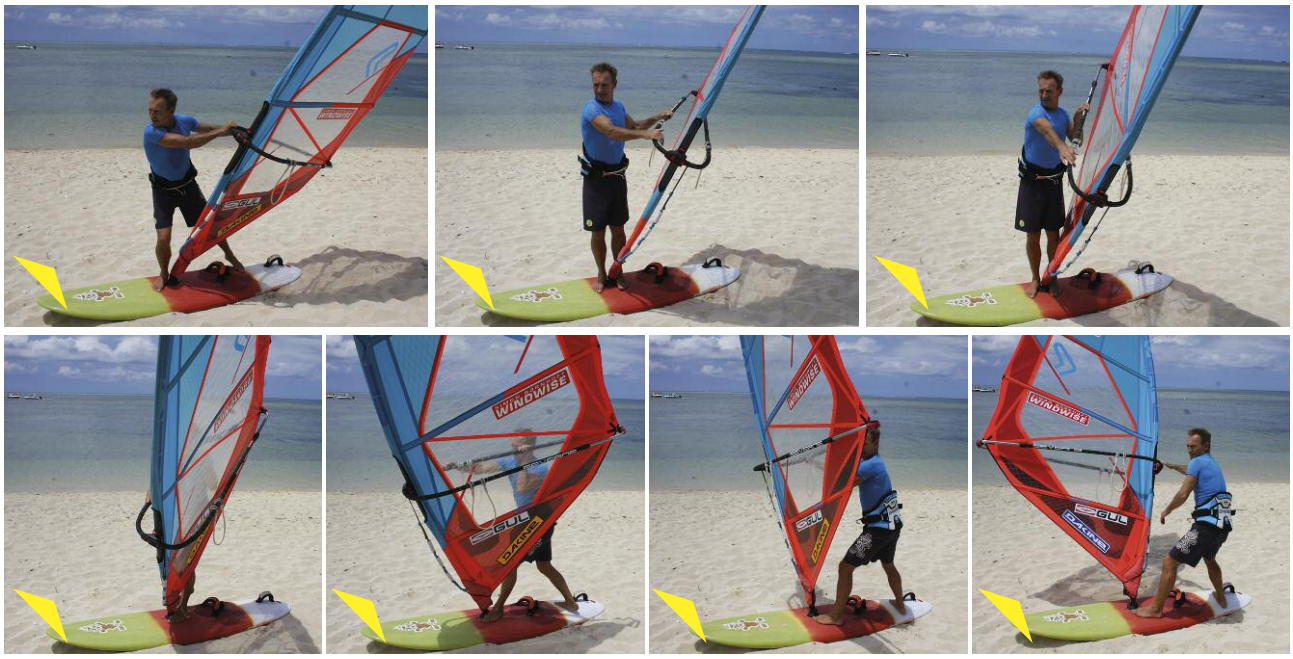
All too often, the front foot isn't wrapped around the mast base and the hips aren't turned DOWN the board before the switch. This is why everyone runs off the front or sinks the nose!

HELICOPTER TACK

As with so many aspects in the Windwise Skills Training System, core skills have a habit of reappearing elsewhere in the sport. Here's Shifting and Switching mid helicopter tack. By reducing the foot movement to a simple, shift, switch you'll create solid foundations for the move, which we'll cover in full later.

Note how the front foot is by the mast base. Warrior, chin on shoulder, is used to rake the rig to turn through the wind.

When the sail touches the rear leg, the rear foot steps forward to wrap around the mast base, to crucially establish a new front foot. As the sail is rotated the new rear foot steps back.



SIMON BORNHOFT WINDWISE

SIMON SAYS...

You'll hopefully have seen how, Vision, Opposition, Warrior stance and similar tight close shift & switch of the feet links into these three different moves. Break it down and practice on land as much as possible, but avoid looking at those feet! As ever any questions fire away and see you on the water for 2018.

SEND SIMON...

a question or suggestion to info@windwise.net! If Windwise answer it in Windsurfing UK, you'll get a fab Windwise Rash Vest!

Simon Bornhoft Windwise 'Coach of the Year'

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SUPM

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WINDSURFING 101:

A BASIC LOOK AT HOW WINDSURFING WORKS

WORDS: SIMON WINKLEY
PHOTOS: JOHN HUMPHRIES
ILLUSTRATIONS: PETE GALVIN

WHEN I FIRST STUMBLED ACROSS WINDSURFING AS AN INFORMAL LEARNER IT WAS RELATIVELY EASY TO PERFORM SIMPLE ACTIONS TO MAKE THE THING WORK. HOWEVER, BEING AN INQUISITIVE CHAP I WANTED TO KNOW HOW AND WHY THE BOARD AND RIG DID WHAT IT DID YET NO ONE SEEMED TO BE OFFERING ANY SORT OF SENSIBLE ADVICE. I REMEMBER BEING TOLD BY A GUY WHO ALWAYS WINDSURFED BAREFOOT DESPITE STUBBING HIS TOES WITH ALARMING FREQUENCY, *"IT'S ALL IN THE REALM OF PHYSICS – A BIT TECHNICAL MATE…"* **I felt comfortable with the concept of catching some wind in the sail and heading off downwind (and that's mostly what I did anyway). Yet how a windsurfer could go in any other directions – even upwind, against the very force that was providing the power in the first place – was beyond me and I was determined to find out what was going on.**

The guy with the delicate feet was right. The answer is to be found in physics but take care. Type 'forces on sails' into Wikipedia and scroll down to marvel at the sheer complexity of information available: graphs of propulsive force coefficients, equations to determine drag predomination and lavish descriptions of lift variables and vortex shedding. This is all swashbuckling stuff – if indeed you have the time and brain capacity for it. For the rest of us, however, here's a quick look at some essentials in this otherwise technical subject.


Longtail

AIRFLOW

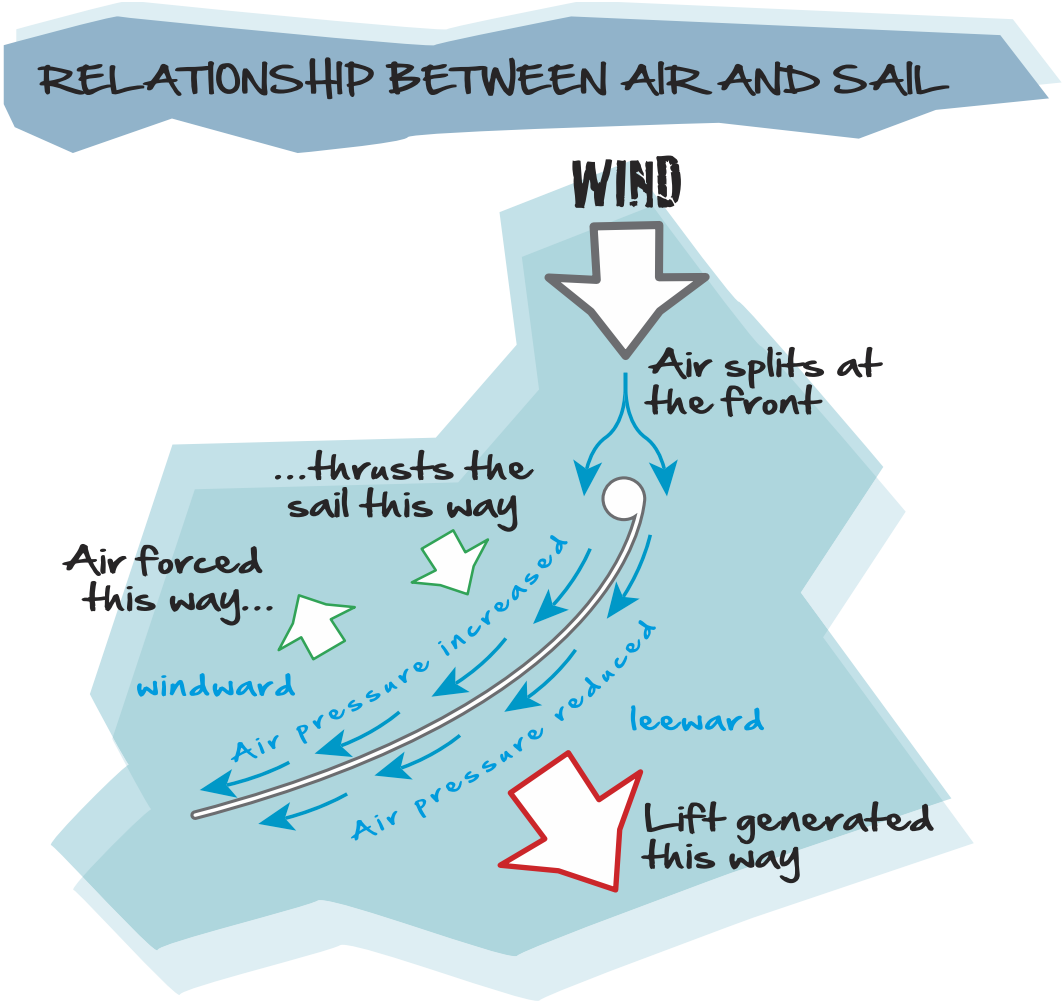
A windsurf sail changes the direction and pressure of the air that it stands in the way of. The air must move onto the sail, flow as smoothly as possible over it and exit the sail with the least fuss. This is primarily achieved with a well-rigged sail pulled-in to the correct position.

A common understanding of how a sail works is this: air splits into two streams as it hits the sail – one of which passes to leeward and the other to windward and that the difference in speed of these two streams causes lift. This is thanks to 'Equal Transit Theory' which suggests that air molecules separate at the luff and meet up again on the back edge – one of which is said to have travelled a further distance around the outside of the sail and the other a shorter distance around the inside. All of this is no longer accepted as credible, however and – for those who are familiar with it – Bernoulli's principle, whilst sound, does not apply here.

Lift is actually generated in two ways:

1) As the air accelerates over the downwind side (which creates an area of low pressure on the downwind side)

2) As the air travels around the upwind side and is forced upwind which pushes, or thrusts, the sail downwind. To add clarity to this concept imagine holding an angled hand out of the window of a moving car with your index finger higher than your little finger. As the air hits the palm of your hand it will be forced downwards and your hand will be thrust upwards. This is also like air being forced over the downwards facing edge of an aeroplane wing to create upwards lift)



Lift is generated by low pressure on the leeward side and thrust on the windward side

SMOOTH AIRFLOW

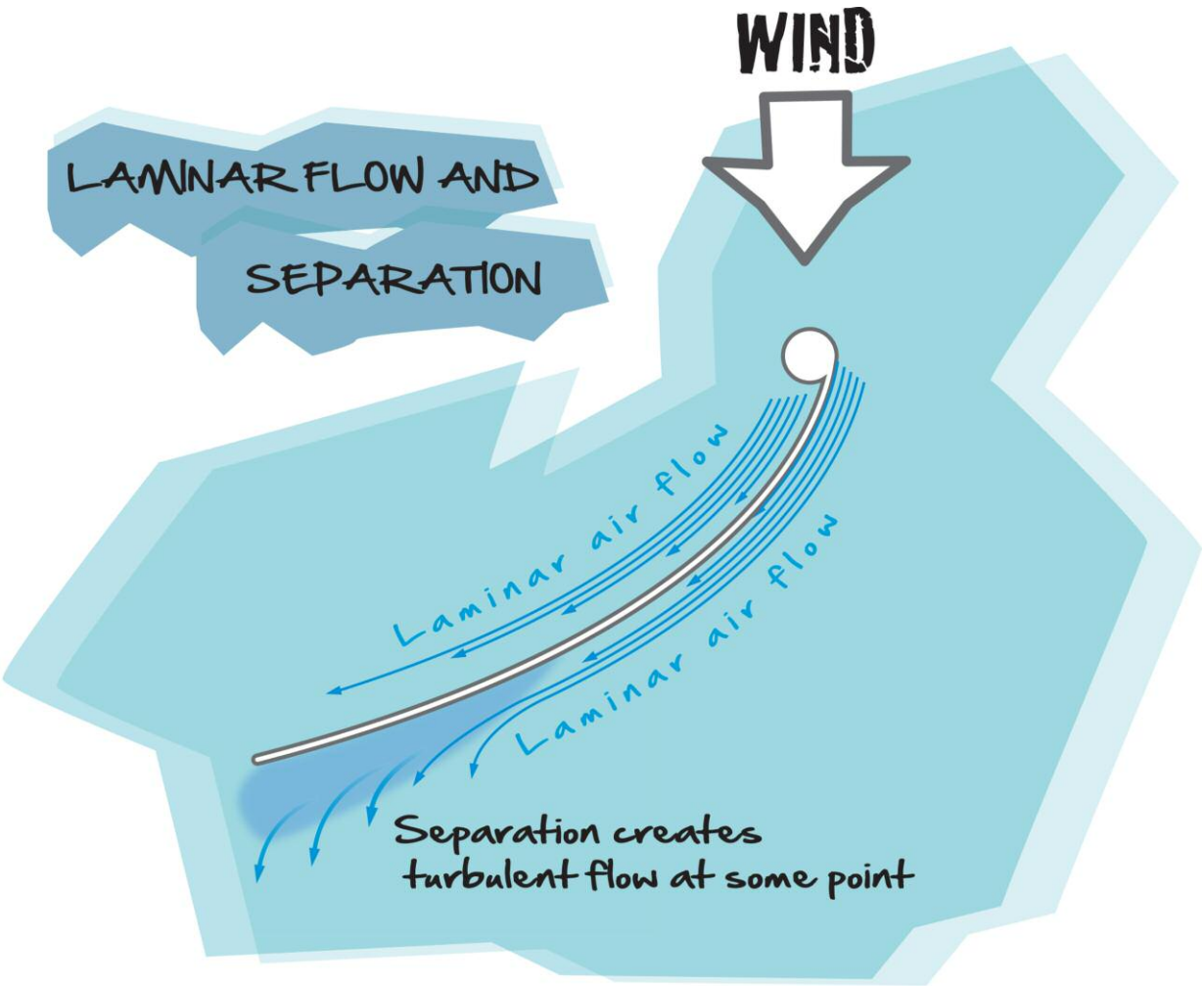
Laminar flow is often used to describe smooth airflow over both sides of a sail but there is much more to the story than this.

The term actually describes how:

- the air molecules touching the sail will slow down to almost zero due to friction (skin friction drag)
- the air molecules slightly further away from the sail will move a bit faster
- the air molecules even further away from the sail will move faster still

The region surrounding the sail where laminar flow occurs is called the boundary layer and can be up to a few inches thick. Air outside this layer is not affected by skin friction drag.

Laminar flow is rather like sliding a loose pack of cards along a table. The card at the bottom of the pile will not move very far along the table as it experiences friction against it. The next card up will move a bit further and so on, with the uppermost card travelling the furthest. In the same way you have layers of air at different speeds sliding over the sail. Laminar flow is good news because this layering produces less skin friction drag. If air only travelled in one thick slab then all of it would be slowed against the sail and windsurfing would not be possible. This would be like picking up the cards, gluing them all together and sliding the pack across the table again. The card at the top would have the same drag as the card at the bottom and not travel freely forwards, thus reducing the overall ability of the pack of cards to travel smoothly across the table.



The layers of air increase in speed as they get further away from the skin friction drag of the sail

TURBULENT AIRFLOW

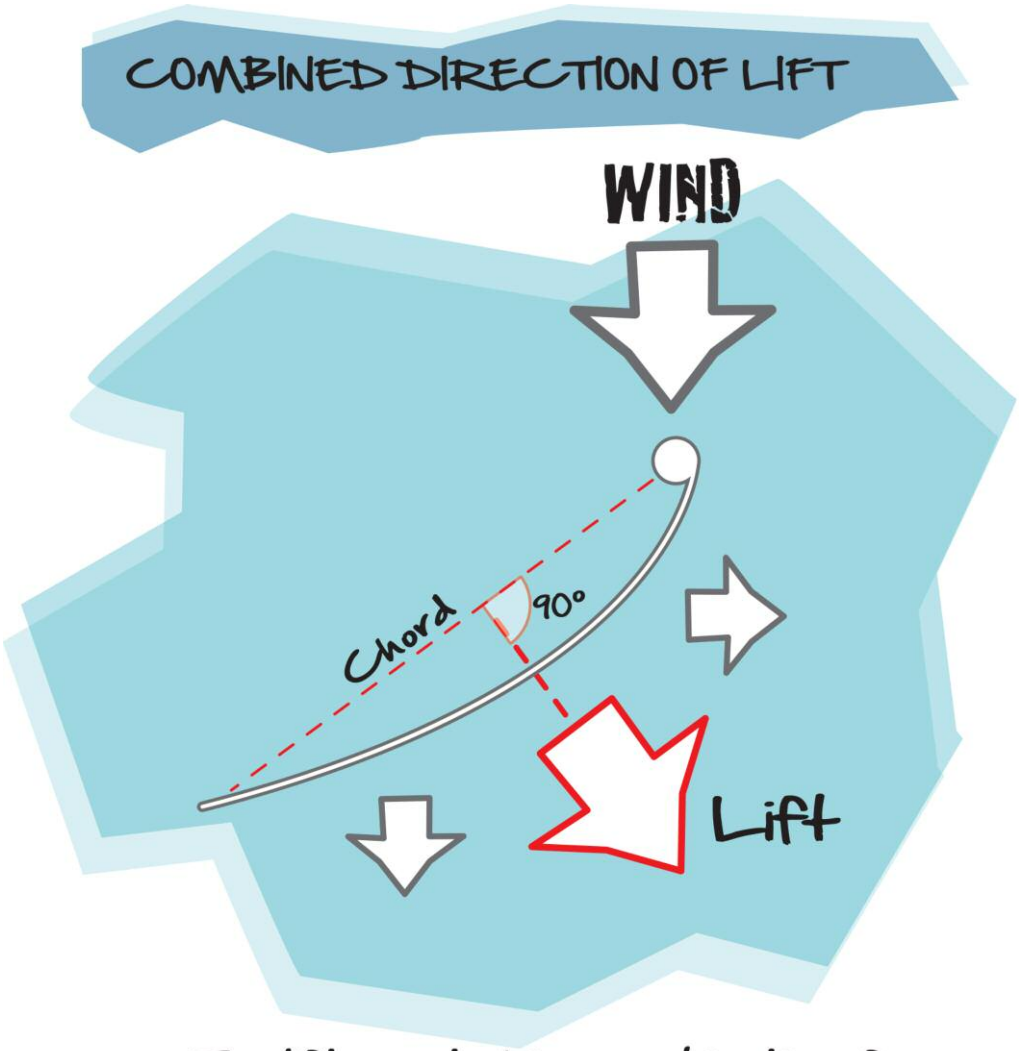
Turbulent flow is air swirling and colliding chaotically instead of sliding past itself in smooth layers. Carefully setting our sail to the wind on a close, beam or broad reach will avoid significant turbulence.

Sailing too close to the wind, sailing dead downwind on a run or pulling in the sail too much before planing occurs will, on the other hand, encourage it. Even so there is very little we can do to avoid some degree of change from laminar to turbulent flow as it will happen at some point. Such separation occurs when the airflow no longer follows the curve of the sail, particularly as it shears off at some point on the leeward side. At the point of separation no lift is being generated and the flow becomes stalled.

LATERAL RESISTANCE

Now let's go back to lift which, in simple terms, wants to pull the sail a bit downwind and a bit forwards. The forwards element is great yet not many windsurfers are fans of going sideways. This is where the board's engagement with the water comes in.

Imagine if a board was literally floating above the water's surface, totally disconnected from it – like a hoverboard-windsurfer of the future perhaps or a hot air balloon blown at the whim of the wind. With nothing to grip onto, the sideways element would be significant and would be impossible to reduce. No need to worry though - boards are suitably connected to the water and, as such, all have some degree of resistance to going sideways.



The lift created is a combination of forwards and sideways forces

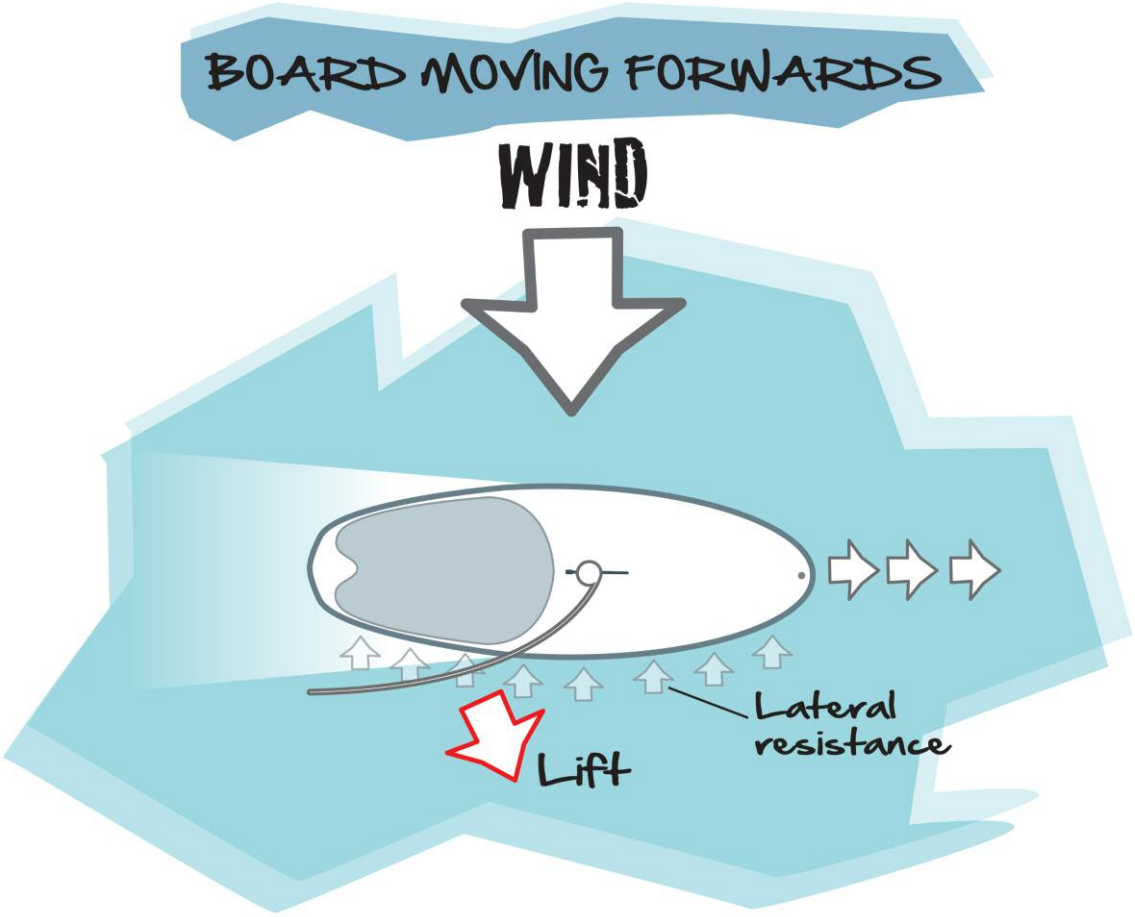
In the photos, the solid arrows represent the sideways force on the board caused by the lift from the sail (transferred though the mastfoot and the body of the person windsurfing) and the opaque arrows represent lateral resistance.

In the first one I am standing in shallow water pressing down on the board and trying to push it sideways which is not easy. You can clearly see how the water is resisting the sideways passage of the board through it, thanks to the board's length/thickness (volume), fin and daggerboard. In the next photo I am deeply engaging the windward rail – a trick to increase lateral resistance in the absence of a daggerboard, typically in non-planing conditions on a smaller volume board. Again the water can be seen rebelling against the board's best efforts to push sideways through it.

So what is the upshot of all of this? Well, the board – subject to the hydrodynamic lift that its lateral resistance creates (as a result of the aerodynamic lift from a correctly-set sail) – simply moves forwards through the water.

And that, in very simple terms, is how a windsurfer works!

Simon Winkley is a RYA Advanced Windsurfing Instructor and a RYA Windsurfing Trainer running instructor courses across the UK and overseas. He is supported by Starboard, Severne and Bray Lake Watersports and provides windsurfing coaching holidays through Ocean Elements in Vassiliki.



All this science comes together to allow us to windsurf

WINDSURFING 101: PLANING MADE SIMPLE

WORDS: SIMON WINKLEY
PHOTOS: JOHN HUMPHRIES
ILLUSTRATIONS: PETE GALVIN

A REMARKABLE ARRAY OF CHANGES OCCURS WHEN A WINDSURFER MAKES THE TRANSITION FROM NON-PLANING TO PLANING. WHEN THE BOARD DRAMATICALLY SLIPS INTO HYPER-DRIVE FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME THE FEELING FOR THE RIDER CAN BE BOTH EXHILARATING AND TERRIFYING IN EQUAL MEASURE. FOR ME THIS HAPPENED ON A SMALL GREEK ISLAND IN A HARBOUR RIDDLED WITH YACHTS LASHED TO MOORINGS. With no idea of how to handle the kit at such speed I simultaneously whooped/feared for my life as I blasted a sketchy line across the water whilst the menacing hulls flashed by. After slowing down again and dropping the rig I collapsed onto my board in a kind of trance having finally realised what windsurfing was all about.

So, in simple terms, what's happening when planing occurs and how on earth can a windsurf board travel at greater speeds than the wind? To get things started we need to go back a few years to understand what stops a board sinking in the first place.

The original 'Eureka' moment

Archimedes of Syracuse, whilst famously stepping into his bath over 2200 years ago, discovered that an object, wholly or partially immersed in a fluid, is buoyed-up (supported) by a force equal to the weight of the fluid displaced by the object. This principle explains how a buoyant force is exerted by a fluid on any object that is placed on or in it. Basically this is the only reason why a stationary board, rig and rider float either on the surface or slightly below it according to volume of board vs weight of rig and rider.


NCX

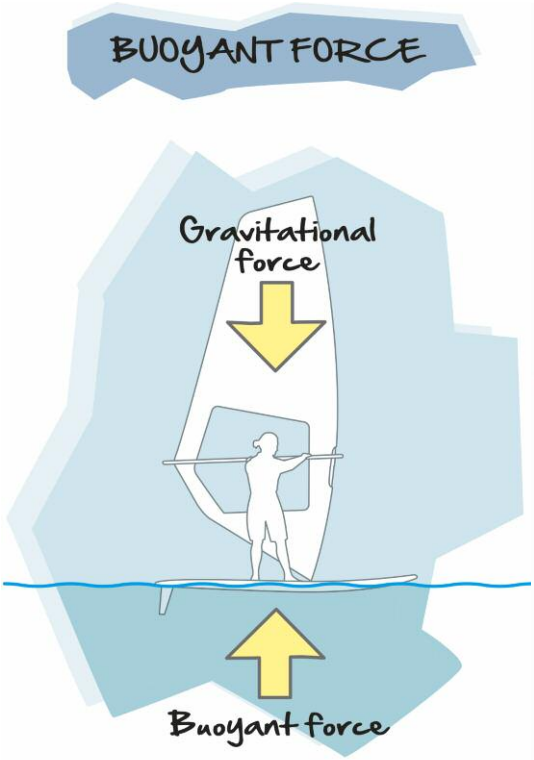
GETTING UP TO SPEED

As a windsurf board moves forwards more elements come into play. At low speed a board displaces water, pushing it out of the way and creating plenty of drag at the same time.

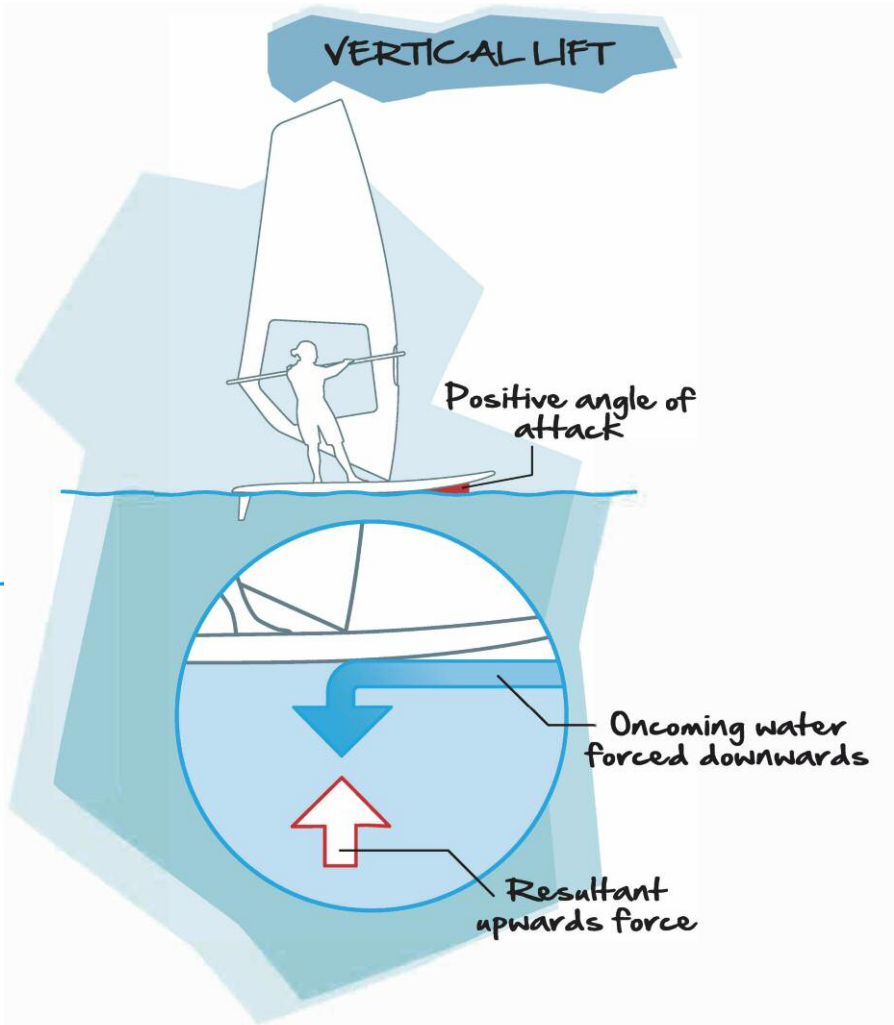
A factor that is significant in reducing drag is the forcing downwards of the oncoming water as it meets the underside of the board. The way the board presents itself to the oncoming water is described as its positive angle of attack. Too steep an angle means that the oncoming water will hit the underside of the board more head-on and prevent it reaching (or maintaining) greater speeds.

A board with a perfect shallow angle, however, will deflect the oncoming water downwards effectively, resulting in a (reactionary) vertical force upwards on the board.

As it moves along, a board sits in a wave of its own creation with a crest near the front and a crest just behind it. With too much weight on the back the board has a mountain to climb and will have low forward speed and high drag. A perfectly trimmed board, however, with plenty of power from the sail will allow the board to move forwards effectively and – as the speed increases and the drag decreases – the board will lift upwards out of the water enabling it to sit in front of its forward crest – often referred to as having 'overtaken its own bow wave'. Now the board is planing, literally skimming across the water unfettered by the drag it previously experienced when in displacement mode



Buoyant force acting on a windsurfer allowing it to float

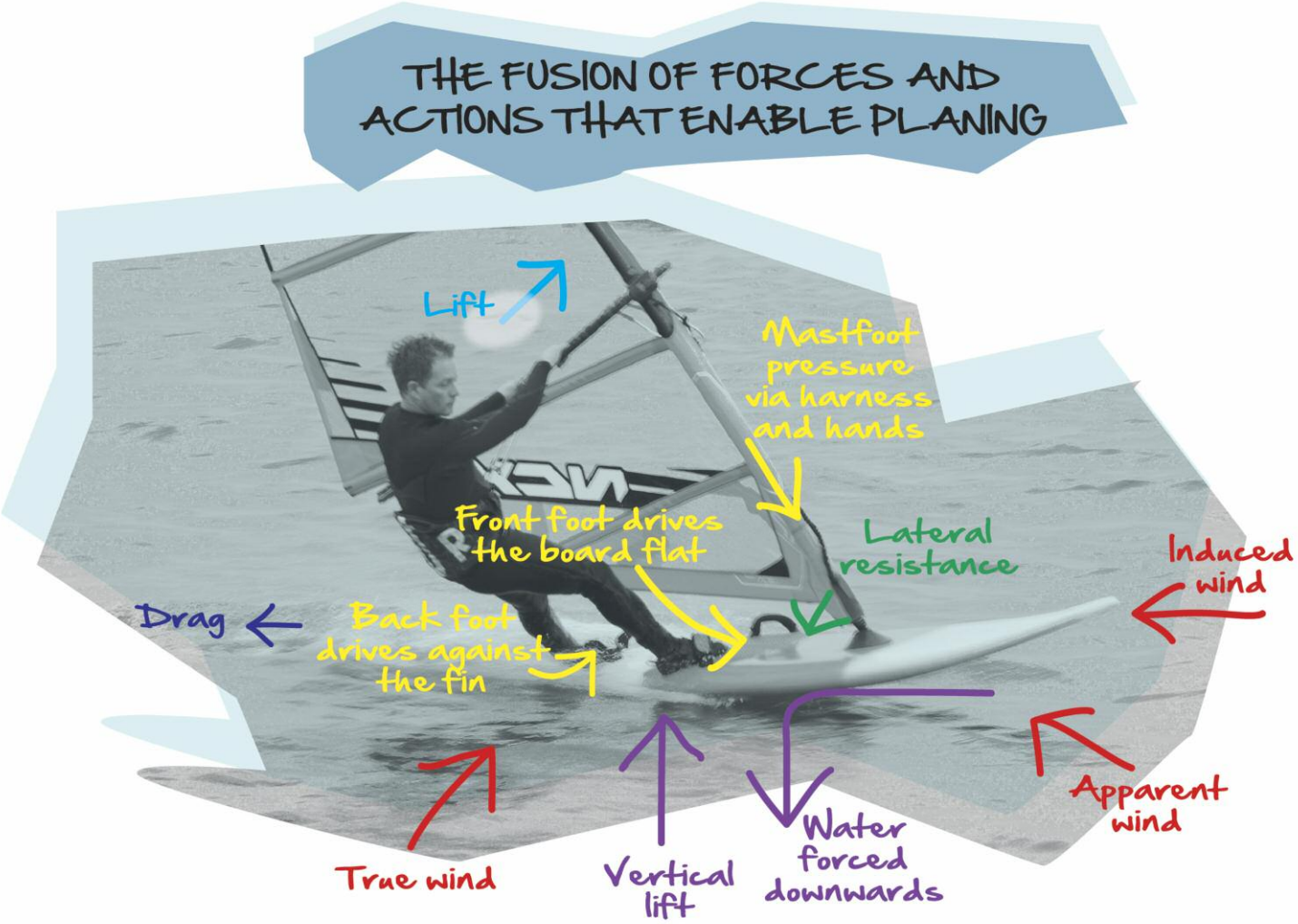


Vertical lift is created as more power is transferred through the board

CAN A BOARD SAIL FASTER THAN THE WIND? APPARENTLY!

The forward speed that we create as we windsurf is called the induced wind (like the wind a cyclist feels in their face as they ride along on a windless day) and it hits the rig at exactly the same speed that the board is travelling in. This headwind (negligible at low speed yet of paramount importance at high speed) is added to the true wind with vector addition.

This increases the strength of the wind, as felt by the rig, which increases the power output of the sail, as well as changing the direction of the wind hitting the sail. This resulting apparent wind comes from further ahead than the true wind.

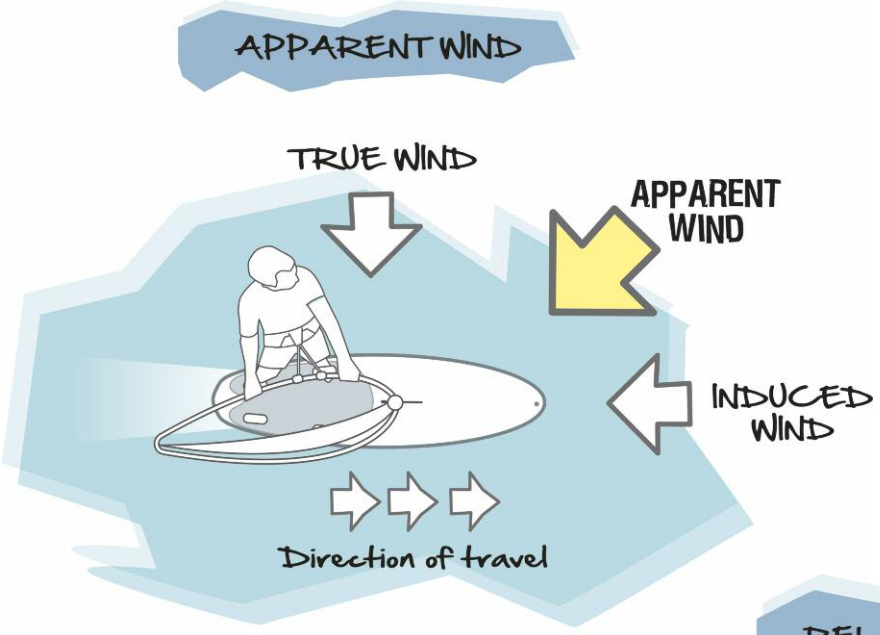


A planing board skims over the surface of the water, having reached a critical speed whereby vertical lift becomes the predominant upwards force

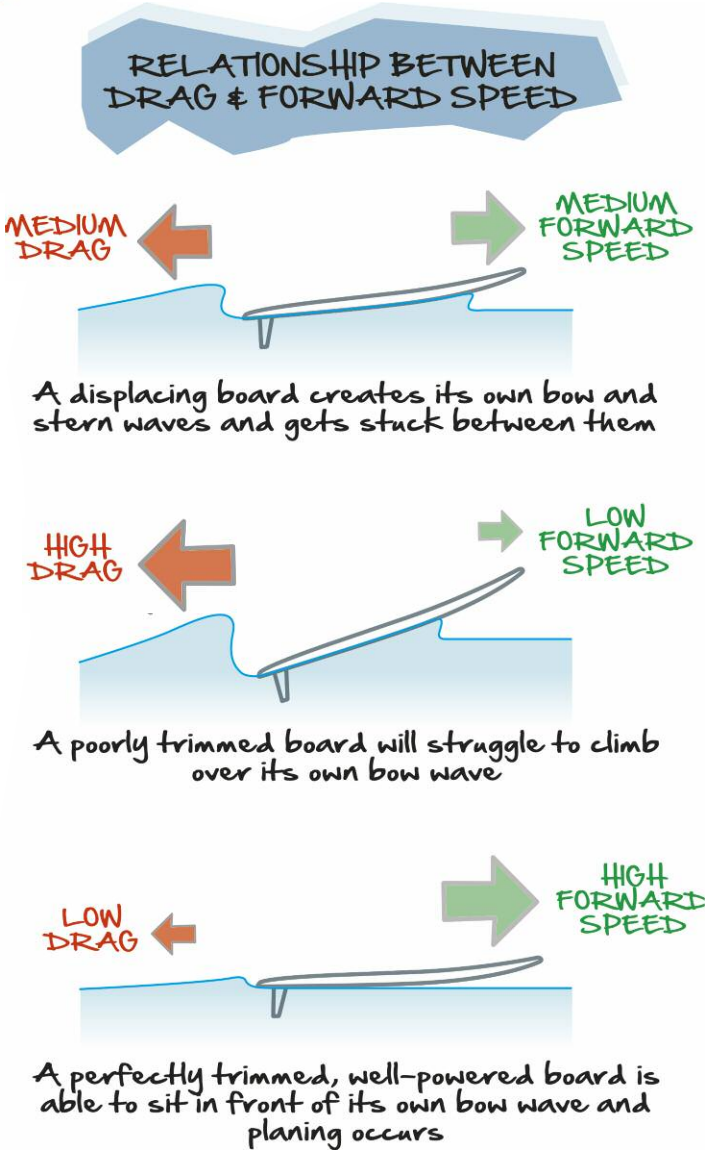
Things are being kept super-basic here. If you're not careful, a number of rather more academic factors can creep in such as wind shear, inverse cosines and quadrant ambiguity which are not generally at the forefront of people's minds when the sun is out and the wind is blowing!

What is important, however, is that the rider in the real world needs to pull the sail in closer to the centre line of the board as the speed increases and the wind is felt from further ahead. Sailing on the apparent wind maintains the smooth flow of air over the sail, allows the board to be sailed faster than the wind and the world is a happy place.

The challenges come when we are windsurfing through the buffer zone between non-planing and planing as our equipment is fought over by the rival forces attempting to dominate it. What we do with our rig and with our weight on the board needs to change fluidly to meet the needs of these rules of physics at this time.



The sail is pulled in closer to the centreline as the speed increases and the apparent wind is felt from further ahead



So there it is – a simplistic version of how a rider, successfully harnessing stronger winds, can enable planing by transferring the rig's energy through their body and board to reduce the board's drag in favour of vertical lift and, hence, greater forward speed. Once planing occurs and the fun intensifies, the only thing left to worry about is dodging those moored yachts - so join us next time for a 101 article on steering…

Simon Winkley is a RYA Advanced Windsurfing Instructor and a RYA Windsurfing Trainer running instructor courses across the UK and overseas. He is supported by Starboard, Severne and Bray Lake Watersports and provides windsurfing coaching holidays through Ocean Elements in Vassiliki

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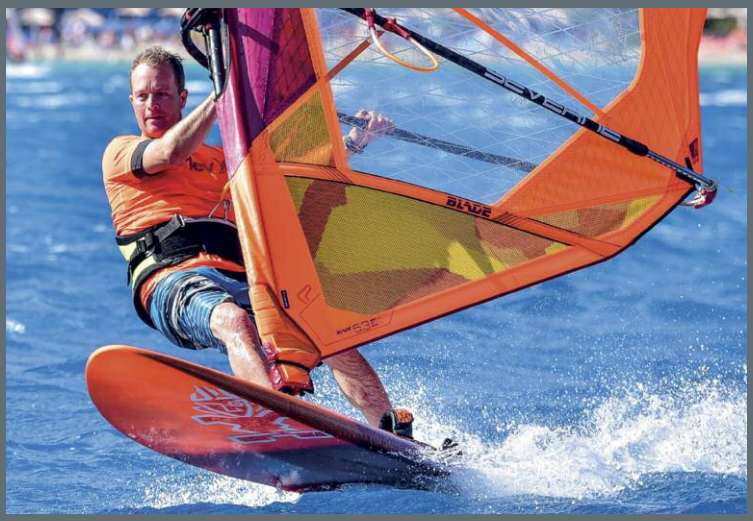

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SEVERNE SAILS FOR THE REVOLUTION · STARBOARD · ABTA

When sailing across the wind - leaning the rig forwards and towards the wind will turn the board downwind

NON-PLANING STEERING

WORDS: SIMON WINKLEY
PHOTOS: MILES TAYLOR WWW.PROTOGRAPHYOFFICIAL.COM
ILLUSTRATIONS: PETE GALVIN

GETTING TO GRIPS WITH EFFECTIVE STEERING IS IMPORTANT AND IT IS LEARNED FROM THE EARLIEST STAGES. FROM BEGINNERS LEARNING TO AVOID AN OBSTRUCTION IN THE WATER TO THE MORE ADVANCED TECHNIQUE OF CARVING THE BOARD BY FOOT-STEERING IT'S AN INTEGRAL PART OF ANY SESSION AFLOAT. There are far too many variations of non-planing steering for the basic information here to apply perfectly to all situations. The aim then is to set the scene for steering by simply looking at what's going on when we are sailing slowly across the wind (on a beam reach) to make a board change direction.

Understanding this elementary level of board and rig control on a beam reach should form a framework of understanding to help with progression towards other more specific forms of steering including tacking and gybing. Throughout, whilst transitions will not be referred to, remember that steering is indeed an integral part of turning the board all the way around. Whilst this is done frequently at the end of short reaches I was once lucky enough to experience blasting for over 30 minutes on one tack from the Sinai deep into the Gulf of Suez. Yet even with that much water to spare I had to use steering eventually to turn around and head back before I ultimately became stranded on the remote shores of continental Africa.

A windsurfing rudder?

Let's start by 'putting the rudder on'. Imagine – if you will – an alternative world where windsurfing has developed along traditional sailing lines since the origin of the sport. Here windsurfers control power with their front hand holding the boom of a rotating sail whilst their back hand steers by gripping a long rod linked to a rudder bolted onto the tail. It's hard to imagine achieving very much on such a stand-up-sailing contraption! One of the main challenges with dinghy sailing is avoiding over-steering the rudder which makes the water flowing over it turbulent, causing it to act like a brake. Luckily, in the real world, we can steer a windsurfer without relying on a swinging chunk of wood/fibreglass/carbon at the back and this is what can make our sport so smooth at the lower end of the wind/skills spectrum and so radical at the top end.

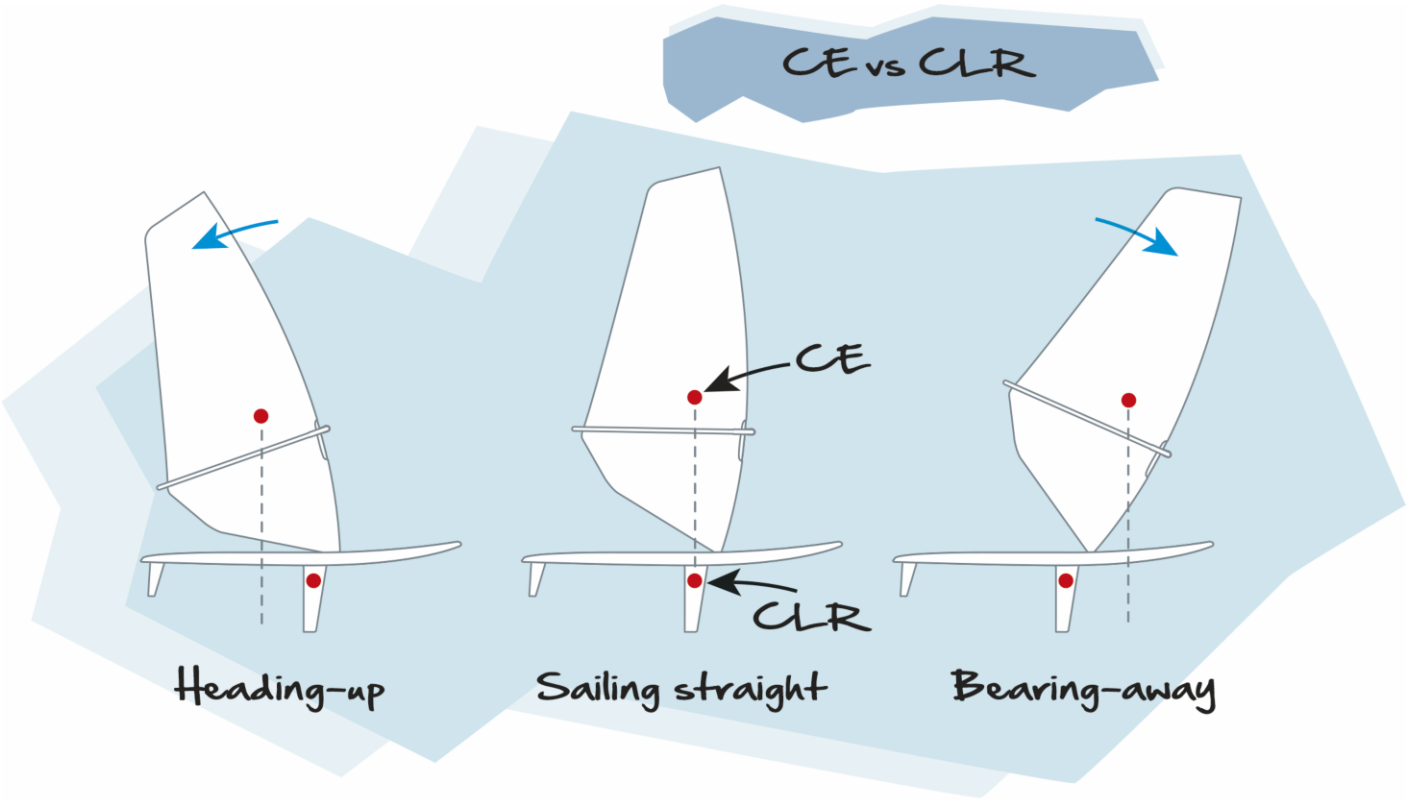
CE AND CLR

In order to change direction we lean the rig back to steer upwind and forwards to steer downwind. The lift created by the flow of air over the sail is best represented by a point in the middle of the sail above the boom and is called the centre of effort (CE).

With some of the lift from the sail pushing the board sideways the board opposes this sideways force along its length. This unwillingness of the board to slide laterally is known as its lateral resistance and the mid point of this is essentially in the middle of the board or on the daggerboard and is known as the centre of lateral resistance (CLR).

- When the CE is directly above the CLR then the board will travel forwards in a straight line as the equipment is in balance
- Leaning the rig backwards puts the CE behind the CLR and the board will turn upwind (heading up). The back of the board is pushed downwind as the board pivots in the middle
- Leaning the rig forwards puts the CE forwards of the CLR and the board turns downwind (bearing away). The front of the board is pushed downwind as the board pivots in the middle.

Further, in order to steer downwind effectively, we must lean the rig towards the wind as well as forwards. When I am running the early phases of instructor training I always ask the candidates why they think the rig needs to be leaned towards the wind as well as forwards yet I seldom procure the correct answer. So lets look more closely at this.

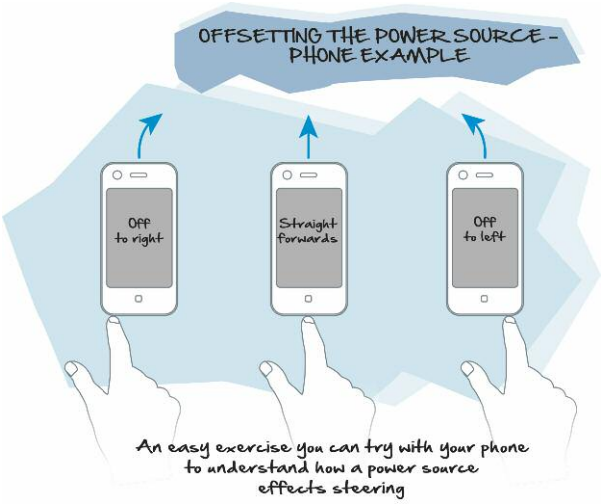


Positioning the Centre of Effort in front or behind the Centre of Lateral Resistance is the key to steering

OFFSETTING THE POWER SOURCE

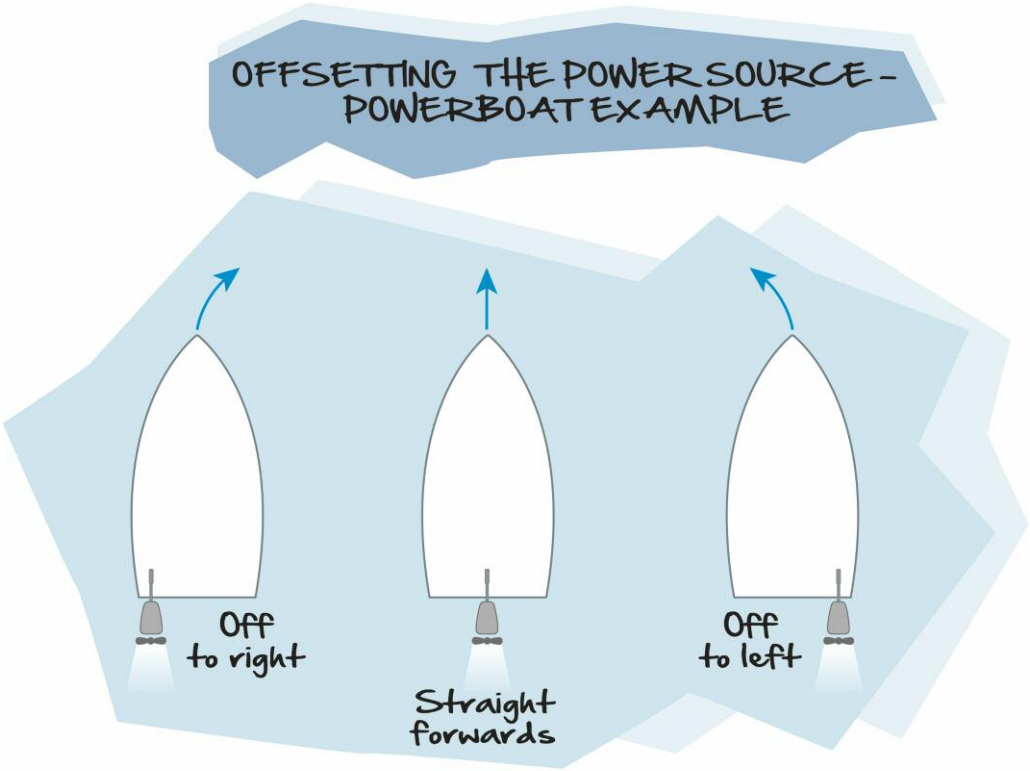
Imagine owning a small powerboat and storing the outboard engine off the boat when not in use. Imagine attaching the engine to the middle of the back of the boat and centralising the steering. When the boat is put in forward gear which way will it go? The answer, of course is forwards, in a straight line.

Now imagine that one day you ask a friend to attach the engine for you – a friend who does not quite know what to do – and let's say that they attach it securely to the back of the boat but, instead of putting it in the middle, they erroneously position it far over to the left hand side. Now which way will the boat go in forward gear? Even with the steering centralized the boat will turn right and we need to appreciate why. The force pushing the boat forwards is no longer acting on it centrally. With one side being pushed effectively and the other side experiencing drag then the boat will turn as it pivots around the side that is feeling neglected.



Try it. Take your phone and place it on a table directly in front of you with a short edge facing you. Place your index finger in the middle of the short edge and push the phone forwards. It should travel in a straight line away from you. This represents a balanced power source. Now try it again but this time place your finger on one end of the short side and push it forwards. The phone should turn smoothly to the opposite side as it moves forwards. This represents an offset power source.

So when we lean the rig forwards and towards the wind we throw the CE not only in front of the CLR but, crucially, over the windward side of the board. This provides more power to the windward side than the leeward side so the windward side is propelled forwards more effectively than the leeward side – and it is this that turns the board downwind.



Thinking about how the positioning of a powerboat engine could effect it's control helps to understand how a windsurfer steers

When we steer upwind the rig needs to be leaned back and away from the wind. As the sail is already positioned away from the wind however (over the downwind side in its natural sailing position) we only need to focus on leaning it back.

THE STEERING PLANE

So with steering in non-planing conditions across the wind there is a diagonal plane in which the rig moves as can be seen in the illustrated photo below.

Understanding this will help to steer smoothly and proficiently, especially when counterbalancing the pull of the sail with the body. Another critical reason that non-planing steering must be performed along the diagonal plane is that airflow over the sail is kept smooth (laminar) which transfers power into the turn. Over-sheeting the sail in order to lean the rig directly towards the nose or tail would mean trying to steer using turbulent airflow which would fail to turn the board effectively. So to get your beam reach non-planing steering just right, remember to only position the rig forwards and backwards along the diagonal plane and from here other more specific steering techniques will follow.

Changing direction at planing speed – the more dynamic version of steering – will be covered in the next article.

The diagonal plane for non-planing steering when sailing across the wind

Simon Winkley is a RYA Advanced Windsurfing Instructor and a RYA Windsurfing Trainer running instructor courses across the UK and overseas. He is supported by Starboard, Severne and Bray Lake Watersports and provides enjoyable, non-elite windsurfing coaching holidays through Ocean Elements in Vassiliki.
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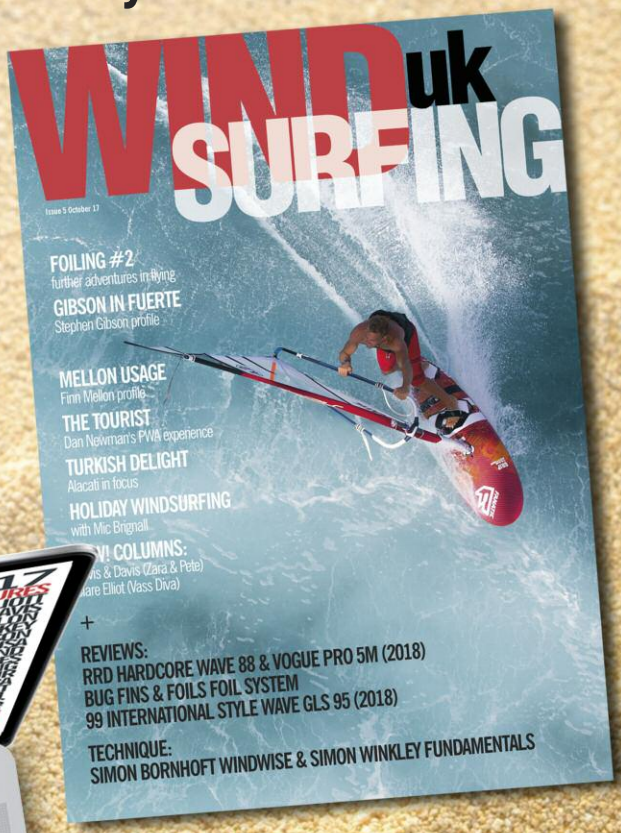

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WINDSURFING 101: PLANING STEERING

WORDS: SIMON WINKLEY
PHOTOS: LOUIS TIERNEY
WWW.PROTOGRAPHYOFFICIAL.COM
ILLUSTRATIONS: PETE GALVIN

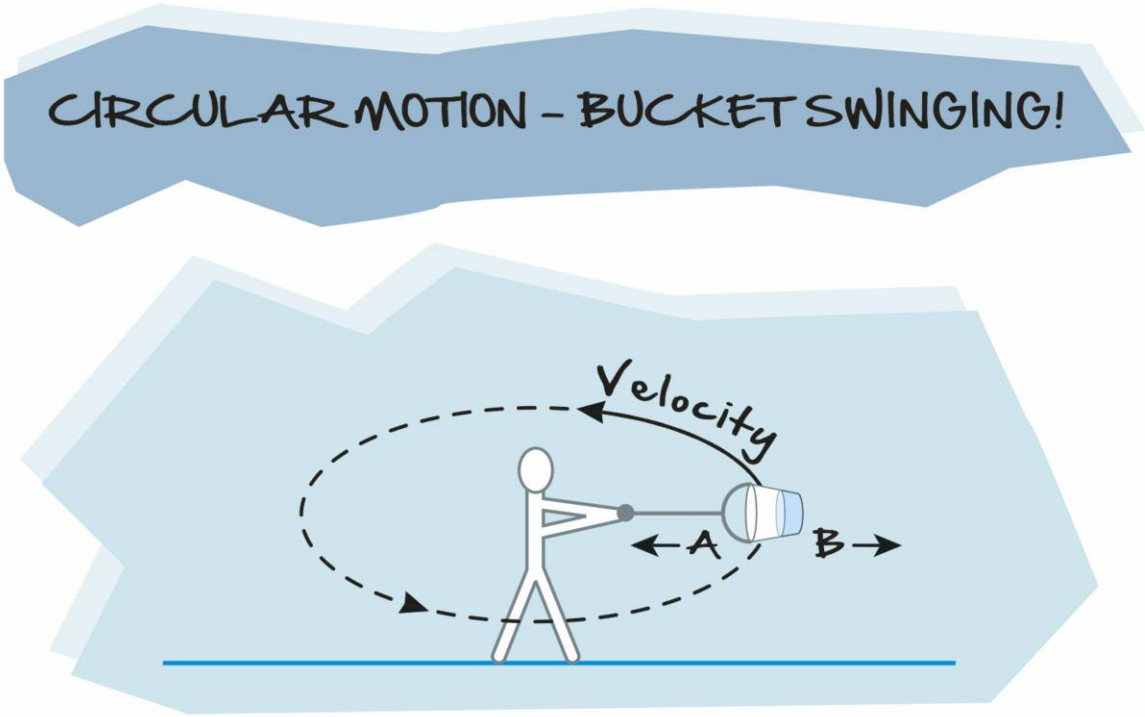
IN PREVIOUS ARTICLES WE HAVE LOOKED AT NON-PLANING WINDSURFING, PLANING WINDSURFING AND NON-PLANING STEERING. SO NOW IT'S TIME TO TACKLE THE SWIFTER AND MORE DYNAMIC MEANS OF CHANGING DIRECTION – PLANING STEERING. Whether foot-steering to avoid another windsurfer, carve gybing or performing a butter-smooth bottom turn on a wave, the thrill of carving – once experienced – will never go away.

I was working with a student recently who, after some serious commitment to the sport, finally got planing at full speed. Being the sort of guy that doesn't want to hold back he also went for a carve gybe one of his first planing reaches. Sadly I have to report that his parabolic wake soon became a crater… however, the fact that he was able to foot-steer straight away shows just how easy it is to start carving. He simply stepped across the board with his back foot and depressed the leeward rail. The board, subject to a set of physical rules, kindly obliged him by cleanly changing direction downwind…until his style points dropped a few notches resulting in him being brutally flung into the blue waters of the Ionian Sea…

So what is the relationship between the board and the water every time we turn at planing speed? Let's look at a few terms and get an understanding of how things come together to make carves happen.

Circular motion is the movement our carving board makes along its curved path and, as it accelerates radially inwards, it becomes subject to ***Newton's Third Law: for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.*** We looked at this in previous articles as it is everywhere in windsurfing.

To introduce these forces let's dive into the radical world of bucket swinging! If a person tied a half-filled bucket of water to a rope and swung the bucket around themselves with enough **velocity** *(definition: the speed of an object in a particular direction)* then the rope would experience tension. This *centre-seeking* force is called ***centripetal force*** *(pronounced Sentry-pEE-tle)* and is what keeps the bucket from flying off as it always pulls it towards the centre. The reaction *(or opposite)* force to the centripetal force is the *(centre-fleeing)* **centrifugal force.** This represents the object's ***inertia*** and is what forces the water away from the centre of rotation into the bottom of the bucket to prevent it spilling even though the bucket will be on its side during its aerial circular motion.



A = Centripetal force (the tension on the rope which pulls the bucket towards the centre of the circle)

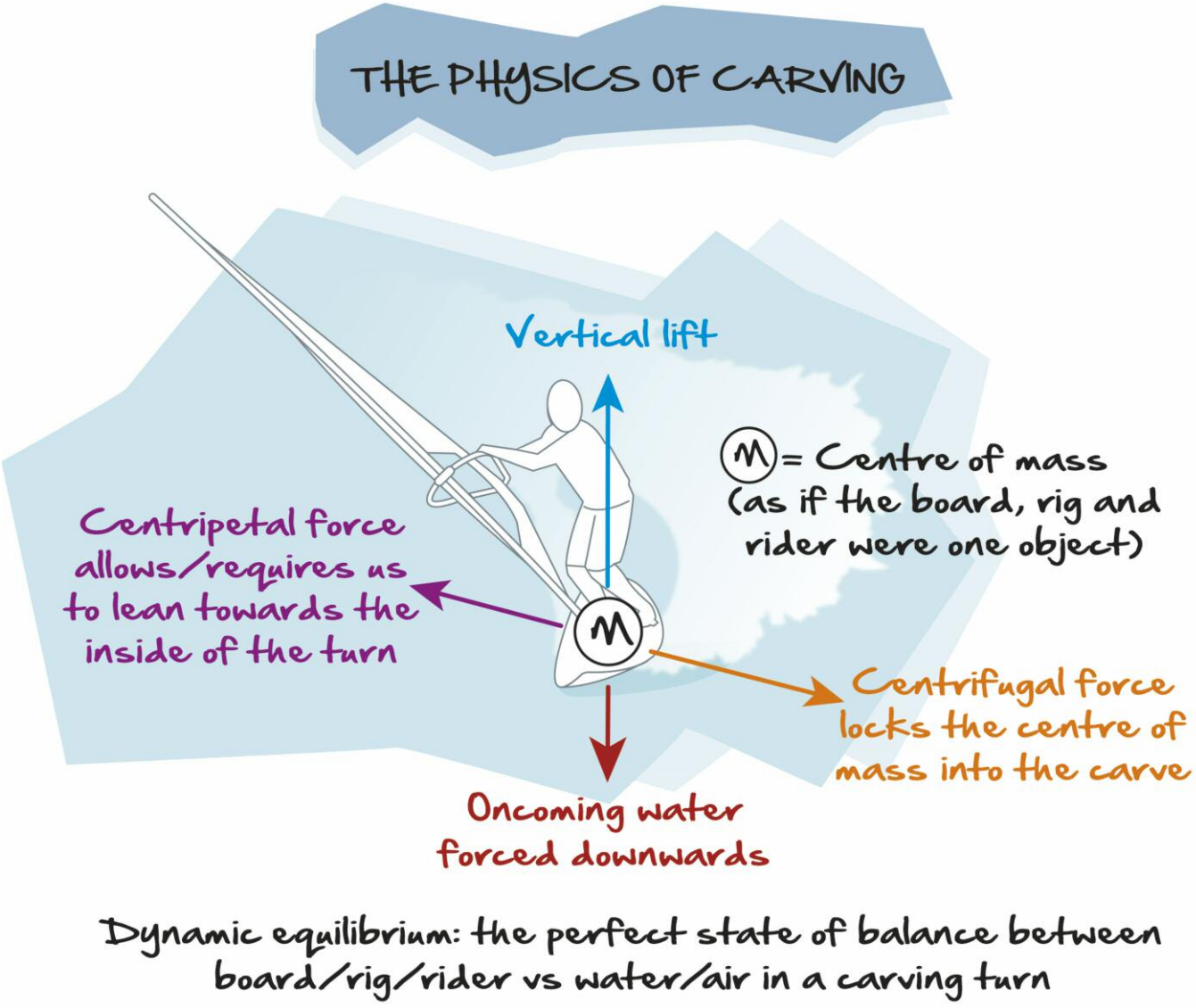
B = Centrifugal force (equal and opposite to the centripetal force – prevents the water from spilling)

Back to windsurfing now. When a windsurfer is carving with control, the centripetal force is the inward pulling force that ensures the **centre of mass** *(definition: the average position of all parts of the system – board, rig and rider)* moves in a circle as if it was actually being swung in an arc whilst fastened to a rope. The opposing centrifugal force, or inertia, is what pulls our feet down onto the board and pulls the board towards the water. So, being governed by inertia, wherever our feet are on the board and wherever our body is positioned relative to our feet will determine the angle of the board during the carve.

During our carves we must maintain speed at all costs. Too much of a reduction in the velocity would make the rider fall into the water to the inside of the turn. Similarly, with the spinning bucket, a significant slowing of the person spinning around would reduce the tension on the rope which would make the bucket drop to the ground the water pour out.

The sail provides (as long as the wind stays constantly strong enough and the rider does a good job) the constant power to drive the board into, through and out of a planing turn. It's the same for either a direction-changing squiggle on the water or a full-blooded carve gybe or planing tack. Other sports which make fast, angled turns such as snowboarding, wakeboarding and cycling work in pretty much the same way so think about how your experiences in any of these can give insights into the sensation of planing windsurfing turns.

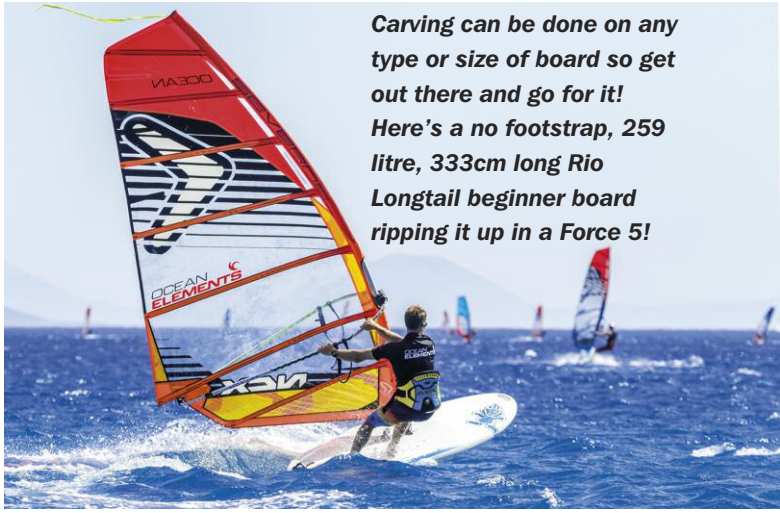
Newcomers to planing can be hesitant when it comes to leaning into carves as they fear falling into the water towards the inside of the turn. As such they might actually lean away from the inside of the turn, colliding with the water in style. If this is you then ask yourself how disastrous things could get if you took a fast corner on a mountain bike yet chose to lean to the outside of the turn.



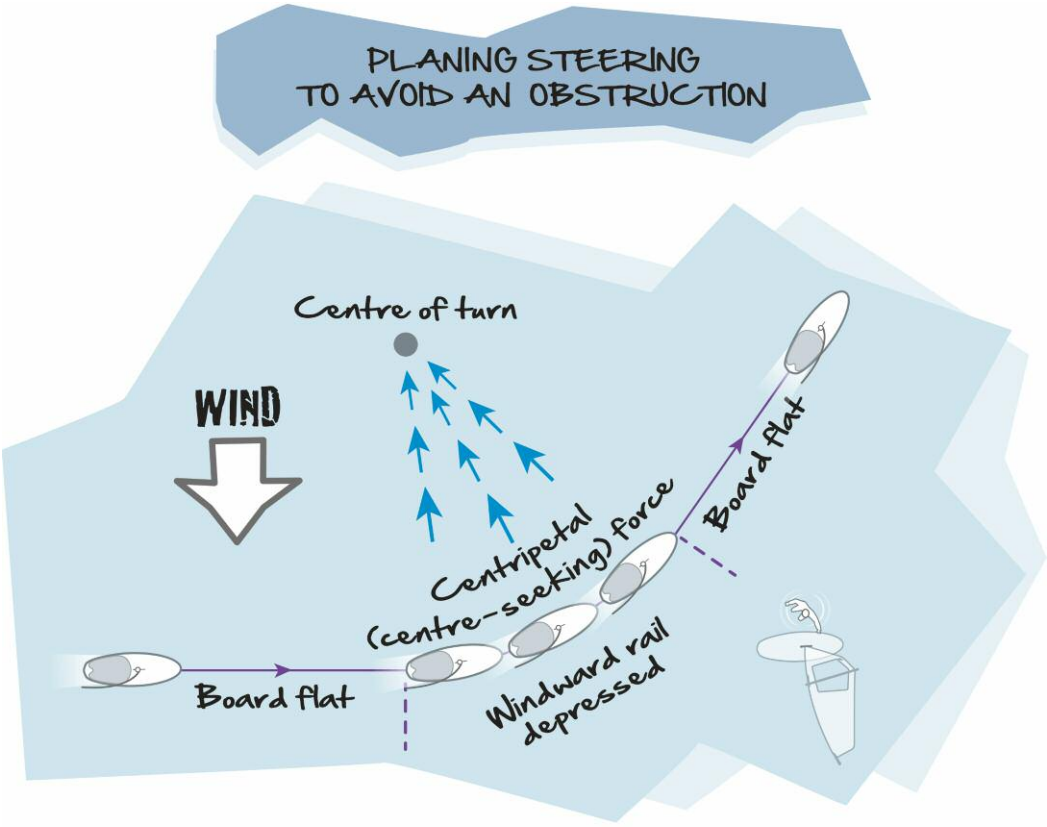
A point to note when carving is that, unlike with non-planing turns, no pivoting should be involved while the edge of the board is engaged with the water as this would cause skidding, or the rail to trip and release from the track it is making for itself in the water. Such a technique is used in more advanced forms of windsurfing such as sliding top turns on waves and aerial freestyle.

Board design elements such as shape, length, nose and tail rocker, how hard or soft the rails are, footstrap and mastfoot positions, etc. together with fin shape and size have a critical part to play in determining exactly how a board carves in a specific situation yet a basic understanding has been offered here.

So remember to carve the board smoothly and to trust the beautiful world of physics to allow you to lean into your planing turns with confidence, grace and lots of power in the sail. Just don't overdo it and lean too far! Carving can be learned and refined on any type of board from a WindSUP or beginner board to any shape or size of freeride board relative to the size and experience of the rider. Slicing-up the water like a surfer or a snowboarder with spray shooting out from the carving rail is right at the core of freeride windsurfing. It's well worth the effort to get to grips with and, once it feels natural, it makes our time on the water so enjoyable.



Carving can be done on any type or size of board so get out there and go for it! Here's a no footstrap, 259 litre, 333cm long Rio Longtail beginner board ripping it up in a Force 5!



Planing squiggles on the water are routine and require momentary (yet firm) pressure on heels or toes

Vass Coaching Weeks 2018:
17 & 24 June

Weymouth Coaching Weekends at the OTC
2017:
25/26 November
2018:
17/18 March
28/29 April
28/29 July

Limited places
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Simon Winkley is a RYA Advanced Windsurfing Instructor and a RYA Windsurfing Trainer running instructor courses across the UK and overseas. He is supported by Starboard, Severne, Bray Lake Watersports and Spinlock. He also provides coaching holidays through Ocean Elements in Vassiliki and coaching weekends at the Official Test Centre in Weymouth.