



A TIME & A PLACE

PHOTOS BY: MARCO WEDELE/GUY CRIBB INTUITION by Guy Cribb

There's a time and a place for a many things in windsurfing, including bending your legs or arms.

In principle though, your legs should try to stay straight on the straights and bent for the bends. Your arms however are far more flexible, always alternating between bent and straight. There's a time and a place for straight arms but I hear so many windsurfing instructors shouting "arms straight!" all the time. Yes, keeping your arms straight does improve some aspects of your windsurfing, but there are equally frequent situations when bending your arms is beneficial too. So, if you feel compelled to bend your arms, don't worry - you might well be doing just the right thing.

BENDING - THE GOLDEN RULE BOOK
- When bending your arms, bend them with your elbows pointing down. This ensures you're hanging your weight onto the boom, rather than on your feet. With your weight on the boom, most things in windsurfing improve.

- If you bend your front arm more than your back arm, you are depowering/sheeting out the sail- which may not have been your intention. Using your arms independently is one of windsurfing's trickiest aspects for newcomers- most people move each arm equally but windsurfers need to move them independently. This skill naturally develops as windsurfers become more aware that their front arm is like a handbrake and their back arm is the accelerator. Pulling on the handbrake kills power. Pulling on the accelerator increases power. Pulling them equally creates no change of power, but can increase mast foot pressure (good stuff) and give you more control (good stuff.)
- Bent arms are stronger than straight arms- you don't see any arm wrestlers with straight arms! Your biceps are strongest when your arm is bent at 90 degrees or less.
- Bending your arms all the time is NOT good stuff. Each arm should be able to move independently and with variety of straight or bent. Start trying!

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GOOD STUFF - RIG FLIPPING



Bending your arms during the flip is crucial for gybing and tacking because it keeps the mast more upright thus reducing the swing weight of the rig. There is a time and a place for making your arms straight to get the rig away from you, but not during the actual flip. The mast should pass as close to you as possible in the moment of rotation.



Tricky situations - non-planing sailing downwind, clew first sailing or during non-planing gybes it's best to have your arms bent so if you are hit by a gust, your arms have some 'give' or 'spring' in them to exhaust and handle the power. If your arms are straight and you get hit by a gust - there is no where to go apart from letting go or being pulled off balance. Watch the pro's, the real pro's, and note how we all have bent arms so much of the time.



Blasting - the most effective way to increase tension into your harness is to push your ass out (since your hook is basically around your pelvis). A by product of your ass going out is your head and shoulders coming in. Naturally your arms bend to allow this.



Popping - without waves to jump in freestyle we pop the board out of the water - just like 'bunny-hopping' a bicycle - where to take off you firstly pull down before springing up. The harder you pull down, the higher you can spring up. Elbows pulling down before lift off!



Harnessing - pulling down into the boom ensures smoother hooking in and out - especially important unhooking for a gybe.

BAD STUFF - ENTERING A GYBE



Mr X - rig and weight back = no control - board tail walking. Note how the front arm is bending pulling the rig backwards and depowering the sail, thus losing all mast foot pressure and therefore control?



Guy correct - rig and weight forwards = more control due to increase of mast foot pressure and rail engaged. Note that my front arm is extended and I'm bending my front leg more than my back leg?

MORE GOOD STUFF



Wave sailing - the transition from bottom turn to top turn often improves by using the rig as a lever to lift the board up the face. In this moment, lean the mast to the outside of the turn, then pull on your front hand to lever the board up the face.



Downforce - rather like popping in freestyle, before lift-off lining up for an aerial I'm spring-loading the downforce on the board for ultimate smack!



In flight control - always needs a crunch-pulling down into the boom.



There's loads of other situations too like getting in or out of footstraps which we'll cover next month when I introduce the latest INTuition Core Skill 'The Growler' that you can apply anytime, any place for better results throughout your windsurfing. Show us your growler and I'll show you mine next month!

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www.guycribb.com
guy@guycribb.com
Riding the World By Storm

Guy Cribb INTuition
Britain's Professional Windsurf Coaching

Guy is the world's leading windsurfing coach and 14 times British Windsurfing Champion. He runs windsurfing courses all over the world for a truly international guest list, and has developed the most acclaimed technique syllabus and DVD known as INTuition. Whether you are trying to master footstrapping, harness, waterstarting, gybing or wave sailing, Guy Cribb INTuition provides your greatest success, and the most fun windsurfing trip of your life!