



## THE TWIST

**Last month we were introduced to Boomshaka! The first of Guy's Core Skills, imperative every time you flip a rig. This month we learn about The Twist, another of Guy's Core Skills, necessary every time you step from one side of the board to the other, in tacking, gybing or freestyling!**

In line with Guy's other Core Skills, The Twist is vital for all windsurfers, whether beginner or expert. Many of you reading this will already do the twist, even if you don't know it. In fact I regularly meet pro-sailors and instructors who still don't know they do the Twist, even though they do it!

If you're carve gybing successfully, you already do the Twist. If you can tack a short board, you might already be doing it. If you want to develop your freestyle, the Twist is probably the best tip you'll ever have. Coaching even high level racers and freestylers, this tip has improved their performance, taking the element of chance away from their tacking or gybing success rate.

If you can strap-to-strap gybe but can't suss out the step gybe, the Twist is the move that makes the difference.

I teach beginners the Twist on day one. As it's one of my Core Skills, they'll find it vital throughout their windsurfing. So many teaching establishments still teach beginners bad habits which restricts their progression. For instance, the standard RYA method of tacking and gybing teaches beginners to use totally the wrong hand and footwork required to tack or gybe a short board at speed. As these beginners progress, they're expected to un-learn their bad habits, and relearn the correct skills! One of the reasons why my Muscle

Memory coaching is so successful, is because no matter how bad your habits, it will correct them. (Guy Cribb INTuition Muscle Memory is the repetition of movements until they become as INTuitive as walking, so you don't have to think, you just do.)

Follow the sequences throughout this feature to feel what the Twist is. For best results, crack open a beer, take your board out of the garage, whip the fin off and stand on it in the straps in your garden, (or living room if the wife's out). By repeating the Twist a sufficient number of times, you'll develop Muscle Memory and the Twist will become INTuitive during your gybes.

To see if the Muscle Memory is working, try the footwork whilst repeating your phone number backwards. Not so easy eh? Half way round your gybe with the spray flying passed, the only thing you'll be able to think about is "H-o-l-y f-e-c-k!!" So, make sure you've got the Muscle Memory sorted beforehand.

Once you have it sussed in the garden, try it afloat in light winds (slow motion) on a big floaty board and a small sail. Having mastered it there too, the real full speed version should come naturally.

This month's feature is split into three main sections; The Twist, Spinning Around (to help you Twist) and Freestylin' Rig 360 (a fun light wind freestyle trick to practice the Twist.)

Scan through all of them and see how we've included heaps of onshore shots to help you develop your Muscle Memory.

### The Twist

The Twist enables you to step from one side of the board to the other using the minimum number of footsteps and keeps your weight over the centre line to prevent the board from tipping over. No other footwork achieves this.



As if carve gybing wasn't tricky enough, it's imperative you momentarily stand like this (the Twist) half way round the corner!



Do the Twist to keep your weight over the centre line during the tack.






## THE TWIST: GYBING'S HOLY GRAIL

Not doing the Twist is the second biggest cause of failure in carve gybes, accounting for about 40% of peoples' mistakes. Learning how to Twist using my

Muscle Memory can cure this problem in about an half an hour.



**Key:**

-  Direction in which the board will turn
-  Correct
-  Incorrect

1&2: At planing speeds the board turns by banking it over, just like a skateboard (bank right to turn right.) To carve gybe, one of the most basic ingredients is to keep the board banking to keep it turning.

3: By doing the Twist correctly my weight is applied to the right hand side of the board and therefore keeps it turning right.

4: If at any stage my weight moved to the left hand side, the board would start swerving left and I'd end up swimming.

5: Half a Twist is not sufficient!



Having done the twist make sure your weight stays on the heel of your twisted foot (and not on its toes) otherwise can you guess what might happen?

You see, gybing's not so complicated after all! Don't believe the hype!

# THE TWIST: GYBING'S HOLY MOLY

Whether you're doing a flare gybe in light winds, or a carve gybe (strap-to-strap or step) in high winds, the footwork is virtually identical.

The only real difference is when you're not planing (i.e: flare gybing - bottom sequence) keep the board flat by staying over the centre-line. Whereas when you're planing, keep the board banked by staying to one side of the centre-line.

The difference in footwork between a step and strap-to-strap gybe is simply either 'stepping' forwards or slipping straight into the new front 'strap'.

Even the timing of the foot change is virtually the same for all gybes.

Step Gybe



## When to Twist:

In the step gybe, people talk of the rig 'going light'; do the Twist then. Or as the nose of the board points straight downwind,

Although wearing a wetsuit boot or having the straps too tight might restrict your Twist, they won't prevent it. The only thing that prevents the Twist is when there's too much power pulling from the rig, jamming your front foot into the strap. Reduce the power by improving your entry to the turn (more tips on that in future issues, but a couple right now; put your back hand down the boom as far as you can reach before turning, and use more downhaul and outhaul to give you better control.)

Bear in mind, people generally Twist too late than Twist too early in their gybes.

Step Gybe



Step Gybe



Strap to Strap

Flare Gybe





Strap to Strap Gybe ➤



## THE TWIST: TACKING'S HOLIEST OF HOLYS

As you step around the front during a tack, invariably the board grinds to a halt and becomes extremely unstable. Therefore it's critical you keep your weight over the centre-line. The best way to achieve this is to do the Twist.



Above left & left: As the board curves around into the wind, to prepare for the Twist, wrap your front foot around the mastfoot until your foot is literally pointing in reverse.

Above, Above right, and right: Just before the board comes off the plane, or as the nose points straight into the wind, (whichever happens sooner) make your move around the front, concentrating on doing the Twist AND keeping your feet together right by the mastfoot. If at this stage you stand too far forwards on the board it will nose dive.

### MOST COMMON MISTAKES

The most common mistake during a tack is not staying on the centre-line. There's a few others like raking the rig back too far (especially big or heavy rigs) or hesitating during the Twist. But if you don't stay on the centre-line, your board tips over and you fall off. Simple as that. If you've been through the RYA syllabus, you probably can't tack a short board because you've got one foot on either side of the centre-line, so when you go to step back, your weight is left on one side of the board; it tips over, you get wet.



To understand the right and wrong of tacking, you really have to stand on a straight line now. It could be a stripe in your carpet, the centre-line of your board or a pair of stockings stretched out. Pretend it's the centre-line of your board and point your front foot forwards with your back foot sideways over the line, just like in this 'wrong' picture.

#### Right way:

Now point your front foot into reverse so that your toes are pointing inwards (wrapping it around the mastfoot) as in the 'correct' photos above.

Do the Twist onto the centre line. Easy enough hey?

Below: Don't hang around! Remember the Twist is just a transitional stage to move from one side of the board to the other, so get on with it.



Below: Step right back making sure you land on the centre-line. If you find you're nearly making your tacks, but are falling off backwards when you reach your new side, usually it's because your back foot has landed on the rail and tipped the board over, instead of on the centre line to keep it flat.



Below: To complete the tack, twist your front foot and body to face upwind/forwards again.

This foot sequence is the shortest number of footsteps to go from one side of the board to the other, short of jumping around. The reason why I don't recommend 'jumping around' is because there's room for error, and as you jump, your weight goes to your toes and upsets the balance of the board.

There's much more I'd say about the tack if this was a feature on 'how to tack'. What I suggest is you practice this footwork on your board at home (being careful not to spill any beer on the carpet), then open up last month's Windsurf mag with my feature on Boomshaka! Have a recap and a refill, then turn overleaf and read Spinning Around.



**Wrong way:**

Point your front foot forwards (instead of wrapping it around the mastfoot) as I have done for the 'wrong' picture here.

Do the twist and watch your weight go off the centreline and tip the board over, as in the second 'wrong' photo. Your body cannot twist that far without dislocating at the hip, or spinning on your foot, neither of which I can recommend.

So, the biggest mistake you're likely to make tacking, is not wrapping your front foot far enough around the mastfoot going into the turn.

For info on Guy Cribb INTuition Holidays visit [www.guycribb.com](http://www.guycribb.com) or call 01273 842 144