

KITEBOARDER'S HANDBOOK

Advanced

Preview



7th edition 



IMPORTANT: This is a preview of the first few pages. To read the whole handbook, become a member of Iko.



Kiteboarder's Handbook

DISCOVERY
INTERMEDIATE
INDEPENDENT
ADVANCED
EVOLUTION

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Disclaimer

Your use of the Kiteboarder's Handbook is at your sole risk. Kiteboarding is as fun and enjoyable as it can be an extreme sport. Do not alter kiteboarding equipment and always follow the manufacturer's instructions. Learn under the direction of a properly trained and certified IKO Instructor. Always do a preflight check of all your equipment before each practice time and assess the weather and local wind quality. If you do not know, ask for the help of an experienced professional. Wear flotation assistance, helmet and use kiteboarding equipment with safety systems (learn to use safety equipment and train often to apply the safety procedures). Practice kite flying as far away as possible from obstacles of any type.

The information in this handbook is a guideline only. It is your responsibility to make decisions in accordance with your equipment, the conditions and your level. IKO holds no liability or responsibility for any accidents or injuries arising from activities in association with the Handbook or with any other related information such as videos or content links provided in the kiteboarder's handbook series.

Why the IKO Kiteboarder's Handbook Series?

When you want to learn, getting input from different sources is the best thing. Watching, doing, reading, and talking regularly about what you have learned (or want to learn) allows you to retain information. As important as practice can be, improving your knowledge about kiteboarding leads to a better and faster progress.

The IKO Handbook series helps you define your needs and select

the appropriate skill you want to work on.

You can find other aspects in the Kiteboarder's Handbook series from the Discovery level to the Evolution one (including an appendix per categories: freeride, freestyle, wave riding, hydrofoil), along with all the safety procedures.

With that in mind the Kiteboarder's Handbook series are the perfect complementary tools, to increase the benefit of your kiteboarding lesson along a properly trained and certified Instructor.

Wishing you to get as many enjoyable hours kiteboarding as we do since 2001.

Frédéric Béné and Eric Beudonnat
IKO co-founders



Congratulations on completing your Independent Kiteboarder Course, you can claim to be certified IKO Kiteboarder Level 3!

The IKO Advanced Course in the following content, is built to make you more than an independent kiteboarder, while working on more advanced skills such as improving your upwind riding technique, perfect the self-rescue, do better turning, and jumping.

The Advance Kiteboarder Course – Level 4 also includes equipment knowledge from tuning to basic maintenance and general knowledge. A more complete information is provided on weather and tide and kite theory.

The time taken to complete this level will vary from person to person. Your training will alternate between lessons from your Instructor and personal practice time. This means that this might be the first time you will leave the supervision of your Instructor, make sure your Instructor assesses your level and confirm you can ride on your own before you go for it.

Ultimately by completing the IKO Advanced Course also grants certified rider part of the access to the IKO Assistant Instructor Training Course (AITC).

Before you start

Make sure you master the skills of the Kiteboarder Discovery, Intermediate and Independent Courses. Take time to practice those skills again if you did not kiteboard for a long period.

Check the wind direction: only go with side-shore or side-on-shore wind.

Make sure: there are no hazards; rocks, current, fishing net... you wear a helmet and a buoyancy aid.

that all safety systems are connected and functional

Be aware that the skills you acquired are corresponding to the weather conditions you experienced. Your learning must include repeating all the previous steps in various type of weather, for you to become fully independent and safe.

Buying equipment?

You may be thinking about buying your own equipment.

Be sure to choose the right kite size for the wind conditions that you will be kiting in and that corresponds to your body weight. Make sure the kite has a good safety system with a quick release and a leash that fully de-powers the kite when activated.

Check the kite fabric of the trailing edge, with light going through: if the weaving is not straight, but homogeneous it is fine, else if fabric coating goes off, weaving is no homogeneous, or that small gaps between fabric's fiber appears, know this kite is worn. Check the bar lines and safety systems.

Avoid buying a board that is too small for you, as this will slow your progress. Ask for advice from your IKO Instructor or local kite retail shop on which kite is suitable for you.

Wishing you the best fun learning and practicing kiteboarding!



Trim adjustment

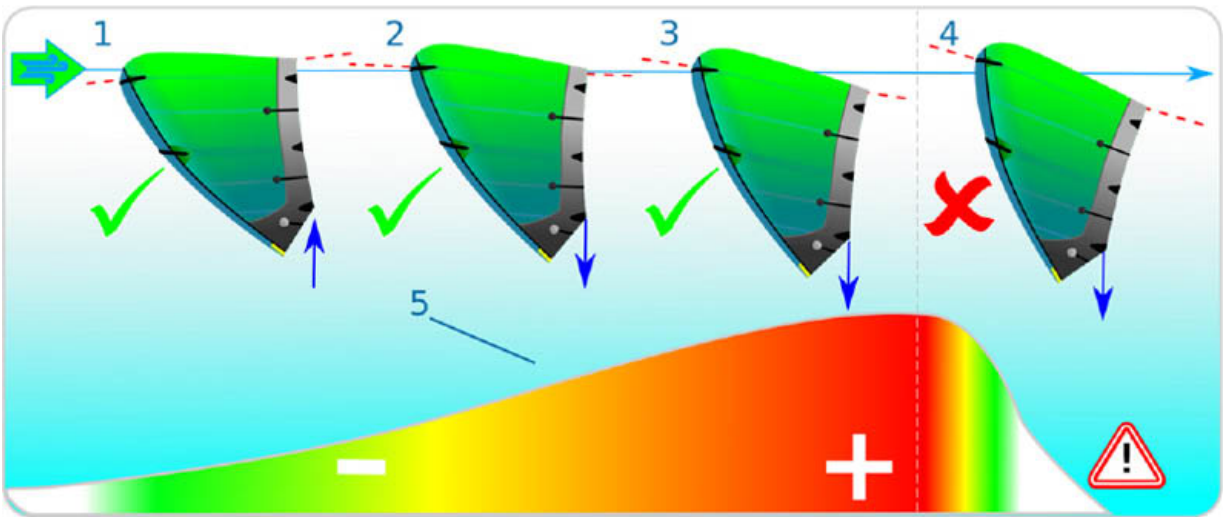
Having good posture is one of the main key points for progression. Remember when you attempted your first water-start. Without the correct posture, it was impossible to achieve results!

The trim adjustment plays a determinant role. For example, we often see beginners totally overpowered and unable to go upwind. Why? This is because the sweet spot (where the bar is naturally positioned when you apply a minimum amount of pressure on it) is all the way up the centerline.

The rider's upper body is bent towards the kite. This position is very uncomfortable, and the rider cannot open their hips to apply the correct amount of pressure to the board. The kite will also tend to back stall*.

A simple trim adjustment will solve this problem.

*What is backstalling? It happens when there is too much Angle of Attack (AoA). The back lines are too short compared to the front lines and vice versa). The kite will start to move backwards (4) trailing edge first, lose all its power and crash.



What to do when this happens?

1. Push your bar away to immediately reduce the AoA so the kite starts to fly normally.
2. Then either pull on the trim strap to reduce the front lines' length or, if already at its maximum, land the kite and modify the line connection to make front lines shorter or back lines longer.

How to be sure a kite is trimmed properly? (Do this each time you launch a kite)

1. Launch the kite and bring it to 11 or 1 o'clock.
2. Pull the bar slowly and carefully all the way down (sheet in at its maximum).
3. Keep this position for 10 seconds.
 - » If the kite is stable and you can steer it normally, it is trimmed properly.
 - » If the kite backstalls the back lines are too short (or front lines too long).
 - » If the kite front stalls or is hard to steer (no steering reaction) the back lines are too long or front lines are too short.

Trim possibilities

There are three main positions where your sweet spot could be. These are old school, freeride/wave and new school/teaching trims. The trim strap allows you to adjust the position to find the sweet spot depending on your style.

Ask yourself, "What am I looking for?" Depending on the answer, adjust the sweet spot position with the trim strap.

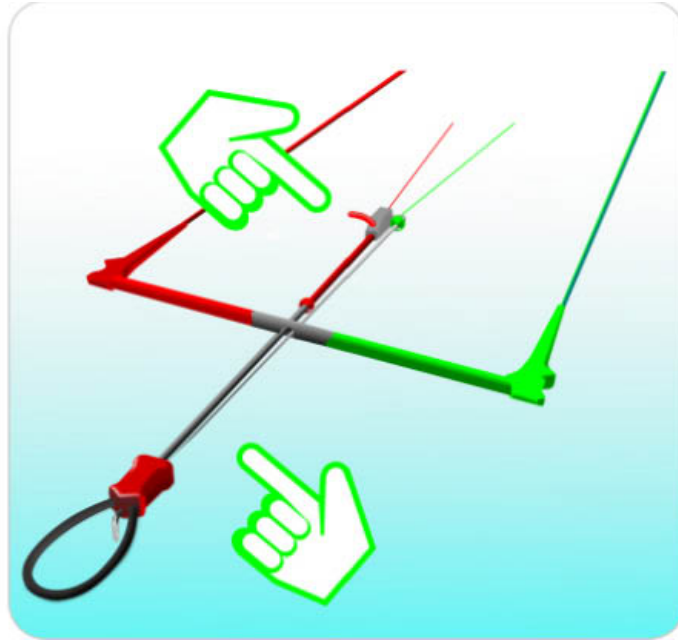
An advanced rider will constantly adjust this depending on what they are doing.

If the trim strap does not allow you to adjust your kite as you want, land it and change the knot connections to the kite.

No matter the trim/style of riding you chose, the kite must always be reactive when steering the bar to right or left and must never back-stall when sheeting in all the way down for at least 10 seconds.

Old school trim

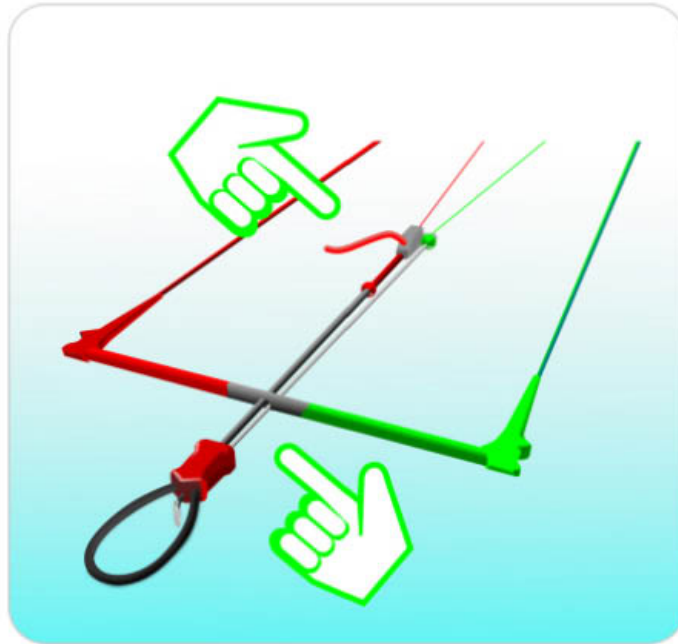
If your style is to jump high, stay awhile out there, take your board off, or make a double back roll, your sweet spot should be far from you. It would be approximately 70% to 80% away from the chicken loop. Therefore, when you start your jump you will have a bigger reserve of power.



Be careful. This trim adjustment's main disadvantage, aside from the fact that it is less comfortable for your back, is that if you let go of the bar, you will still have a lot of power in the kite. Be aware of this. Over sheeting will make the kite first lose power and then stall.

Freeride/wave trim

If you like to do a bit of everything, like riding and jumping, or if you are a wave rider, either strapless or with a twin tip, this is the adjustment for you. The sweet spot is right in the middle of the centerline or beneath it.

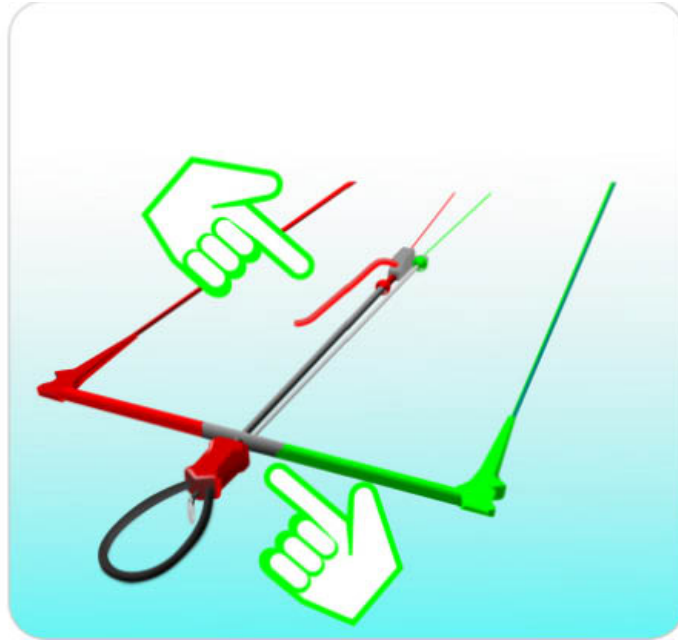


This is where most people have it. You can adjust the power at any time, depending on wind gusts.

[New school/teaching trim](#)

If your obsession is to pass the bar behind your back, then you should choose this trim adjustment. The bar is held close to your body and you create power using the kite's movement and your board.

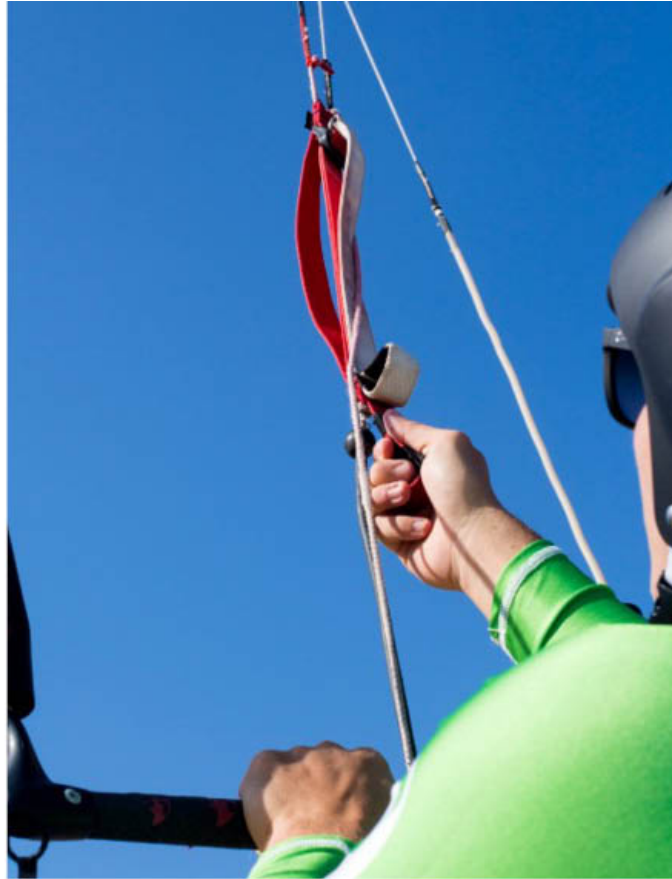
This way, when you unhook, you do not have bad surprises such as the kite over pulling and/or backstalling. You are also more balanced with your elbows close to your body, which is the ideal position for this practice.



New school trim is the best for teaching, especially for Level 1 as this is the safest method. When the student lets go of the bar, almost all of the power in the kite will be released. If a student over pulls on the bar, the kite will not back-stall.

Trim experimentation

Challenge yourself! Try to have an incorrect trim in your kite and ride this way to evaluate the impact.



Also experiment the different trim possibilities to understand the effect it can have on your riding.

Backstalling happens a lot during beginner lessons because the kite is not trimmed properly and also because LEI kites on short lines tend to back stall more often if the trimming is not perfect.

Theoretical approach to jump

The main principle behind the jump is to increase the kite power until it pulls more than your weight and upward.



Take a look at these steps:

- The power loading
- The take off
- The jump or ascent
- The apex and the landing

Commitment is important: once you start edging and piloting the kite for a jump, keep going, do not think about it too much; at first you will make small jumps and will learn from that.

Jumping is a matter of coordination between the position of the kite (best to pull you up) and the fast release of edging heel side.

You are probably more confident now, but keep wearing your buoyancy aid and helmet, remember to check your safety systems.

Adjust your bar

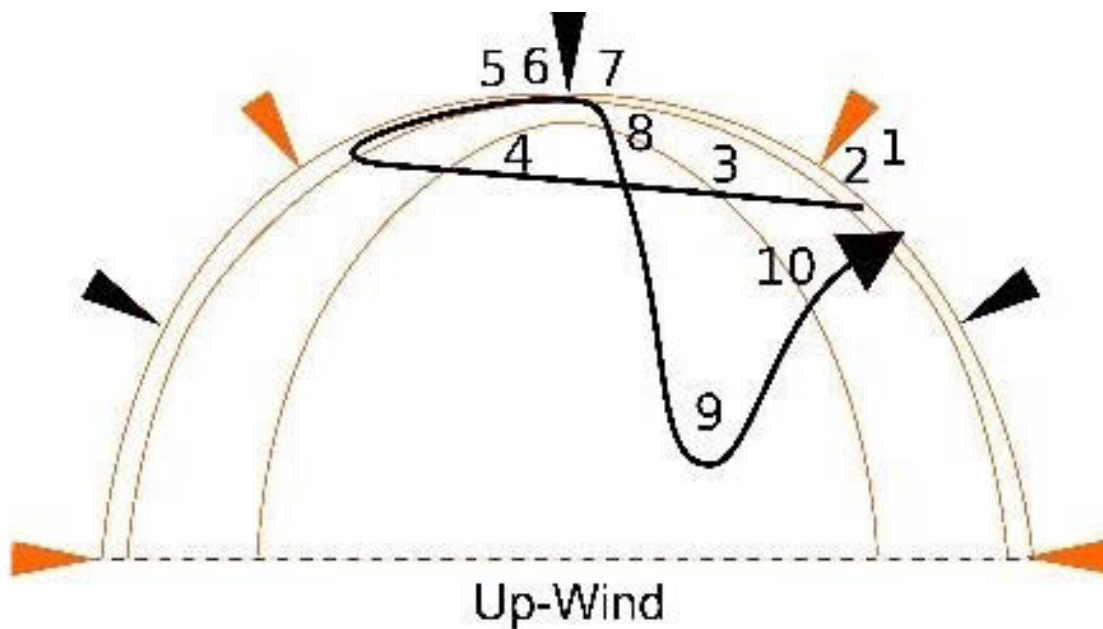
Make sure your power trim is adjusted, so you have the most power in your kite, as your arms are comfortable close to your body.

Bar at 1/3 from the chicken loop.

Point of sail

Ride cross wind or slightly upwind (to have speed/more power).

Kite movement



To jump, actions must be done simultaneously and in a coordinated manner.

The power loading

Position the kite at mid height.



Lean back with commitment and edge hard (use all the board length to keep speed).

At the same time (starting when you start to edge on the board) pilot the kite up (slightly to the opposite side of 12).

The take off



The power increases as you edge and pilot the kite up.

Lock your elbows (to keep the kite power)

Release your edge at once, as if you wanted to stop leaning back quickly (do not push on your legs to jump, let the kite take you up)

The jump



Right after the take-off, pilot your kite above your head by placing the bar parallel to the water.

The kite will act like a parachute.

Bend your legs to balance yourself once in the air.

This step can be disregarded if the jump is small. For your first jumps, think of bringing the kite back to a flying position immediately after the take-off.

[The landing](#)



NEVER land with the kite at 12: it would stall at the moment you touch the water.

The higher you jump, the later you will fly the kite to its original position. You must bring the kite back to its original position as you are almost landing.

To be able to regain speed at landing, point your board downwind: have a quick look down at the water and orientate the board in the direction of displacement.

Land board flat on the water, applying pressure on the back foot.

Keep piloting the kite down as you touch the water, to gain or keep speed.

IMPORTANT safety advice when jumping

- NEVER use a board leash.
- NEVER let go of the bar when you are in the air.
- Try jumping on a small wave – it's easier (yet less formative).
- Make sure to pick up enough speed before jumping (but not too much!).
- If you feel that the landing is going to be rough, kick the board off and place the kite above your head.
- Wear a helmet and a buoyancy aid.
- Once in the air, bend your legs under your bar. This will help you position yourself for the landing, maintain balance while in the air, and avoid landing on your back.

Go for your first jump

Visualize jumping with this video many times, and try to repeat the actions in your head (imagine yourself doing the jump and all the steps of it until you feel comfortable) and then go for it.

Your goals are to gain speed, edge heel side hard as you pilot your kite to 12 and release edging when the kite pulls the most.

You will achieve the proper rhythm with practice. Do not hesitate to be quick in the flying move that will make you take off.

Watch video basic jump

BASIC JUMP



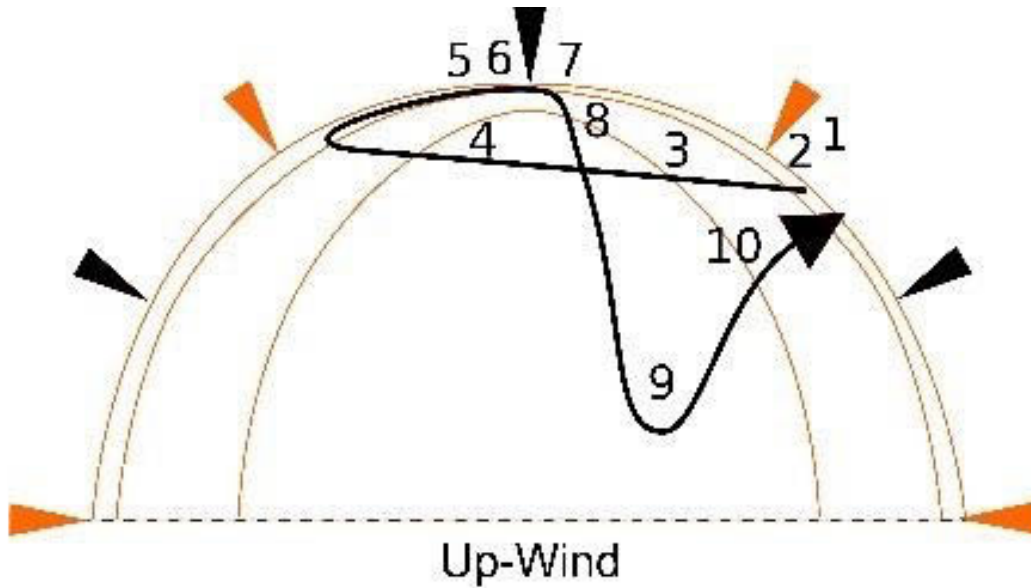


Jump with grab



- The key of any grab is airtime. The longer you are flying, the easier it is. Practice your jumps until you go higher, if needed.
- At first you can just let go your backhand of the bar quickly (while jumping) and put it back, to get used to the movement and feeling. It may be weird at the beginning but you will get used to it very quickly.
- Then try to do the same and touch your board.
- Finally repeat this action and try to grab the tail of your board.
- Be careful to grab with your backhand, not the front. To have it ready to pull for landing. Center your front hand (close to the center line) right before the jump.

Kite movement

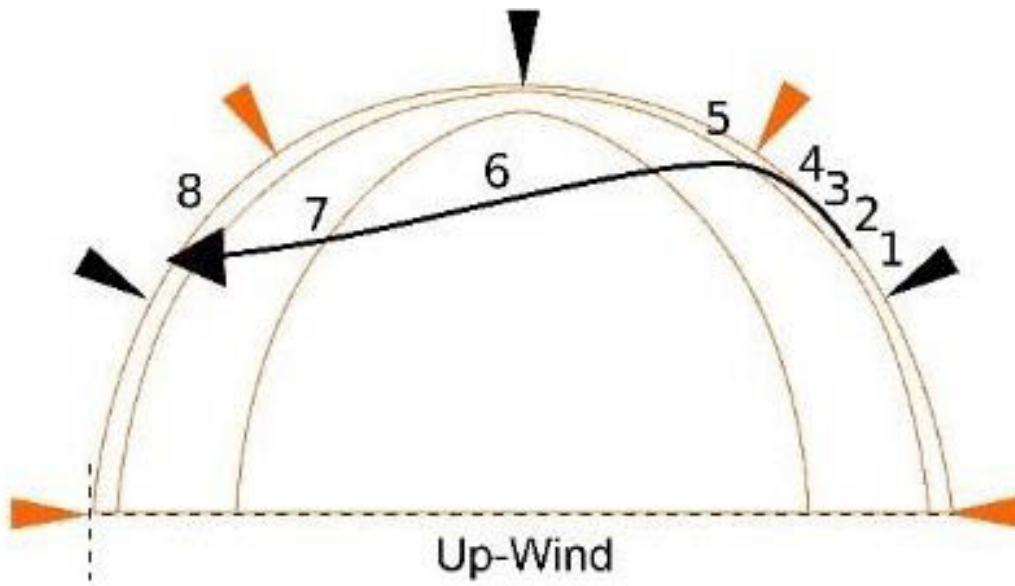


Steps	Kite & bar movement	Board edging, direction & position	Body actions
1	Bar in the sweet spot, kite at 11 or 1, hands in the center of the bar.	Edging upwind with speed.	Lean back, body straight.
2	Sheet in and start pulling on your backhand.	Flatten the board pointing downwind to take more speed.	Straighten up your body position
3	Slightly sheet out your bar and pull harder on the backhand to throw the kite over your head.	Edge progressively harder.	Lean back, front leg extend, push on your back leg.

4	Once you feel the power of the kite, sheet in and keep your kite over your head	Release your edge to pop.	Push hard on your back leg and tense your body to pop!
5	Keep your kite over your head, sheet in	Bring the tail of your board close to your body.	Bend the back leg, extend the front leg, let go of your backhand from the bar.
6			Grab the tail of your board with your backhand.
7			Look for your landing spot and release the grab.
8	Pull hard on your front hand to transform the vertical force into horizontal and land softly.	Board point downwind	Extend the back leg keep the front slightly bent.
9	Wave your kite to create power and continue riding	Land tail first	Bend your knees to absorb landing
10	Stabilize the kite	Start edging.	Body in riding position.



Jibe
Kite movement



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