

# Foundations of Flight

**The Side-Slide** | Brought to you by Axis Flight School at Skydive Arizona in Eloy. Photos by Niklas Daniel.

**AXIS**  
Flight School

In a side-slide, your goal is to move horizontally toward a target. Though you'll use similar inputs as you do when turning, you'll drive both your upper and lower body in the same direction.



## **Reasons to perfect a side-slide:**

### *Performance*

- ▶ Increases basic flying proficiency
- ▶ Increases overall body awareness
- ▶ Helps perfect leg turns

## **Execution**

Maintain a good arch and keep your spine straight throughout this exercise. Before you start the slide, remind yourself to move your upper and lower body simultaneously.



**Arms:** Imagine that you have a broom handle taped across your shoulder blades from one elbow to the other. Your arms should move like a teeter-totter, with the center line that follows your spine as the pivot point. Looking in the direction that you wish to move, push down on the airflow with your leading elbow. Remember, both arms are "attached" by an imaginary broom handle, so your opposite elbow should lift up.



**Legs:** Drop your leading knee, and tilt your leg at an approximately 45-degree angle with your knee pointed in the desired direction. You should be able to feel the airflow on the inside of your leading leg. Once you are comfortable with the mechanics of the position, you'll want to start using your legs as the primary catalyst for the move, while simply tilting at your shoulders and hips. You'll want to minimize creating movement primarily with your arms, because in the future you'll need them for taking grips (on formations or students) or for geeking the camera. The more you can avoid flying with your arms, the stronger a flyer you will become.

## **Helpful Hints**

Don't twist your torso or "square off" your shoulders toward the target. In a proper side-slide, you should look over your shoulder and elbow at the target, and your hip should move straight toward it.