FOUNDATIONS OF FLIGHT | HEAD-DOWN TURNS


Daffy: Neutral


Daffy: Right Turn


Shelf: Right Turn


Straddle: Right Turn

AXIS Flight School

SKYDIVE ARIZONA ELOY

Brought to you by AXIS Flight School Instructor Niklas Daniel at Skydive Arizona in Eloy. Photos by Brianne Thompson.

Purpose

- Create a heading change
- Increase basic flying proficiency
- Increase overall body awareness

Execution

Start small: Begin with 90-degree turns, then move through 180- and 360-degree turns until you can spin continuously. Gauge your ability to progress by how well and precisely you can stop.

Assume one of the three neutral head-down flying positions (daffy, straddle or shelf; see "Foundations of Flight," March *Parachutist*). Maintain a heading perpendicular to the aircraft's line of flight.

Upper Body

Maintain a straight spine, fly on the crown of your head and turn your head to look in the direction you wish to turn. (Before learning turns, practice isolating your head movement from your torso movement. You should be able to turn your head without creating a heading change.) To turn, present the palm of the arm that is in the direction you wish to turn into the wind and keep your elbow out and in front of yourself so you can feel air pressure on your entire forearm. To stop the turn, use the same arm method with the opposite arm.

Lower Body

Daffy: Angle your front foot so that your knee points in the direction you wish to travel. This will expose the inside of your calf to the wind and will help drive the turn. You should keep your back leg passive with the toes pointed. Stop the turn with your front leg using the outside of your calf.

Shelf and straddle: In these positions, use your legs for level control and stability but otherwise keep them mostly passive.

Helpful Hints

Start with small turns and gradually work your way up to larger ones. Try to stay on the crown of your head throughout the turn by looking at the horizon through your eyebrows.

To view the instructional video, use the QR code to the left or visit the Foundations of Flight page at parachutistonline.com.