

■ FOUNDATIONS OF FLIGHT | MFS BLOCK 1—DOUBLE 69

Brought to you by Niklas Daniel and Brianne Thompson of AXIS Flight School at Skydive Arizona in Eloy. Photos by David Cherry. Information about AXIS' coaching and instructional services is available at axisflightschool.com.



Prerequisites

- Ability to fly both head up and head down (see “Foundations of Flight—Head-Up Variations” and “Foundations of Flight—Head-Down Variations,” December 2012 and March 2013 *Parachutist*).
- Ability to transition between the head-up and head-down orientations using a backflip or cartwheel (see “Foundations of Flight—Back-Flip Transition from Sit to Head-Down Daffy” and “Foundations of Flight—Sit-Fly to Head-Down Cartwheel,” September 2012 and January 2014 *Parachutist*).

Move Description

Mixed formation skydiving block 1 (double 69) requires one performer to fly head up and the other to fly head down with respect to the relative wind. Facing each other, the head-down flyer grabs the legs of the head-up flyer anywhere below the leg straps. Once the flyers establish contact, the gripping performer lets go. The jumpers then make 180-degree transitions to change their orientations and build the same formation in opposite slots.

For judging purposes, it is the team's responsibility to clearly present the camera flyer with the correct formations and inter, as well as show complete separation between points. The formations do not need to be perfectly symmetrical, but the team must perform them in a controlled manner and close them with stationary contact. (For more information, refer to Chapter 5 of the USPA Skydiver's Competition Manual.)

Execution

One of the most efficient of the many ways to perform this maneuver is for the head-down flyer to turn out slightly and then front flip to the head-up orientation. This causes his legs to fall into the center of the formation, making them easier for his cross-partner to target. The head-up flyer may find it best to turn about 90 degrees and then use a back-flip transition to reach the head-down orientation. Both flyers should strive to form a star picture with their cross-partners at the start and finish. To accomplish this, the jumpers must maintain communication with each other by using eye contact and cross-referencing.

Helpful Hint

Rather than transitioning simultaneously, both performers can stage their individual moves in order to establish communication and keep better track of level. The head-down flyer should not get too high in relation to the sit flyer, because this causes the head-down flyer to reach down toward the legs, which compromises stability and possibly induces forward drive. Remember to assess your level and distance before reaching for a dock (see “Foundations of Flight—Taking Grips,” October 2012 *Parachutist*).

The authors intend this article to be an educational guideline. It is not a substitute for professional instruction.