FOUNDATIONS OF FLIGHT | VERTICAL COMPRESSED EXIT (MIXED FORMATION SKYDIVING RANDOM C)

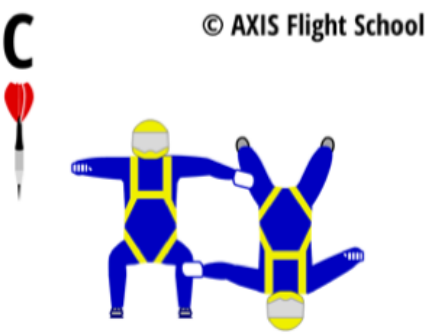
Brought to you by Niklas Daniel and Brianne Thompson of AXIS Flight School at Skydive Arizona in Eloy.
Photos by David Cherry. Information about AXIS' coaching and instructional services is available at axisflightschool.com.

Prerequisites

Ability to:
- Perform head-up and head-down formations
- Exit consistently and unassisted in the head-up and head-down orientations

Visit center.axisflightschool.com/pdf/articles to find information about these prerequisites

The horizontal version of this formation is the compressed accordion, which jumpers can perform either on their bellies or their backs. In the vertical version, the performers can actually face each other. This makes the formation much easier to build and transition to the next point. (To launch the formation in this manner, reference "Foundations of Flight—69 Exit," January 2019 *Parachutist*). Here, we launch the vertical compressed as depicted in the dive pool (with the performers not facing one another) in order to provide a different exit strategy.



MOVE DESCRIPTION

In the 2-way vertical compressed formation (random formation C in the mixed formation skydiving dive pool), the performers fly in opposing orientations, head-up and head-down. The head-down flyer (Flyer A) grips the head-up flyer (Flyer B), left hand to left leg or right hand to right leg, while Flyer B grips Flyer A left hand to left leg or right hand to right leg. The flyers may take grips anywhere on the other flyer's legs, below and excluding the leg straps.

EXECUTION

The aircraft in this example is a Twin Otter.
In competition, it is the team's responsibility to ensure that the video is scoreable by clearly presenting the correct formation and complete separation between points to the videographer. The formation does not need to be perfectly symmetrical, but the team must perform it in a controlled manner and close the formation with stationary contact. (For more information, refer to Chapter 9 of the USPA Skydiver's Competition Manual.)

The following is just one of many ways to launch a 2-way vertical compressed and may or may not play to your team's strengths.

SETTING UP IN THE DOOR

Flyer A—the head-down, outside jumper

Climbing out first, Flyer A gets into position by standing on her left leg and positioning her right foot on the back of the aircraft. Holding onto the bar with her left hand, she picks up Flyer B's right leg with her right hand (preferably near the knee).

Her torso should be as close as possible to parallel with the floor of the aircraft. Once in position, she makes eye contact with her teammate, so they can sync up the exit count.

Flyer B—the head-up, inside jumper

The head-up flyer gets into position by standing on his left leg and placing his right foot on the edge of the door. There is no need to hold onto the bar, as he needs to be able to leave the door with his teammate, and the chances of falling out prematurely are low. He then grabs Flyer A's right leg with his right hand and places his elbow on her leg strap. This is to save space by keeping both flyers close to each other. His goal is to keep his spine as parallel as possible to the relative wind.

THE EXIT

Both flyers can easily communicate with each other, so either one can give the exit count. The team should leave the aircraft by Flyer B hip checking Flyer A out the door. This helps with timing and prevents the formation from getting stretched out. Both flyers aim to orient their bellies to earth at the moment of exit in order to properly present the formation into the relative wind. Level control is crucial, as the opposing orientations have different fall rates.

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