

Foundations of Flight

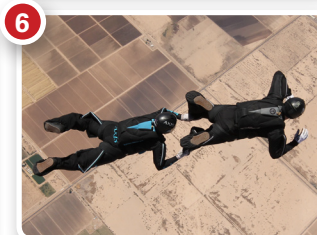
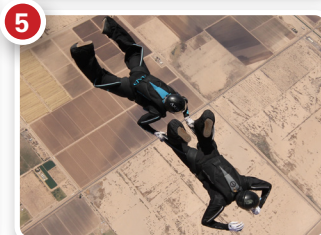
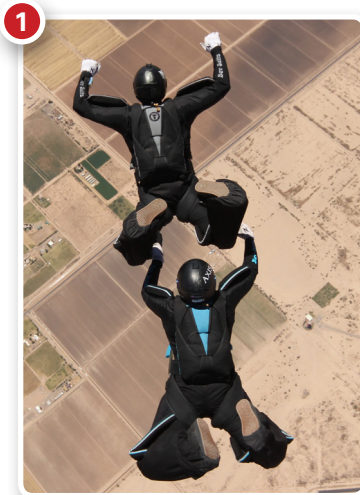
AXIS
Flight School



Spinning a 2-Way-Caterpillar (Cat) Piece

Brought to you by Brianne Thompson and Niklas Daniel of AXIS Flight School at Skydive Arizona in Eloy. Photos by Travis Mills

For more information visit axisflightschool.com or search "Axis Flight School" on Facebook.



Purpose

Performance: Perfecting a fundamental block move from the 4- and 8-way dive pools.

Execution

Set Up: Build the initial piece straight with both flyers' center points inline. Jumpers can spin this piece either left or right; this article describes a spin to the left.

Grips: The flyer at the tail of the cat must take an inside and an outside grip. Since this piece will spin to the left, the tail flyer's left hand should be on the inside of the front flyer's left leg and on the outside of his right leg. The person at the head of the cat can then maximize his move and won't feel that the tail flyer has cut his move short.

Moves: The head flyer will initiate the move by "stepping out" to the left. This is a simple side-slide move of about half a body width. The head flyer must avoid stepping back into the tail flyer—it's very important for the initial move to be a straight side-slide. Once there, the head flyer must stop his momentum and remain passive during the rest of the move, allowing the tail flyer to do most of the work.

The tail flyer must not begin her move until the head flyer's momentum stops. His move will open the door for the tail flyer, giving her a place to go.

The tail of the cat then needs to initiate her turn by dropping her right knee. It may help the flyer to visualize putting her hips in a compressed-accordion position in relation to the other jumper. (A compressed accordion will never happen due to the grips; the visualization simply helps the tail flyer aim her body correctly.)

Once the tail flyer moves, she'll feel tension down the left grip-line. When that happens, she should tighten the piece up by bringing her grips on the head flyer's legs toward her shoulders. This speeds up the turn and allows the piece to turn in place. (The center of the piece is the space between the two flyers. The tail needs to keep her head between the knees of the front flyer. If her head moves to either side of the knees, it may cause an off-center turn.)

At about the midway point, both flyers want to treat this move as any normal 360-degree turn, keeping their eyes on their targeted end point and head-switching so the piece turns on center.

Once past the 180-degree picture, the tail should slow the piece down by expanding the grips away from her shoulders. As the piece gets larger, its momentum will slow.

Once the end point is in sight, both flyers can help avoid overshooting the turn by applying inputs in the opposite direction. In this left cat-piece spin, the jumpers shut down the momentum by applying right-turn inputs.

Helpful Hints

▶ When performing this move, flyers usually try too hard to muscle the other flyer into position. If you fly your body independently, the turn will be easier.



▶ If you're the tail flyer, you'll find the move much easier if you try to put your hips right next to the other flyer rather than trying to muscle him around the sky.

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