

■ FOUNDATIONS OF FLIGHT | ANGLE FLYING—FEET FIRST ON BELLY

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.



Angle flying blurs the lines between horizontal and vertical flying. To excel at this flying method, you first have to understand your direction of travel, which comes with gaining spatial awareness. You can do this best by first getting proficient at flying a flat track on both your belly and your back. Steer clear of the line of the aircraft's course by planning a flight trajectory that is perpendicular to that of the aircraft. Confirm your drop zone's angle-flying policies, especially exit order, before attempting this.

Performance Objectives

- Increase awareness and control of body pitch
- Influence your level and horizontal speed using body pitch
- Learn a fun way to lead an angle jump

Prerequisites

- Proficiency at belly flying, specifically backward drive (see "Foundations of Flight—Backward Movement, Belly

Flying," July 2013 *Parachutist*) and level control (see Foundations of Flight—Level Changes While Belly Flying" June 2011 *Parachutist*). Ability to perform belly-to-sit transition.

- Proficiency flying head up, specifically backward drive (see "Foundations of Flight—Backward Movement in a Sit," September 2015 *Parachutist*).
- Balance and range of motion in a stand (see "Foundations of Flight—Head-Up Variations," December 2012 *Parachutist*, and "Foundations of Flight—Head-Up Range of Motion Drills," March 2015 *Parachutist*).

Execution

You may experience some disorientation when flying at steeper angles due to the unfamiliar sight pictures and control inputs. Steep angles have a rapid descent rate (similar to that of a freefly jump). Stay altitude aware and use an audible altimeter.

When angle flying in the head-up belly orientation toward your feet, you are engaged in a continuous backward drive no matter how steep the angle. The primary flight surface for this maneuver is the front of the body.

You can attack this skill in two ways:

1) Horizontal method

Start the move on your belly facing 90 degrees off the line of flight and opposite the direction you wish to travel. Initiate a strong backward drive by stretching out your arms and flattening your chest. If you lose heading control, stop, re-establish your desired heading and continue. Engage your abdominal muscles as you stand up and straighten your legs.

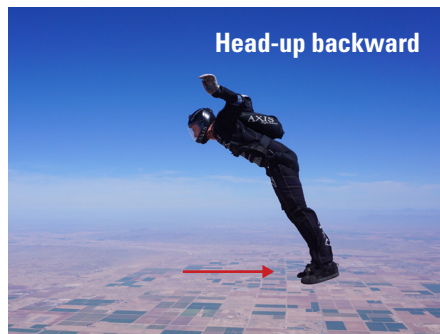
2) Vertical method

Start the move in the head-up orientation, facing 90 degrees off the line of flight and opposite the direction you wish to travel. Initiate a strong backward drive by leaning forward. Straighten your legs and keep your feet close together. If you lose your balance, you will most likely fall to your belly, which will result in a rapid fall-rate change. If this occurs, transition back to your feet, re-establish your desired heading and continue.

Helpful Hints

Explore the wide range of possible angles, as these will give you the ability to fly relative to other flyers more effectively.

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



These three prerequisite moves bear similarities to the angle flying position.