

WINDSURFING 3x3 WINDSURFING "FUN" DAMENTALS

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When we are windsurfing, with rig in hand and board beneath our feet, there are only three (3) things we can manipulate to achieve any of our windsurfing goals. It does not matter if the goal is to sail in a straight line, tack, gybe or loop. All we can do is change how our hands connect us to the rig; change our foot placement on the board; and lastly, we can change how our body connects our hands and feet. With each of these three (3) FUNDAMENTALS - HANDS, FEET, BODY - THERE ARE THREE (3) EFFECTS we can use to create different results when we are windsurfing. Use this guide to analyze, experiment, and be creative in your own windsurfing and to do movement analysis, teaching, and appreciation of other windsurfers.

1. HANDS
2. FEET
3. BODY

HANDS (Taught in this order)

1. **Moving hands forward or back on the boom.**
 - a. **Hands forward** (closer to the mast or leading edge of the sail) = **less power** (i.e., beginner hand position)
 - b. **Hands back** (farther away from the mast or leading edge of the sail) = **more power**.
2. **Hands spaced wide or close together.**
 - a. **Wide** = **more leverage to force the sail to do what we want**.
 - b. **Close together** = **more sensitivity and "feel" from the wind in your sail** (great for light wind).
3. **Independent hands. Pulling or pushing on both hands with the same force does not change the sail in regards to the wind. To sheet in or out we use our hands independently where ideally one is pushing while the other pulls, or we at least only pull or push with one hand while the other remains static. To build up independent hand use we designate one as a Power hand and the other as a Control hand.**
 - a. **Power Hand = Rear hand** (its job is to regulate the power of the sail by sheeting in or out with the clew.)
 - b. **Control hand = Front hand** (its job is to keep the rig positioned properly above the board to go straight and to lead the rig forward/back to steer.)

FEET:

1. **Feet can be on the centerline** (the balance/tipping point of the board) **or straddling the centerline.**
 - a. **Straddle = Tips board on edge.** (Rarely is it a good thing to straddle the centerline as weight ending up on one foot or the other will tip over the board. In general, we end up feeling like our feet are glued to the board when this happens as when we try and move our feet, the board tips over. But in rare moments like carving through a gybe a straddled centerline is a benefit as we want to purposefully tip the board on its edge.)

- b. **On Center = Stable Board** (With our feet on the centerline in light winds the board remains stable and we can easily move our feet without effecting the tippiness of the board. In higher winds or simply higher speeds there is lift from the daggerboard and/or fin that we need to counterbalance. In effect the balance or tipping point of the board moves towards the upwind rail due to this lift so we move our feet towards the upwind rail to stay on the boards balance/tipping point so it remains flat.)
2. **Feet close together or wide apart**
- a. **Close together = Maneuverability** (With feet close together it's easy to shift weight from one foot to the other and reposition your feet on the board.)
 - b. **Wide apart = Stability** (With feet wide apart it's easier to keep your weight centered between your feet to maintain balance. You can go too wide though as then your feet become glued to the board as you cannot get enough weight on one foot to lift the other. Somewhere slightly beyond shoulder width apart is generally considered the max width for our feet.)
3. **Open stance or closed stance.**
- a. **Open stance** (front foot pointed towards the nose of the board, back foot across the board) = **Better balance and efficiency.** (With the feet around 90 degrees to each other we can easily move weight from one foot to the other as well as over our toes and over our heels for better balance. Having the front foot pointed towards the nose of the board also gives us greater efficiency as we can drive off the foot to push the board forward. It allows us to make the most use of the sails power to create forward movement. As we sheet in to reach planing speeds our body becomes more square to the centerline of the board and keeping the foot pointed directly at the nose is no longer possible. At this point we still try and twist the foot a little so that our toes remain closer to the nose of our board than our heel.)
 - b. **Closed stance** (both feet pointed in the same direction, and they usually end up across the centerline of the board.) = **Poor balance and efficiency** (In this closed stance you have little strength to resist a forward pull from the sail and often times a surprise gust results in a catapult. You also have less ability to keep your hips centered between your feet so your balance is effected as well.)

BODY (Leverage/strength):

1. **Big person position is the #7 stance with the head above the boom and little person position is when you are tucked up in a ball with the head below the boom.**
 - **Big person = More leverage/strength** (With straight outreaching arms and your hips in line with your ankles and shoulders we resemble the number 7, and this is the stance we want to use when we need strength or leverage over the sails power. Anything we do where our head/shoulders get higher and farther away from the sail gains us strength/leverage over the sail and this position maximizes our head/shoulders being away from the sail. Big guys tend to naturally have their heads higher and farther from the sail than smaller persons, so you want to try create their natural position)
 - **Little person = Less leverage/strength** (When our head gets closer to the sail and/or the board, we lose strength/leverage over the sail. So anytime we bend our knees, and waist we get lower and lose strength/leverage. For things like waterstarting where we want the sails power to pick us up, this can be a good thing. Or if we feel we are about to

fall over backwards losing strength/leverage will help the sail hold us up and keep us above the board as in the hanging save.)

2. Body further forward or back on the board.

- **Body forward = Less leverage/strength** (When our feet are close to the mast base or possibly even straddling the mast base we have little ability to lean back against the sail and pull it back and to windward, therefore we have less strength/leverage.)
- **Body further back = More leverage/strength** (As we move back on the board and get our feet away from the mast base it is easier to pull the sail over the water, back and to windward, so we gain strength/leverage.)

3. Ankle pressure, either soft or extended with pointed toes.

- **Extended or stiff ankles = More leverage/strength** (In our #7 stance, we have the ability to greatly affect our leverage/strength over the sail by how extended or stiff our ankles are. The muscle movement being described here is very similar to pushing on the gas pedal in a car. You are extending your ankle so that without resistance you would end up pointing your toes. Because we are balancing against the sails power, we may not reach the full extension where our toes are truly pointed, but by exerting effort to try and have them move towards being pointed we apply pressure to the board where our body is being pried out and over the water. This counterbalances the pull from the sail. Note that if we try and use our ankles at times when we are not in the #7 stance, we'll find the effort needed is too great and we get fatigued very quickly.)
- **Relaxed or soft ankles = Less leverage/strength** (With the ankles not being extended there is no pressure in our feet to hold our body in position, and when the sail gains power there is nothing to resist us from being pulled towards the sail.)

