

# IMPROVING YOUR RIDING

## GETTING UP

The first thing to do is to figure out which foot you should have forward. If you do any other board sports, it will be the same. Otherwise, have someone push you from behind. The foot that you put forward to catch yourself will be your front foot. But, the test isn't always right, so try riding both ways and see which feels more natural.

To get up for the first time, you should learn the deep-water start. Float in the water, with your wakeboard and life vest on, holding the handle. You should be on your back, with the toeside edge (the edge that your toes point to) of your board sticking out of the water. Make sure the rope is going over the board, and sitting on the edge, right between your feet. Keep your knees and arms partly bent. When the boat starts to go, don't pull yourself up – just let the boat pull you, and slide your butt forward, towards your ankles. Keep your board sideways, lean back a bit, and let yourself be pulled out of the water. When you're right on top of the water, turn yourself 90° to be either left- or right-foot forward. When you're riding, always keep your knees and elbows bent, and keep the handle in near your front hip. Never bend at your hips when you're wakeboarding. Bend your knees instead.

## EDGING

Once you're comfortable on the water, start edging. To edge heelside, just lean back against the rope, and move the handle from your front hip towards the centre of your body. Edging toeside is a little tougher. Lean forward onto your toes, and twist your body away from the boat. Keep the rope at your front hip, or even move it a bit towards your back.

## JUMPING

Now that you've mastered edging, you know the most important part of jumping. Simply edge as far out of the wakes as you can, then turn around and edge back in. The biggest mistake people make is flattening off their edge at the wake, and just letting momentum carry them in. Make sure you edge *all the way through* the wake. Don't expect to get much air while you do this first step, but doing this helps you learn the right way.

Next, do the same thing, but when you reach the peak of the wake, straighten both your legs and stand tall. Make sure you stand tall right when you're at the peak; it will come later than you think, so try to wait before standing tall. Now just maintain your body position in the air, and bend your knees when you land. Don't land flat – stay on your edge, and keep moving across after you land.

## 180S

The first step to learning 180s is to do an ollie 180. Out in the flats (outside of the wakes), push your back foot straight down into the water. Let the water push you back up, and level your board out. Now do it again, but when you get air, twist your shoulders the direction you want to turn, and pull the handle to your other hip.

Now, to do a 180 wake to wake, you want to think of it as a regular jump. You do exactly the same thing as you would for a straight wake jump, but once you're in the air, pull the handle to your back hip and rotate your shoulders, but don't start to spin until you're in the air. Make sure you land on edge, leaning away from the boat. It can take some courage to land leaning away from the boat (especially switch stance), but if you do it, you'll land way more of your tricks. Now try doing it with a grab – mute or nose works well with 180s. You should also start delaying the spin – ideally you want to just jump straight up, and spin on the way down.

# GRABS

The first way to add style to your jumps is to learn some grabs. When doing grabs, don't bend over to grab the board, just bend your knees to bring the board up to your hands.

## **Indy**

Your back hand grabs your toe edge between your feet. For good style, make sure you grab between your feet, not behind your back foot.



## **Mute**

Your front hand grabs your toe edge between your feet.

## **Melon**

Your front hand grabs your heel edge between your feet.



## **Method**

Same as a melon, but with a backside air, so the bottom of the board faces the boat. Your chest should also be facing the boat.

## **Stalefish**

Your back hand grabs your heel edge. You reach around your back foot, and grab between your feet.



## **Nose Grab**

Your front hand grabs the nose of the board.

## **Tail Grab**

Your back hand grabs the tail of the board.



## **Roast Beef**

You reach down with your back hand, between your legs, and grab your board's heel edge. This is a good grab, because it forces you to bend your knees and bring the board up to your hand.