

your action plan

To finish off his expose on how the windsurfing body works, **Simon Bornhoft** summarises the key performance enhancing actions for you to try the next time you hit the water. Photos: **WindWise / Karen Bornhoft**

As we've illustrated throughout this BodyWise series, how we position and move our body has a huge impact on our potential. Our fitness, mobility and agility raise or restrict our game. You can 'know' how to blast, gybe or jump and repeat verbatim what you're meant to do, but you still have to move that body! Our success is down to being physical and more determined than we think. But while there are times of concerted exertion, it's technique and body mechanics rather than raw strength that enables us to make breakthroughs. Plus, if you're not in the first flush of youth you need to make damn sure you're using your body as best you can, otherwise board beats body every time!

While it's quite common to blast back and forth in our comfort zone burning a few calories, we only truly advance when we make positive efforts to deliver the right forces at the right time. I know suggestions such as 'flex the back leg and get low' work, but it's your accentuation and commitment in doing it that makes the difference. Thus, this feature is to motivate and remind you that simple points make the biggest difference. So get out there and give it a damn good go!

- **Take this feature along to the beach**
- **Choose one of the points / themes and try applying it to the relevant situation**
- **Enjoy, accentuate and really believe in what you're trying!**

Whether this is for your light wind skills training, freeride, wavesailing or freestyle, these actions stand out time and time again as working for pretty much every level of windsurfer!



TOP TIP
Tight torso, light grip. Try just using three fingers!



Narrow the arm spread and use a finger-light grip

Straighten, stiffen, tighten, lift and lock that torso

Drive most of your weight through the front leg

LIGHT WINDS

Q: What should I concentrate on when the wind is light?

A: Light wind equals light body

STRAIGHT-7 'LIFT-&-LOCK' when do I use it?

When you're looking for more power in marginal situations, like after getting in harness and straps, busting through a lull, or eking out extra speed.

how do I do it?

Resist the intuitive feeling to pull on the boom with the arms. In marginal situations, switch gear by straightening the body, tightening the torso and minimising that death grip on the boom.



Arms roughly shoulder-width apart, elbows pointing down!

Sink the lower torso / hips down and back into the harness with all your might

Note the flex in that back leg to almost 90°, especially over chop

Extend the front leg, locking that windward rail down by digging the heel down onto the deck and by curling the toes

STRONG WINDS

Q: What should I concentrate on to enhance control?

A: Strong wind equals strong body

SUPER-7 'DROP-&-DIG' when do I use it?

When you want control, be that in or out of the straps / harness, blasting or setting up for a move, like a gybe! If conditions worsen, emphasise pulling down on the boom in the harness and curl the front toes more.

how do I do it?

Practice by getting a bench and noting how far you need to go to get that rear leg flexed to 90°.



ACTIVE FLEX

It's that active flex in the back leg which absorbs unwanted chop, helps prevent spin-out and gives great in-flight entertainment.

SUPER-7 'DROP-&-PUSH'

For early planing or when exiting moves like tacks and gybes, try adopting a super-7 style stance – **but** rather than digging the heels, **push** through the toes of the front foot to encourage acceleration. Plus for more drive, get those feet out in front of the hips.



TRANSITIONS

Q: What should I concentrate on during transitions?

A: Use technique over strength

If you've ever uttered those words, "I can't hold the rig", or you find you fall in just when you don't want to, it could well be down to that move-killer, breaking at the waist.

what is it?

As we've mentioned before, think about sitting back on a Harley Davidson motorcycle rather than leaning forward, like on a sportsbike.

when do I use it?

Whenever you're counterbalancing, seeking to control a rig or trying to keep on a board mid-transition.

how do I do it?

To use our bodyweight, rather than arm or back strength, we need to flex our ankle(s) and knee(s) and at least **try** to keep the shoulders back.



DON'T BREAK!

In difficult conditions or mid-transition, there's a huge tendency to look at the kit and excessively hinge at the waist by over-straightening the legs, knees and ankles.

EXCEPTIONS

You **can** massively lean forward in windsurfing, but only when the rig has 'gone light'. This is often illustrated when top sailors massively over-sheet or 'lay the rig down' for gybes, waveriding or when belting downwind in freestyle moves. But if your rig is well powered, and especially if the board has slowed down, leaning forward, sportsbike style, is a real killer.

CONTROL

Q: How can I increase my control & leverage?

A: Spread 'em!

what is it?

Spread those hands and feet.

when do I use it?

During overpowered, contorted, difficult moments, like ending transitions and especially when out of the straps trying to direct an errant board.

how do I do it?

It's far easier to turn, steer and control the board and rig in difficult situations if you widen your foot and arm spread. As basic as this might sound, it links into so many out of harness, transitional style moments. Often, the defining action when you're trying to lean, lever, rotate or tame your rig, is to spread your hands and feet. It massively helps you to oppose the position of the rig in tricky situations.



TOP TIP

Place a piece of tape about an arm's length down the boom past your harness lines as a reminder to move that back hand for gybing!

So, time for action! You have four key scenarios to try out. Use these proven pointers and really commit to them. If it's of interest to others we'll publish your findings and give you a Gul rashvest for your efforts!

Bring your windsurfing to life and discover your potential by joining a WindWise session in 2010. Not only do you get expert proven coaching, but instant 1-2-1 feedback, on water video footage and a whole load of enjoyment on and off the water!

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SIMON BORNHOFT | sb@windwise.net | www.windwise.net

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If you have any questions regarding your technique, or any subjects you'd like covered in the magazine, you can contact sb@windwise.net

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