

INSTRUCTION

Keys To A Great Off-Side Turn

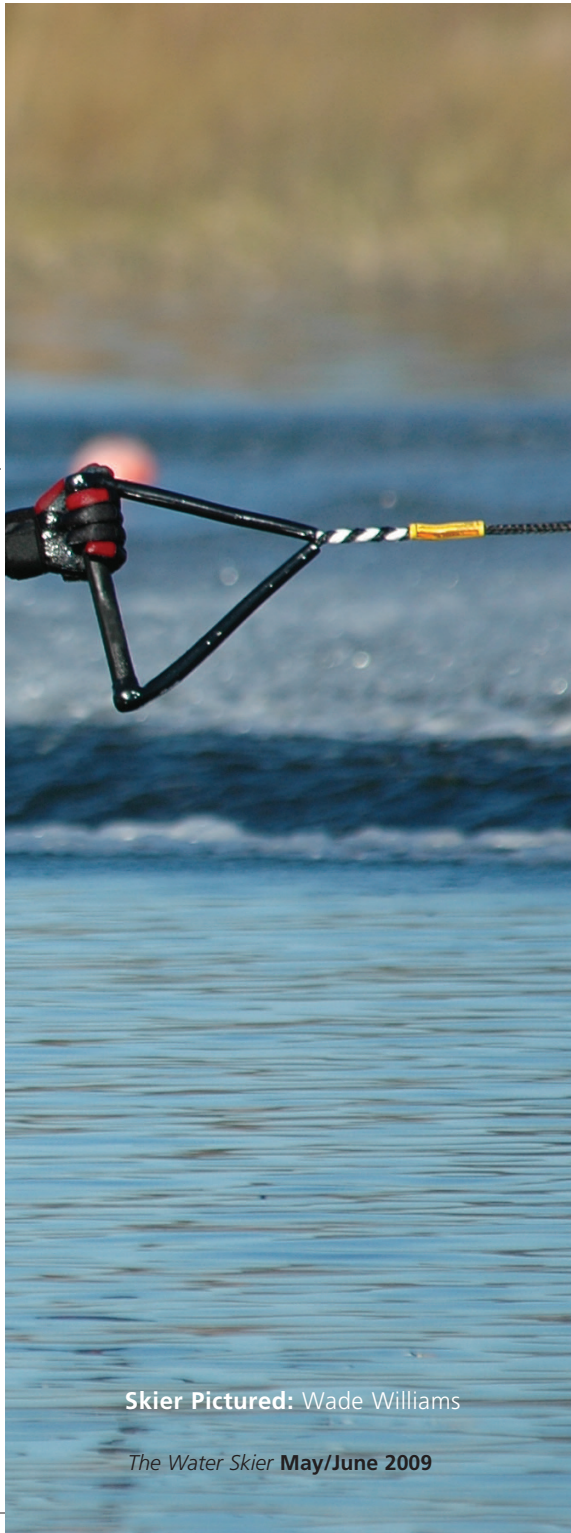
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**Remember, the buoy is not the point
where we HAVE to turn, it's the earliest
place that we CAN turn.**



Skier Pictured: Wade Williams

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- Don't try to kill your on side turn and cut! By overturning – taking more angle than we can sustain – we set ourselves up to edge change too early. By delaying your edge change you will get more width and the ski will be able to roll on a higher turning edge. For best results, feel the handle low, arms straight, and stay leaned away through the second wake.
- Let the boat swing your body up. A lot of skiers use their biceps for this, but that is more work than you need to do and will take you onto a narrower line into the buoy. Stay leaned away through the second wake and feel the boat's pull swing your body up. The longer it takes for you to get to the vertical position, the wider you will be (helpful for very short lines).
- Let the ski go where it wants once you release your hand. This sounds easy, but most skiers don't allow this to happen. You almost never fall coming into a buoy so go ahead and trust to let yourself lay out more. The additional ski edge angle produced by this will help to both support you and help to make a tighter, more controlled turn. The trick here is to feel full extension in your reaching arm. Think about skiing away from the handle so far that you can feel it in your shoulder.
- Turn when you feel that the ski is the farthest point away from you. This is the apex. Don't worry about where the buoy is. Remember, the buoy is not the point where we HAVE to turn, it's the earliest place that we CAN turn.
- Fall onto your front foot at the apex. This is the main difference between

on- and off-side turns. The on side is primarily turned by utilizing the back foot. The off side functions from the front foot. Think of a light step forward at the apex. This helps to bring the ski around and keep it stable.

- Ski to the handle, don't rotate. Trust that step forward and let the ski bring you to the handle. This allows you to keep necessary speed before you get on the handle and start to accelerate. If you start accelerating from a faster speed, you can expect to end up at a faster speed. This is what will bring you into the following buoy earlier. Rotating to turn – twisting the torso and free hand back to the handle – causes excessive skidding and rapid loss of speed; two things that cause loading of the line and loss of direction into the following buoy.
- Get the handle low and balance through both hands. You always want to connect to the handle with it below your belly button. This allows you to lean away from the boat and keep the ski rolled up on edge. When you connect on the handle, feel it low like you are trying to get it down on your thigh. Make sure your arms are straight (allows more lean) and that both of your hands have even weight distribution. This even weight distribution allows you to stay balanced all the way through the second wake.

Chris Rossi is a professional skier and coach who is sponsored by Radar Skis, Tige Boats and Performance Ski & Surf. For more discussion on this and many other water ski-related topics, visit proskicoach.com or come ski with Chris at SkiTek in Orlando, Fla.