

Add Points To Your Run With Toe Back-to-Backs

Toe back-to-backs are the building blocks to the toe pass. Learning these tricks will add points to your runs, but perfecting these will lead to many more surface toe tricks. Toe back-to-backs aren't complicated tricks, but few people do them well. These tricks can be done extremely fast and can accumulate quite a few points in very little time.

To begin, let's look at the most basic aspect — the stance on the ski. This is where many people are confused. Contrary to popular belief, you don't want the weight to be on your toes all of the time. Instead, the weight should always be on the trailing edge of the ski. In the front position that means slightly on your heels; in the back, on your toes. This establishes your axis, in relation to the boat, upon which you will pivot. Your axis should be at a slight angle away from the boat, not straight up and down.

By maintaining this angle away from the boat you can lean against the rope for support instead of trying to balance yourself in position. If you try to maintain the "proud look" with a straight back in the back position, you put the weight flat on the ski or even on your heel. This creates a loose line and causes many problems on the toe front. It also forces you to balance

more to ride in the back position. Stay away from the boat so that you can lean on the rope for support and turn the front with your chest up.

Your body position will directly affect your stance on the ski and the execution of the trick. Always put yourself in a good start position before proceeding to the next trick. Your starting position should be similar to how you stand on land, except you will bend your knee slightly. You should be able to draw a line through your ankles, hips and shoulders. Your elbows should be by your side with forearms extended as if you have your hands on a table. Keep your toe leg high and slightly in. Your thigh should be parallel to the water and the angle at the knee should be close to 90 degrees so that the heel of your toe foot is up at the same level as the other knee.

Making the turn will take little effort once you have the correct stance and you are in the right body position. Learn the toe backs and toe fronts with as little movement as possible. To turn, pivot from the front to the back using your hips to initiate the turn. Apply more pressure to the tip of the ski as you turn. Applying pressure to the trailing edge of the ski as you turn will help pull the ski to the back position. Your toe leg

should be just resisting the pull from the boat. Don't pull in slack at the start. You want to maintain a tight line throughout the trick. As you turn back to the front, lift your toe leg knee instead of pulling. Turn with your hips and chest facing up and you will finish with your weight slightly on your heel. By resisting and lifting your knee instead of pulling from the back, you will notice that you finish the toe front with your hips up and in perfect position to continue to the reverse toe back.

The reverse toe back is similar. Start slightly on your heel, initiate the turn with slightly more pull and pivot to the back position, applying more pressure to your toes as you turn to the back. You should lean slightly away from the boat with your shoulders level, and then feel the support of the rope. As you turn back to the front, keep your knee up high and resist the pull from the boat with your leg. You will turn back to the front with your chest facing up, your hips up and your leg in.

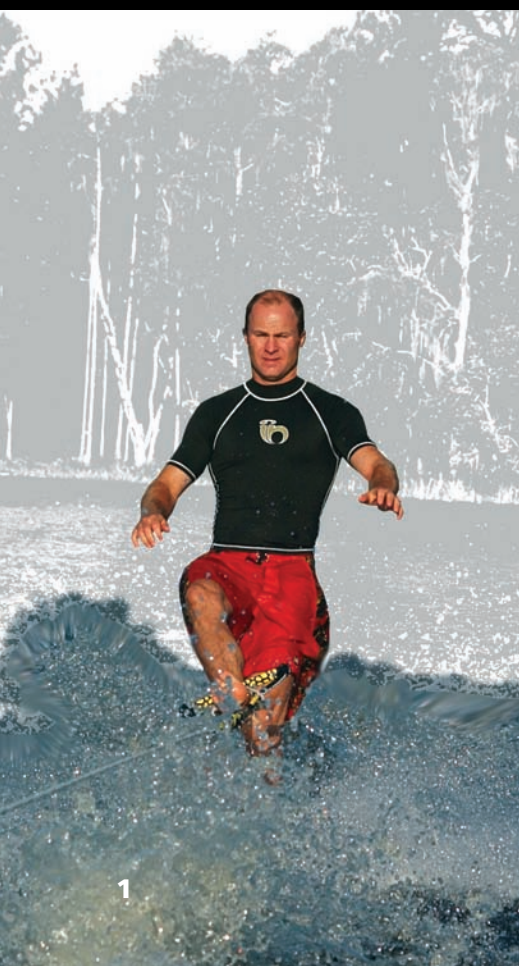
Done properly, it's just a matter of putting the two tricks together and executing. The toe back-to-back should just come together. If you have trouble keeping the rotation going, you probably are losing your hips behind you as you come to

the front position and dropping your chest forward. Always go back to the basics and work on your turn, keeping your hips up and leg in as you come to the front from both back positions. The key to the back-to-back being continuous is keeping your hips up as you go through the front position.

As you perfect these tricks looking away from the boat, you can begin looking back at the boat in the back positions. This will change your balance and may feel awkward at first. As you turn to the back positions your chest should stay open to the boat, your head should look toward the boat, and one hand should point toward the boat. Keep your upper body still and it should counter spin as the lower body performs the back-to-back.

As you perfect the 180s and 360s of the back-to-back, you will help your other surface turns immensely. The standard toe pass is just a continuation of these tricks strung together. Your next progression will be T5B (TB + TBB) and TO wrap in. Have fun and enjoy the process!

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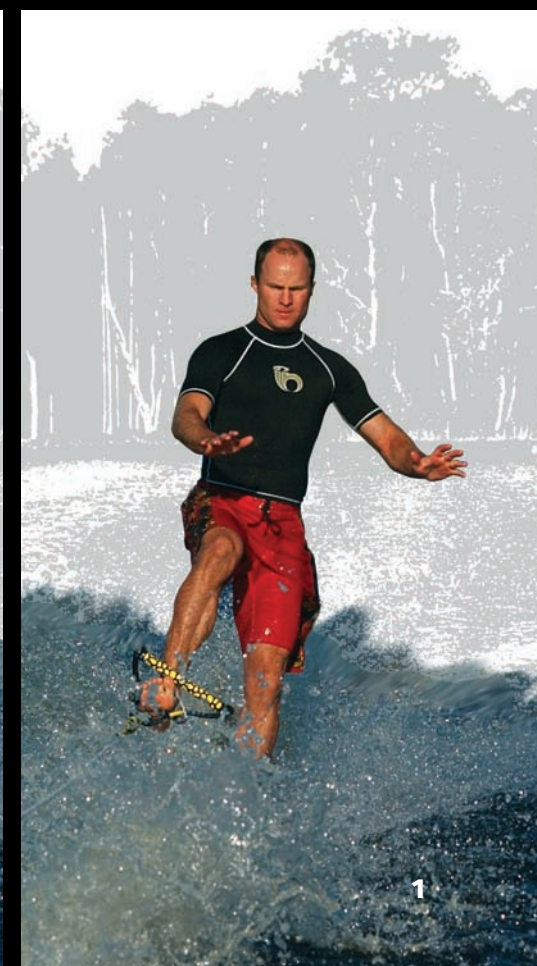
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1