

Foundations of Flight

Diving Exit

Brought to you by Axis Flight School at Skydive Arizona in Eloy. Photos by Niklas Daniel.

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Purpose

Safety

- ▶ To begin an aggressive dive in a stable position with a predictable trajectory

Performance

- ▶ To successfully dive after a formation of any size.
- ▶ To efficiently dive after a student as an AFF instructor

Execution

To dive successfully, you must first present your hips to the relative wind, get stable and identify your target. If you begin your dive without presenting correctly to the wind and before you are in a stable body position, you'll tumble on the hill. If you dive without first seeing your target, you'll be prone to make quick and radical changes in trajectory, which can be hazardous to the people behind you. Also, there's a good chance you'll overshoot and end up below or on the wrong side of the formation. So, always exit presented with your hips to the wind, get stable and look at your target to identify where you are going before starting your dive.


Once you're stable, find the correct body position for an aggressive dive by:

- ▶ assuming a powerful arch
- ▶ bringing your arms close to your sides, slightly behind your hips
- ▶ straightening your legs to provide forward motion

By having your arms slightly behind your arched hips, you'll be able to make a steeper approach to the formation rather than tracking flatly over it. You can tell you're in a steep dive if you feel the relative wind more on your chest than on your hips.

Be sure to stop! It doesn't matter how awesome your dive was if you overshoot your target and go low (quite possibly ruining the skydive). To stop properly, you'll need to put on the brakes *before* you get to your target. First, go into a neutral body position to begin the deceleration process, then aggressively "get big" to put on the brakes (see "Foundations of Flight—Level Changes While Belly Flying," June 2011 *Parachutist*). Then, use the stair-step method—moving forward and downward incrementally—to get into the formation.

Helpful Hint:

When you're first learning to dive, you'll want to start putting on the brakes early. Diving is fun, and it's very easy to get carried away and overshoot or collide with the target. So, it is important to learn when to stop when approaching a formation in order to avoid a freefall collision. 



To view the diving exit instructional video, use the QR code to the left or visit the Foundations of Flight page at parachutistonline.com.