

INSTRUCTION



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# Kneeboarding - Fun For Everyone

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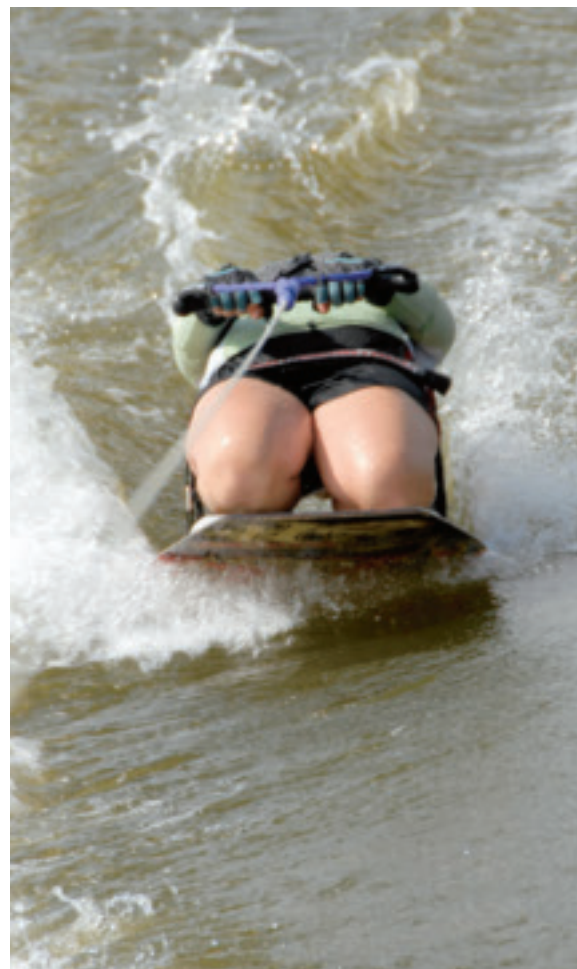
If you have not been on a kneeboard, check out this article. The contents may urge you to give it a try. If you have just learned how to get up and strap in on a kneeboard, check out this article. You are ready for a challenge. If you have been riding comfortably and ready for some basic tricks to impress your onlookers, check out this article. Your audience may want to jump in and give these tricks a try as well.

Being secure and confident on the kneeboard is essential before trying these tricks. Riding with a strap secured around the top of your thighs is a must, along with

riding comfortably straight behind the boat wakes. Ride with your palms down on the handle with slightly bent elbows. Keep your back straight and lean back against the pull of the boat. Use your knees to keep the front tip of the board straight toward the back of the boat. (If you want to move toward the wakes, use your knees by turning them in the direction you want to go). Suggested boat speed is 14 to 18 miles per hour with a rope length of 53 to 75 feet.

Flexibility plays an important part in the first maneuver you will attempt called the *Head Back*. Riding directly behind the boat

and in a basic kneeboard riding position, keep the handle low by your thighs, with both palms facing down. Gradually and slowly lean backward toward the tail of your board. It is extremely critical at this time to keep the handle in the middle of your body. Getting the handle off center will turn the board and make the trick impossible to complete. Continue leaning back with your head until your head touches the water behind you. Recover by pulling back up using your abdominal muscles and handle tension. This trick may sound harder than it is to accomplish. Just keep the board



straight, handle low, and lean back and get it done! It is important to keep your eyes open; the upside down view is weird and awesome.

The second trick gives you a chance to say, "Look Mom, no hands!" This photo opportunity is appropriately called the *No Hander*. Staying in the solid kneeboard position directly behind the boat, slowly pull the handle in toward your waist. Turn the handle perpendicular to the water and stick the bottom end of the handle between your legs. Your knees should be in the center of the "V" of handle. With your knees squeezing together and the handle locked into position, you will slowly be able to let go of the handle putting your arms out wide like an airplane. Add a big smile and you've got a great photograph! Happy Boarding!

*Mark Ritchhart is the current Open Men's Overall National Kneeboard Champion and the current Male Kneeboard Athlete of the Year. He has won 25 national kneeboard titles. He currently is the elementary and middle school dean, teaches character and is the varsity softball coach at Pine Castle Christian Academy in Orlando, Fla.*

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