C2SKY · MUI NE, VIETNAM

KITESURFING FIELD GUIDE

From zero to independent rider

EDITION 1 · SEPTEMBER 2026

WHAT THIS IS

The theory half of learning to kitesurf. It is not a syllabus replacement, not a certification, and not a substitute for supervised water time.

HOW IT WAS SOURCED

Every safety-critical statement traces to a training body, a formal standard, or a current manufacturer manual.

CONTENTS

PART A · BEFORE THE WATER

00 START HERE

This is the theory half of learning to kitesurf. The other half only happens on a beach, with somebody watching you.

Kitesurfing is not difficult to understand. It is difficult to do, and the gap between those two things is where people get hurt. Everything in this guide is written to close the first gap so that your instructor can spend the lesson on the second.

The theory half is what this guide is for. This is the other half, and it does not happen on a page.

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How to read the four marks

Every instruction in this guide carries one of four marks. They are not decoration. They tell you whether you may act on what you have just read.

KNOW Safe to read and act on.

WATCH Where this goes wrong.

DANGER Injury, not inconvenience.

INSTRUCTOR CHECK Do not attempt unsupervised.

LOCAL NOTE Mui Ne specific, and only where verified.

KNOW

A guide is a legitimate way to learn wind, geometry, rules and vocabulary. It is not a way to learn to fly a kite. Every manufacturer manual we consulted opens by requiring instruction from a certified school before first flight, and so does this one.

Two things you never do

Never fly a kite over land near people. Only over open, unobstructed water.

Never permanently attach yourself to the kite, the bar, or the lines. Every connection you make must be one you can break in under two seconds.

DANGER

Safety procedures cannot be learned during an emergency. The release you have never operated is the release you will not find. Practise it on land, under supervision, before it matters.

Where you are going

The international standard behind this guide is the IKO progression: four levels, twenty-five named skills, ending at *Independent* — riding in all directions including upwind, riding among other people, and getting yourself back to the beach without help. Chapter 27 lays out the whole ladder. Chapter 28 is the checklist you measure yourself against.

LOCAL NOTE

At C2SKY the published course ladder runs 2, 7, 12, 15 and 18 hours. Riding usually begins around twelve hours; independence is the work of fifteen to eighteen. Nobody honest will promise you less.

This guide is the theory half. The water half happens with an instructor.

See the C2SKY courses →

01

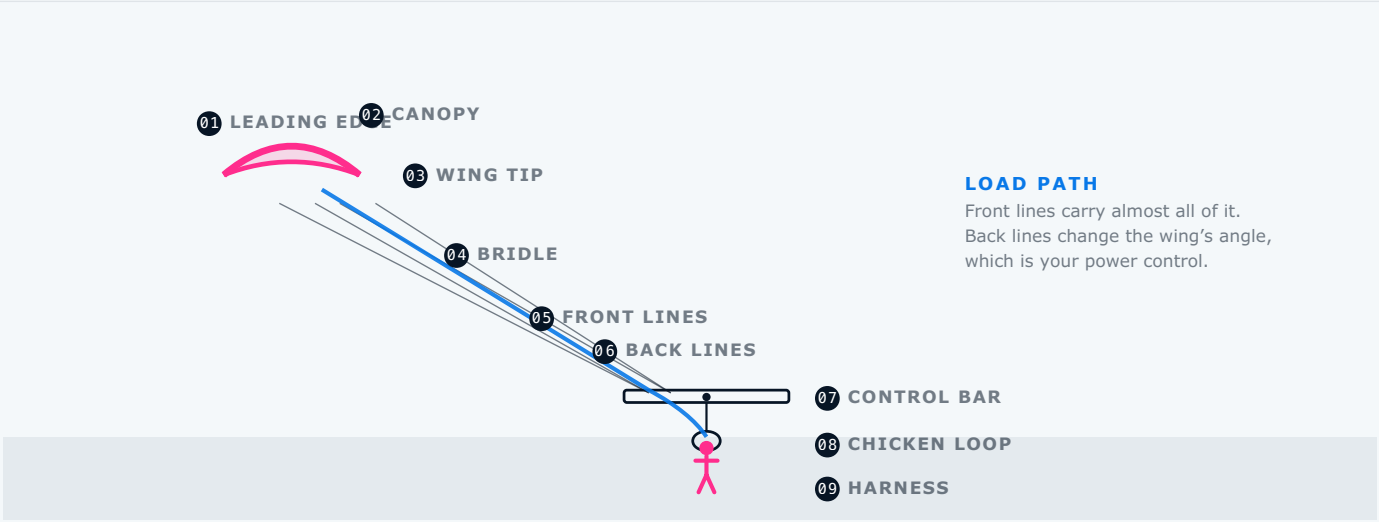
PART A · BEFORE THE WATER

KNOW YOUR GEAR

A wing on a leash, a bar with three jobs, and four lines that do two different things.

Learn the names now. On the beach, an instructor shouting *trailing edge* does not have time to explain it.

FIG 01.1 EXPLODED · LOAD PATH



Nine names, one load path. Trace the blue line: everything the kite makes arrives at your harness through the front lines.

Lines run, kites laid out downwind, and nothing yet attached to anybody. The pre-flight happens here.

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The four lines are not four of the same thing

Two front lines run from the bar's centre to the kite's leading edge, and they carry almost all of the load. Two back lines run from the bar's ends to the wingtips, and they change the wing's angle to the wind. That asymmetry is the whole reason a modern kite depowers when you let go of the bar: release it and the back lines go slack, the wing pitches forward, and the pull falls away.

KNOW

This is why the bar has a limit at both ends of its travel and why the trim strap sits on the centre lines. Everything that changes power changes the same physical thing — the angle at which the wing meets the air.

Kite types, and what each one costs you

TYPE	DEPOWER RANGE	WATER RELAUNCH	SUITS
Bow / SLE	Widest	Easy	All levels. What you will learn on
C-shape	Narrow	Harder	Intermediate and up, freestyle
Delta / hybrid	Wide	Easy	All levels
Foil (closed cell)	Wide	Possible, different technique	Light wind, foiling, racing

After IKO's equipment course. A foil kite must be closed-cell and water-relaunchable to be used on water at all — and self-rescue with one is harder.

Lines are consumables

DANGER

Never touch a kite line under load. Under tension they are sharp enough to cut to the bone, and a knot can take up to half the strength out of a line. A line with a knot in it is not a line you fly.

WATCH

Inflation pressure is set per kite size and per brand. There is no universal number, and a soft leading edge changes both how the kite flies and whether it will relaunch.

AWAITING LOCAL DATA · Awaiting equipment confirmation

Kite brand, models and school quiver sizes — not published in any C2SKY source. Confirmed with an instructor before this section names equipment.

PART A · BEFORE THE WATER

02 READ THE SPOT

Everything the kite can pull you into is downwind of you. That is the only direction that matters.

IKO makes this the very first thing you are taught — before a kite is inflated, before a line is unrolled. It has a name: the SEA assessment, for Spot, Environment and Activity. It also has an outcome that includes *no*.

Look downwind first

Beginners assess what they can see, which is upwind and in front of them. The hazard is behind that: the corridor the kite will drag you through if it gets away. Walk it with your eyes before you unroll anything.

DANGER

You need at least a hundred metres of clear space downwind and to both sides. Duotone states it as a semicircle a hundred metres deep, downwind and to each side. Power lines, poles, roads, buildings, trees and airports are not obstacles to be avoided carefully; they are reasons to move.

The assessment that comes before any equipment is touched. Everything downwind of you is the part that matters.

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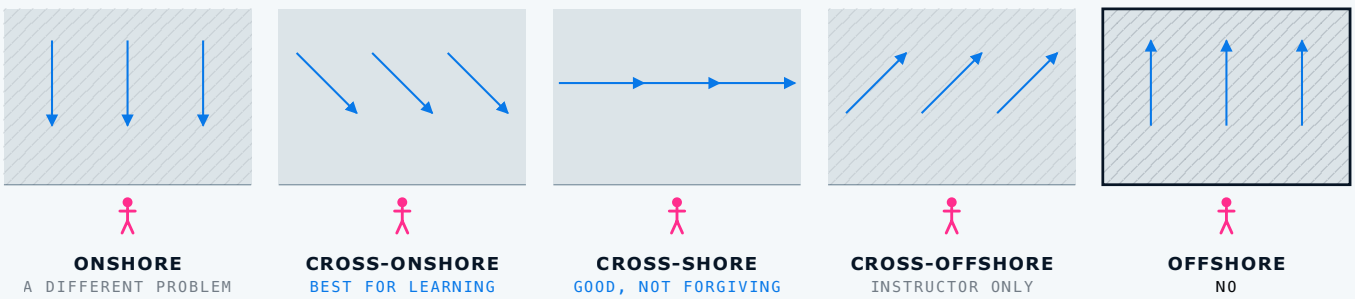
Wind direction is a classification, not a preference

FIG 02.1 TOP–DOWN · FIVE STATES



Two different failures, not one scale. Offshore takes you away from safety. Straight onshore pushes you and the kite onto the beach and everything on it.

There are two different failures hiding in that row, and reading it as a single best-to-worst scale will teach you the wrong lesson. Offshore takes you away from land, and everything that goes wrong makes it worse. Straight onshore pushes you and the kite onto the beach and everything on it. They are not degrees of the same problem.

DANGER

Offshore wind is the one that kills. IKO's position is unambiguous: do not ride in offshore wind unless a rescue boat is already in the water with a pilot trained for deep-water recovery, and somebody ashore knows you are out. If there is no one, do not go.

Then the water, then the people

Depth, and how far out you can still stand.

Tide — a falling tide exposes obstructions that were not there an hour ago.

Current, and which way it sets.

Shore break: what the last ten metres do to you and to your kite.

Everybody else. Other water users have right of way, and you pass downwind of them.

WATCH

The spot changes while you rig. Look again before you launch — the wind has shifted, someone has parked downwind of you, the tide has moved.

AWAITING LOCAL DATA · Awaiting local confirmation

The Mui Ne worked example — hazards, currents, shore break, launch and landing areas, local conventions. Chapter 26 carries what has been derived so far; the operational detail is an instructor answer, not a guess.

PART A · BEFORE THE WATER

03 UNDERSTAND THE WIND

Strength, direction, and steadiness. Beginners learn the first two and get hurt by the third.

You will spend more of your kitesurfing life judging wind than riding in it. Learn to do it from the beach, not from a phone.

Reading it off the world

The Beaufort scale exists because you can estimate wind strength from what it does to things around you: smoke drifts at 1–3 knots, leaves move at 4–6, small branches move at 11–16, whole trees are in motion at 28–33. Learn the middle of that range by feel and you will never be entirely dependent on a forecast.

FORCE	KNOTS	WHAT YOU SEE	WHAT IT MEANS FOR A KITE
2	4–6	Leaves rustle, wind on your face	Below teaching wind
3	7–10	Leaves in motion, light flags out	Light. Big kite, or a lesson on the sand
4	11–16	Small branches move, flags flap	The working band for most riders
5	17–21	Small trees sway	Powered up. Size down
6	22–27	Large branches moving	Experienced riders only

Condensed from Ozone's published wind table. One knot is 1.15 mph, 1.85 km/h.

DANGER

Never learn in more than ten knots. Never rig a kite for the first time in more than about twelve kilometres an hour. And never go out in a thunderstorm — there is no version of that decision that ends well.

The gust is the thing

Two days can share an average and be entirely different sessions. What hurts people is the spread: the gust that arrives while you are already at the limit of what you can hold, and the lull that drops the kite out of the sky while you are relying on it. CORE puts it plainly in its manual — gusts can be deadly. Size for the gusts, not the average.

KNOW

Wind is slower near the ground and turbulent for a long way downwind of anything solid. If you are standing in the lee of a building and it feels light, it is not light.

A forecast is not a measurement

A forecast model and a weather station are different objects and must never be quoted as though they were the same. Models average across a grid cell that may be kilometres wide and sited inland; at a coastal thermal spot they systematically read low. C2SKY's own analysis found exactly this for Mui Ne.

LOCAL NOTE

C2SKY publishes a Windguru forecast spot and a separate live measured station, and keeps them apart on purpose. When there is no reading to give you, the answer is the beach camera rather than an invented number.

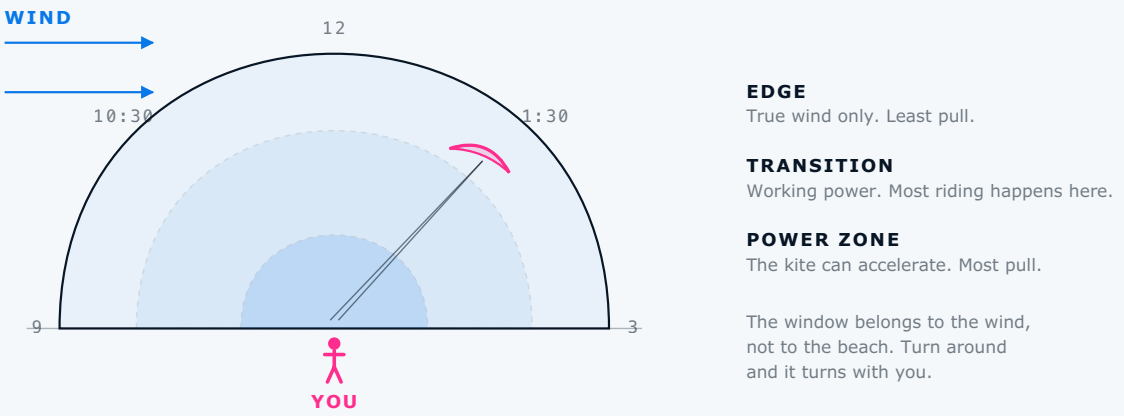
PART A · BEFORE THE WATER

04 THE WIND WINDOW

A quarter-sphere downwind of you, the radius of your lines. Where the kite is in it decides some of the pull. How fast it is moving decides more.

The window is the volume in which the kite can fly. It belongs to the wind, not to the beach: turn around and it turns with you.

FIG 04.1 FRONT VIEW · FROM BEHIND THE RIDER



A quarter-sphere downwind of you, with a radius equal to your line length. The three bands are distance from the centre, not height.

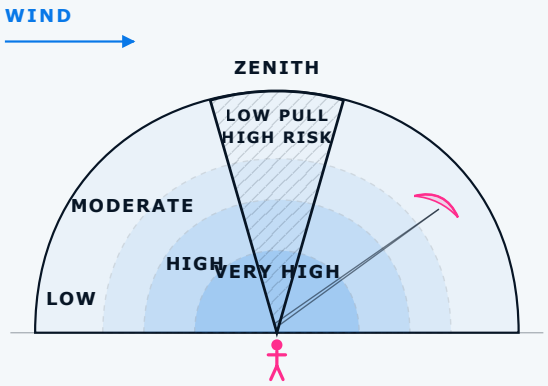
The clock

Riders and instructors talk about the window as a clock face, and the vocabulary is worth learning exactly because it is what somebody will shout at you. Twelve o'clock is directly overhead — the zenith. Nine and three are the launching and landing positions, at the window's edge on either side. The signal chart in Chapter 09 depends on these names.

Why the edge is quiet and the centre is not

At the edge, the kite is flying almost sideways to the wind and receives only the true wind; most of what it makes is spilled rather than delivered to your lines. Move it toward the centre and it can accelerate — and a kite that accelerates makes wind of its own. That induced wind adds to the true wind, and the sum is what the wing actually feels. IKO calls this apparent wind, and it is where the power comes from.

FIG 04.2 FRONT VIEW · RELATIVE POWER



HOW FAST YOU MOVE THE KITE MATTERS MORE THAN WHERE IT IS.

LOW	Edge, and overhead. The kite waits here.
MODERATE	Working power. Steering and riding.
HIGH	Real pull. Deliberate, and brief.
VERY HIGH	Low and downwind. All of it.

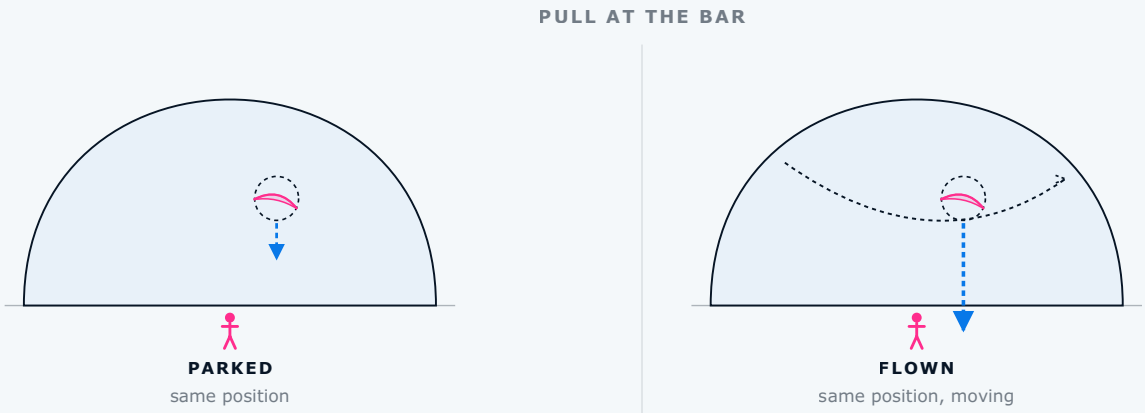
A conceptual scale, not a measurement.

Position sets part of the pull; the kite's speed sets more of it, and no still diagram can show you that. Note where the scale reads lowest — overhead, on land, is where riders get lifted.

KNOW

This guide shows relative power as a four-step scale and not as a percentage, and that is a deliberate decision. A number computed from position alone would ignore the kite's speed, which is the larger term; it would need a trim setting to have a denominator at all; and it would print its lowest value directly overhead, which on land is the most dangerous place your kite can be.

FIG 04.3 FRONT VIEW · TWO STATES



Identical position, different speed. A kite steered fast through a point produces several times what the same kite parked there produces — which is why a position readout can never be a power readout.

DANGER

Overhead feels safe and reads low on every scale. It is also the position from which a rider standing on land gets lifted and dropped. On the beach the kite belongs at the edge, low, or on the ground — never parked above your head while you think about something else.

The window has depth

The two views in the plate above are one kite. Move it overhead and the top-down marker collapses onto you, because a kite at twelve o’clock is not downwind of you at all. That is the whole lesson: the window is a volume, not a fan.

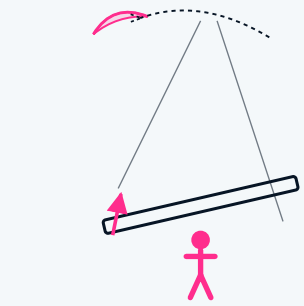
PART B · CONTROL BEFORE YOU SWIM

05 KITE CONTROL

You steer with a difference in tension between two lines. Everything else follows from that.

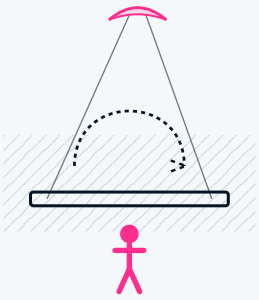
Everything in this chapter is practised on a trainer kite, on land, with an instructor, before it is attempted with anything bigger. The more time you spend on the trainer, the faster the rest goes.

FIG 05.1 — FROM BEHIND · CORRECT / INCORRECT



✓

ONE HAND IN. THE OTHER ARM STAYS OUT.
The two back lines end up at different tensions. That is the turn.



✕

NEVER ROTATE THE BAR LIKE A WHEEL.
Both lines move together, so almost nothing happens — until it does.

The bar is not a wheel. Cabrinha's own manual says so in terms: rotating it is ineffective and can put the kite out of control.

One hand in, one arm out

Pull one hand toward your body and keep the other arm extended. That difference in tension between the two back lines is what turns the kite. Pull both hands in together and you have not steered — you have sheeted in, and changed the power instead.

WATCH

Do not rotate the bar like a steering wheel. Cabrinha's manual says it in terms: it is ineffective for steering, and it can put the kite out of control. It is also the single most common thing a new rider does with their hands.

Speed of input is power

The faster you move the bar, the faster the kite turns — and the more power it makes on the way round. A small input held for a second turns the kite far more reliably than a hard pull released immediately. A kite also keeps turning until you tell it otherwise; it has no self-centring.

01

Fly at the edge, in a figure of eight.

Stay in the outer third of the window where the power is lowest. Eyes on the kite, not on the bar.

COMMON MISTAKE

Drifting the pattern lower each pass until the kite is in the power zone and the lesson has changed.

02

Let go of the bar, on purpose.

A modern bow or SLE kite depowers when you release the bar. It is the first response to trouble, not the last.

COMMON MISTAKE

Gripping harder when frightened. The instinct is exactly backwards and it takes deliberate practice to reverse.

03

Fly one-handed, then walk while flying.

Both are separate taught skills. You need them because on a real beach your other hand is always doing something.

COMMON MISTAKE

Walking downwind without noticing, until you have run out of beach.

INSTRUCTOR CHECK

Everything above is a supervised skill. Reading it tells you what your hands should do; it does not tell your hands to do it.

PART B · CONTROL BEFORE YOU SWIM

06 POWER & DEPOWER

Five separate controls sharing one object. Learn them apart or you will confuse them under load.

There is no single dial. There are five things that change how hard the kite pulls, and three of them live on the bar.

FIG 06.1 MATRIX · FIVE INPUTS

01	**STEERING INPUT**	**One hand in, one arm out**	Differential back-line tension → the kite turns
02	**BAR TRAVEL**	**Sheet in / sheet out**	Angle of attack, right now. Push away and power falls immediately
03	**TRIM**	**Strap or cleat**	Angle of attack for the session. Set it, then leave it
04	**ANGLE OF ATTACK**	**What both of the above change**	Too much and the kite back-stalls: power and control go together
05	**KITE SPEED**	**Where most of the power lives**	The kite makes its own wind. Fast kite, big pull

Five separate things sharing one object. No car metaphor survives all five.

Steering, sheeting and trim are three different controls. Angle of attack is what two of them change. Kite speed is the one nobody sees on the bar, and it is the biggest.

The first response is always the same

Push the bar away. Sheeting out reduces the wing's angle to the wind immediately, and Cabrinha calls it your best defence for exactly that reason: it is instant, it is reversible, and it costs you nothing. Everything else — steering the kite to the edge, adjusting trim, firing the release — comes after.

DANGER

When frightened, most people pull the bar in. That increases the angle of attack and increases the power. The first hour of a lesson is spent building the opposite reflex, and it is the most valuable hour you will spend.

Trim is for the session, not the moment

The trim strap shortens or lengthens the centre lines, which changes the wing's angle for as long as you leave it there. Set it once you know the wind, and then use bar travel for everything moment to moment. Trim out too far and you have thrown away the bar's working range: pushing the bar away will have nothing left to give.

Back-stall is the other end of the same mistake

Sheet in too far, trim in too far, or fly on front lines that have stretched, and the kite stalls backwards out of the sky. You lose power and steering together, which is why it is worse than being underpowered. It is also the reason line length gets checked before every session and not once a year.

KNOW

Depower is not the safety system. It reduces power; the release removes it. On some leash settings, letting go of the bar leaves the kite fully depowered but still pressurised and still flying. Chapter 10.

PART B · CONTROL BEFORE YOU SWIM

07 RIGGING

There is no universal order. There is a universal checklist, and it is not optional.

Rigging happens after the spot assessment, never before. You are choosing where to leave a large, unattended aerofoil for the next ten minutes.

01 Choose the place, looking downwind.

The corridor downwind of your kite is where it goes if it gets away. It must be clear of people, of other people's lines, and of anything hard.

COMMON MISTAKE

Rigging in the first gap on a busy beach. A gap that fits the kite does not fit the accident.

02 Inflate, then secure it immediately.

Sand or a board on the upwind tip, spread rather than heaped. The more weight the better.

COMMON MISTAKE

Walking away from an inflated kite "for a second". An inflated kite can fly away on its own and has killed people who were not flying it.

03 Lay the lines out at ninety degrees to the kite.

Untangle them where they lie, before anything is connected. Walk them and look for knots, fraying and wear as you go.

COMMON MISTAKE

Connecting first and untangling afterwards, with the lines already under some load.

04 Connect by the labelled system.

Front to front, back to back, by the numbers or colours the manufacturer printed. Miscrossing lines is common enough that brands engineer against it.

COMMON MISTAKE

Assuming symmetry. The bar is not symmetric and neither are the lines.

05

Check line lengths, then test the release.

Hook in, take all the trim out, sheet fully in: the bar should reach the top of the safety system. Then fire the quick release and the leash release, and reassemble both.

COMMON MISTAKE

Skipping the release test because it worked yesterday. Sand gets in overnight.

WATCH

If the bar does not reach the top of the safety system with full power on, your front lines have stretched and the kite will back-stall. Fix it before you fly, not after.

DANGER

Never handle tangled lines unless the kite is secured. An unsecured kite can self-launch while your hands are inside its lines.

INSTRUCTOR CHECK

The order above is the checklist every manufacturer agrees on. The specific sequence your school teaches, and the inflation pressures for its kites, come from your instructor.

AWAITING LOCAL DATA · Awaiting school procedure

C2SKY's own sequence and pressures — to be recorded here once confirmed.

PART B · CONTROL BEFORE YOU SWIM

08 PRE-FLIGHT CHECK

Four systems, one circuit, and an answer that is allowed to be no.

IKO makes this its own named skill, taught before you are allowed to launch as a pilot. It is not a formality bolted onto rigging; it is the last point at which the day is still free to change.

The circuit

SYSTEM	WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR
Kite	Canopy, leading edge, struts, valves closed, bridles intact and free of wear where pulleys run. Pressure firm, not merely inflated.
Lines	Equal length, no knots, no fraying, correctly attached, free of each other and of everything else.
Control system	Release operates and resets to its indicator. Leash attached, in the mode you intend, routed so it cannot snag. Trim free.
You	Harness, leash, helmet, impact vest, knife. Then look at the spot again.

The four-system order is common to every manual in the source register.

DANGER

Verify that your leash will not snag when the safety is pulled — before you go on the water. Naish states this as its own line item, and a leash that fouls turns a working safety system into an ornament.

WATCH

Check that the release has actually reset. Every brand has a tell — a green window, a green indicator, a collar returned to the down position — and a release that clicked is not necessarily a release that is armed.

Agree the signal before you launch

You and whoever is holding your kite settle on a release signal while you are both still standing still and can hear each other. Not during.

LOCAL NOTE

Proper inflation of the leading edge is what makes a kite relaunchable. Check it on the sand: once you are two hundred metres out and the kite is on the water, it is not a thing you can fix.

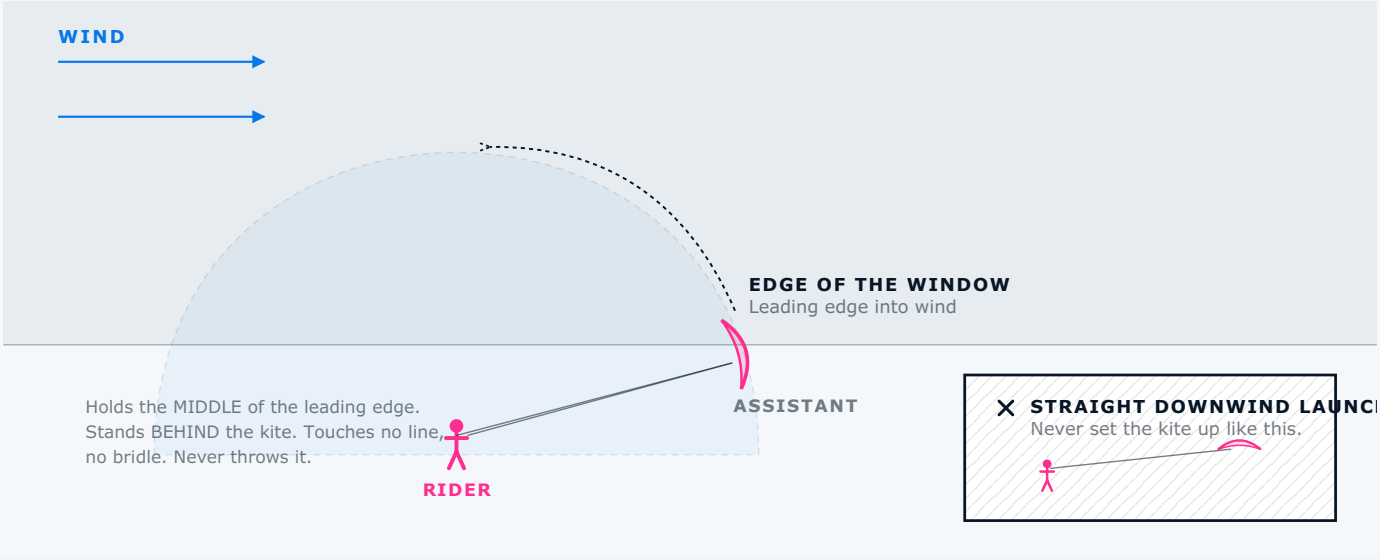
PART B · CONTROL BEFORE YOU SWIM

09 LAUNCH & LAND

The most dangerous ninety seconds of the session, twice, and both of them happen where the ground is hard.

You learn the assistant's role first. That is deliberate: it is the safer role, and holding a stranger's kite properly teaches you the geometry faster than flying your own.

FIG 09.1 TOP-DOWN · ASSISTED LAUNCH



The kite goes up at the edge of the window with as little power as possible. The exact angle depends on the kite and the school — the geometry does not.

If you are holding the kite

Hold the middle of the leading edge. Never a wingtip, never the trailing edge — both make the kite flip or spin.

Stand behind the kite, not beside it and not in front of it.

Touch no bridle and no flying line.

Do not throw it. Let the pilot steer it out of your hands, then move upwind and out of the way.

If anything looks wrong, use the "do not launch" signal. You are the last check.

If you are the pilot

01

Set up at the edge of the window.

Leading edge into wind, as little power as possible. The exact angle depends on your kite — the principle does not.

COMMON MISTAKE

Setting the kite straight downwind. Cabrinha marks this as potentially hazardous in its own manual, and it is how a launch becomes a launch you do not control.

02

Take the slack out, and signal.

Bar at chest height, a few steps back, then the agreed signal — not a wave, not a shrug.

COMMON MISTAKE

Interpreting ambiguity as go.

03

Steer it up slowly, with a hand free.

Your spare hand rests where the release is, from before the launch. More wind means everything happens faster.

COMMON MISTAKE

Pulling the bar in as the kite rises.

04

Walk to the water without delay.

Kite at the edge, low. Do not stand on the sand admiring it.

COMMON MISTAKE

Parking it overhead while you sort out your board.

Landing

Come in slowly with the kite low at the edge of the window, step off the board and body drag the last stretch. Your catcher takes the leading edge as the kite comes down, and walks it away from the water before anything is wound. Self-landing — firing the release and walking up the single safety line — exists and is a taught skill, but it is the fallback, not the plan.

DANGER

Do not approach the shoreline with speed. The last twenty metres contain the shore break, the shallows and everybody else's legs.

INSTRUCTOR CHECK

Launch angle, self-landing method and the school’s own launch checklist are equipment- and school-specific. Learn them where you ride.

AWAITING LOCAL DATA · Awaiting local confirmation

C2SKY’s launch and landing areas, and the kite the school teaches on.

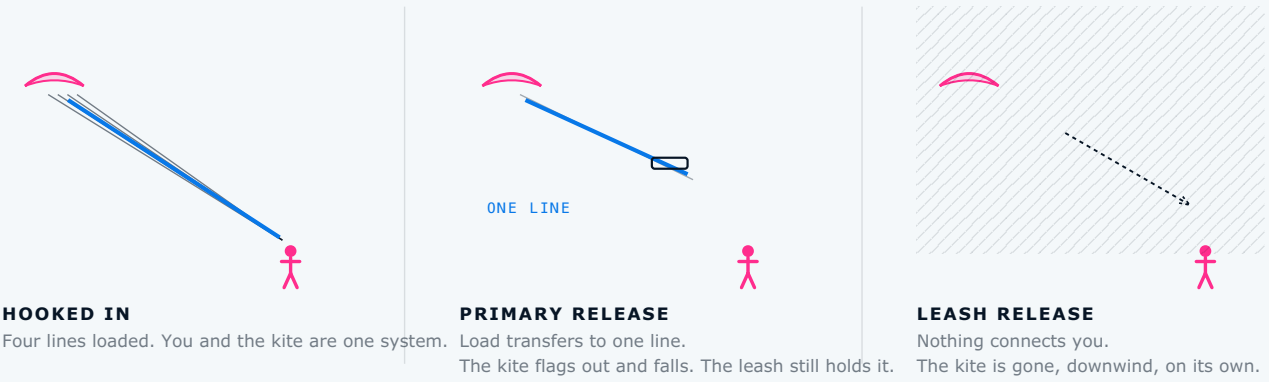
PART B · CONTROL BEFORE YOU SWIM

10 SAFETY SYSTEM

Two stages, one flag-out line, and a set of details that differ by brand in ways that matter.

This chapter teaches the architecture. It deliberately does not give you a step-by-step actuation sequence, because there is no honest universal one — and a sequence learned from the wrong brand is worse than no sequence at all.

FIG 10.1 SCHEMATIC · THREE STATES



Two releases, two very different outcomes. The first ends the power. The second ends your connection to the kite — and sends it downwind, unaccompanied.

Two stages

The first release separates you from the bar and transfers the kite's load onto a single front line. Robbed of its angle of attack, the wing loses its power and comes down — this is called flagging out. You are still attached, by the leash, and that is on purpose: you still have your kite. The second release, on the leash itself, separates you from the kite entirely.

WATCH

Stage two has a cost. A released kite blows downwind on its own and can endanger whoever is behind you; at sea you may not get it back. It is for when stage one was not enough, not for when stage one was inconvenient.

What the standard guarantees

Kite releases and their matching leash releases are governed by ISO 21853:2020, in force since February 2020. It sets a maximum release force of 170 newtons and a maximum opening time of two seconds, tested dry and clean, in dry sand, in sandy water, in fresh water, and cold and wet. Compliant hardware carries the number stamped on it, so you can check your own bar.

WATCH

That 170 newtons is a bench figure under standardised conditions. Cabrinha warns in the opposite direction: more wind can mean more force needed at the handle. The standard is a design guarantee, not a promise about your worst day.

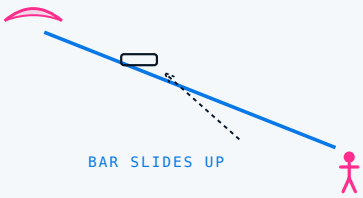
What is not universal

FIG 10.3 MACRO · FOUR TYPES

Four release actions found across five current manufacturer manuals. The motion is not the same, the reset indicator is not the same, and what happens afterwards is not the same.

Across the five current manufacturer manuals behind this guide, four things differ: which way the release is actuated, what the kite does afterwards, what the reset indicator looks like, and — least known of all — what your leash setting does to the whole chain.

FIG 10.4 TWO MODES · SAME RELEASE



LEASH ON THE FLAG-OUT LINE

The bar slides up the safety line.
The kite loses its angle and comes down.

LEASH IN A NON-FLAGGING MODE

The bar cannot slide.
The kite stays pressurised, depowered but alive.

Which mode you are in is a choice you made when you clipped the leash on, and it changes what your safety system does. Duotone documents both. Ask which one your school sets.

INSTRUCTOR CHECK

Which leash mode you are in is a choice you made when you clipped in, and it changes what your safety system does. Duotone documents two modes with materially different outcomes; CORE warns that on one leash setting the kite is fully depowered but still pressurised. Ask which mode your school sets, and why.

The chain, link by link

Seven links in the chain. Each one is filled in once the school's own equipment is confirmed — and until then this guide will not print a plausible guess, because on this page a plausible guess is the dangerous kind.

01 **Connection to harness**
How the chicken loop is held on the spreader bar

02 **Leash attachment**
Where the leash clips, and to which ring

03 **Leash mode taught**
Flag-out mode, or a mode that does not fully depower

04 **Primary quick release**
The actuation — push away, push down and away, or pull

05 **Flag-out state**
What the kite does once the primary release is fired

06 **Secondary release**
The leash release, and what it separates

07 **Reset**

The indicator that says the system is armed again

Maintenance is part of the system

Operate the release and the leash release before and after every session, then reassemble them.

Keep sand out. Rinse with fresh water.

Store the release open; reload it at the next setup.

Confirm the reset indicator every time, not the click.

INSTRUCTOR CHECK

Reading this chapter is not rehearsal. Activating a release under load is its own named IKO skill and is taught in the water, under supervision.

DANGER

Your equipment may differ from anything described here. This guide will not print a release sequence it cannot attribute to your bar. Practise it with your instructor, on your own hardware, and follow the safety system your manufacturer documents — not a generic one.

AWAITING LOCAL DATA · Awaiting equipment confirmation

The kite and bar model, the ISO marking and the default student leash mode are not published in any C2SKY source and have not been guessed. Until an instructor confirms them, this chapter teaches the architecture and no school-specific procedure.

PART C · IN THE WATER

11 BODY DRAG

The water lesson without a board, because a fall here costs nothing and teaches everything.

Body dragging is where you first meet the kite's power in an environment that forgives it. It is also where relaunching and self-rescue technique get practised in earnest.

Downwind first

Two hands on the bar, kite stable, and let it pull you. You are learning what a given kite position feels like when it is attached to your whole body weight, and how to keep your head out of the water while thinking about something else.

Then upwind, with one arm out

Extend one arm like a rudder, keep the kite low on that side, and you will track across and slightly into the wind instead of straight downwind. This is the single most useful thing in the chapter, because it is how you get a lost board back — and it is the same body position you will use if you ever have to sail a kite home in Chapter 23.

DANGER

Fly only if you are a strong swimmer and wearing a flotation or impact vest. The kite is not a flotation device, and you should never be further from shore than you can comfortably swim back.

WATCH

Budget your drift. Every drag takes you downwind, and the walk back up the beach is the tax. Start upwind of where you intend to finish.

INSTRUCTOR CHECK

Supervised, in shallow water, before it is attempted anywhere else.

PART C · IN THE WATER

12 BOARD RECOVERY

You will lose the board before you can ride it.
Getting it back is a skill, not an accident.

IKO teaches upwind body drag and board recovery as one skill, and the reason is geometric: you sink, the board floats, and the two of you drift at different rates. The board ends up upwind of you almost every time.

Mark it before you move

Take a bearing on something fixed ashore before you start dragging. The board is small, low and the same colour as the chop, and thirty seconds of looking for it is thirty seconds of not flying your kite.

Then drag to it

One arm out, kite low on the upwind side, and work across. Pick the board up without letting the kite drop — which in practice means looking at the kite and feeling for the board, rather than the other way round.

WATCH

Sometimes the right answer is to leave it. A board is replaceable and it is not worth a long swim in a current. Chapter 23 is what happens when you decide the board is not the priority.

DANGER

If you use a board leash, wear a helmet. A leashed board on a short line comes back at your head, and every manufacturer that mentions leashes says the same thing.

INSTRUCTOR CHECK

Recovering another rider — not their board, them — is a Level 4 skill and is not covered here.

PART C · IN THE WATER

13 WATER RELAUNCH

The kite going down is normal. Whether it comes back up was decided on the beach.

Proper inflation, especially of the leading edge, is what makes a kite relaunchable. Cabrinha marks this as imperative and checks it before entering the water, which is exactly the right place to care about it.

The principle, on an inflatable kite

01

Get it onto its side.

If the kite is face down, pull one rear leader line toward you and hold constant tension. You may need to pull a full metre before the wingtip lifts.

COMMON MISTAKE

Wrapping the leader around your hand. Never do this — the kite can power up without warning.

02

Let it work to the edge.

Once on its side, the kite migrates toward the edge of the window on its own. In light wind this takes patience.

COMMON MISTAKE

Losing patience and pulling on both sides of the bar, which puts the kite straight back down.

03

Then fly it up.

Release the leader and steer it into the sky, levelling the bar. Be ready to push the bar away as it comes up powered.

COMMON MISTAKE

Committing to one side, switching halfway, and starting again.

WATCH

Keep the board on your feet and in front of you. It slows your drift and speeds the relaunch.

DANGER

A downed kite can relaunch on its own, often when you do not expect it. Treat it as live until it is secured.

KNOW

Foil kites use an entirely different method — a reverse relaunch on a hand brake, a control that does not exist on an inflatable kite's bar. The technique does not transfer in either direction.

INSTRUCTOR CHECK

Relaunching is practised in the water with an instructor. The sequence above tells you what the kite is doing and why; it does not substitute for having done it once with somebody watching.

When it is not going to relaunch

There is a point at which the honest answer is that the kite is not coming up, and continuing to try is spending energy you will want later. That decision is the start of Chapter 23, and recognising it early is the whole skill.

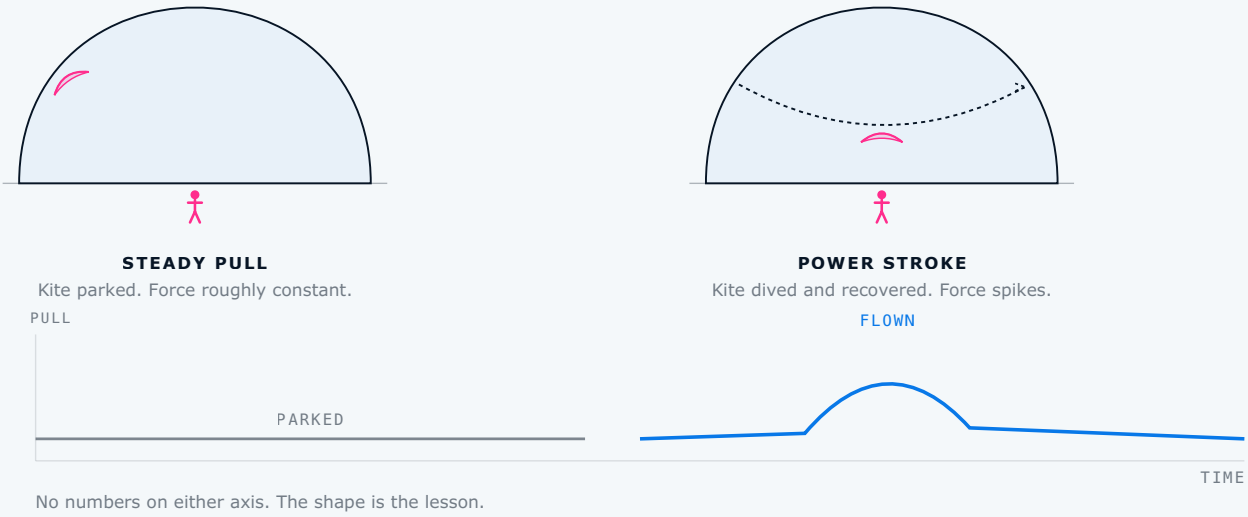
PART C · IN THE WATER

14 POWER STROKES

A parked kite pulls. A kite steered fast through the same place pulls several times harder. That difference is the sport.

IKO names these together as one skill for a reason: they are the two ways of getting force out of a kite, and confusing them is how beginners get pulled off their feet.

FIG 14.1 WINDOW + FORCE TRACE



Same kite, same wind, same window. The only difference is that the second one is moving. That spike is the water start, and it is also the accident.

Where the extra power comes from

A kite parked in a position generates roughly constant pull from the true wind. Steer it down and across the window and it accelerates — and an accelerating wing makes its own wind, which adds to the true wind and raises the force enormously. The stroke is a dive and a recovery, and the recovery matters as much as the dive.

KNOW

Input speed sets stroke size. The same hand movement in twenty-five knots is not the same event as it was in fifteen. If you have moved from a small kite to a big one, or from a light day to a strong one, everything you learned about how hard to move your hands is now wrong.

DANGER

Power strokes are learned in the water, without a board, on purpose. On land the same stroke is how riders get lofted into whatever is downwind of them.

INSTRUCTOR CHECK

This is the mechanism of the water start. It is taught, in the water, with somebody watching.

PART C · IN THE WATER

15 WATER START

A power stroke with a board on your feet. Nothing new, except that now you go somewhere.

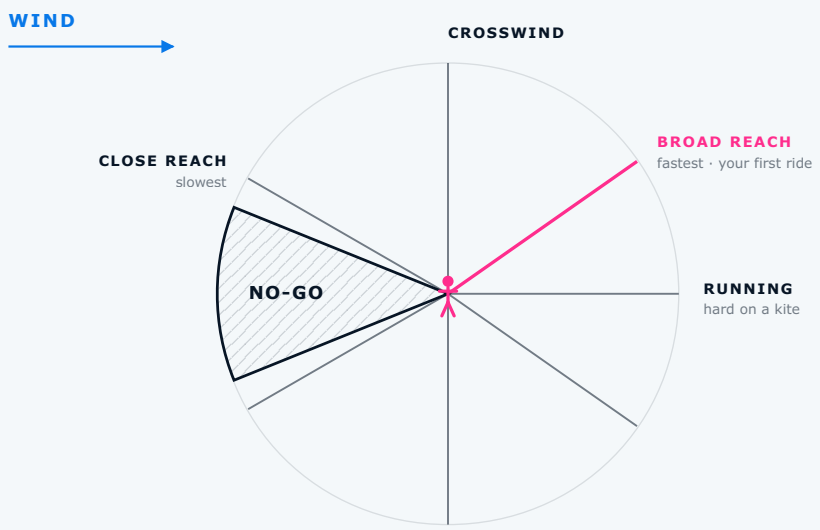
This is the moment people book the trip for, and it is also the moment where the earlier chapters get audited. If body drag, board recovery and relaunch are not solid, a failed water start leaves you in deep water without a way back.

Waist-deep, a long way out. The whole argument for learning on this coast is that you can stop, stand up and try it again.
C2SKY

You go downwind first

The first direction you travel is a broad reach — slightly downwind of across — and it is the fastest point of sail. IKO says so in as many words. The board has to be moving before it can be edged, and you cannot edge against nothing.

FIG 15.2 ROSE · POINTS OF SAIL



The directions you can actually travel. Your first ride after a water start is a broad reach — slightly downwind, and the fastest point of sail.

01

Board on, kite parked, sitting in the water.

Feet in the straps or on the pads, board across the wind, kite at rest at the edge. Nothing happens until you are settled.

COMMON MISTAKE

Fighting the board. If it will not go on, park the kite properly first.

02

Send the kite down and across.

One smooth stroke through the window. The pull arrives a beat after your hands move.

COMMON MISTAKE

A stroke twice the size you intended, which pulls you over the front of the board.

03

Let the pull straighten you.

Extend the front leg and let the kite lift you into a standing position. You are not pulling yourself up on the bar.

COMMON MISTAKE

Standing before the power arrives. The kite stalls and you sit back down.

04

Point slightly downwind and go.

Board flat-ish, weight back, eyes up. The first few metres are about not falling, not about direction.

COMMON MISTAKE

Trying to go upwind immediately, which stops the board dead.

05

Park the kite and look ahead.

Back toward forty-five degrees. If you are making constant corrections, the kite is riding and you are a passenger.

COMMON MISTAKE

Leaving the kite low and powered. It will keep accelerating you until something gives.

LOCAL NOTE

At C2SKY, first attempts on the board sit around the seven-hour course, and riding usually begins around twelve. That is the school’s own published figure, not an average from somewhere else.

PART D · RIDING

16 FIRST RIDES

Short runs that end when you decide, not when you fall.

Your first rides go downwind. All of them. Plan for that rather than being surprised by it: start upwind of where you want to end up, and treat the walk back as part of the session rather than a failure.

The one everybody comes for, and the one that arrives around the twelve-hour mark.

C2SKY

Stopping is a skill, learned the same day as going

A rider who can only start is a rider who can only be stopped by the water, the beach, or somebody else. Learn to shut the power down and sink the board on purpose, in the first session in which you ride at all.

WATCH

Kite low and forward, not high. The beginner reflex is to fly the kite up for reassurance, which loses your drive and, near the shore, puts you in the lofting position from Chapter 04.

DANGER

From your first ride you are in traffic, and the right-of-way rules in Chapter 22 now apply to you. They are not an advanced topic you get to later.

KNOW

Keep a reserve. Finish before you are exhausted, not when you are — the last run of a session is where most tired mistakes get made.

PART D · RIDING

17 CONTROL YOUR SPEED

Speed is a board control, not a kite control. This is the first thing IKO asks of an independent rider.

Until now the kite has been doing everything. Edging is where the board starts to argue with it, and that argument is what riding actually is.

What an edge does

Tip the board onto its heel edge and it resists sideways through the water. That resistance converts the kite's pull into grip rather than acceleration. Kite position is your coarse control; edge angle is the fine one, and it is far faster to apply.

KNOW

Depower supports edging. In stronger wind a rider who cannot sheet out cannot hold an edge, because the kite simply overpowers the board. The two skills arrive together.

DANGER

Do not approach the shoreline with speed. Speed control is what lets you come in among people, boards and shallow water without needing luck.

INSTRUCTOR CHECK

IKO makes this the first Level 3 competence, ahead of riding upwind, because upwind is the same mechanism pointed at a different goal.

PART D · RIDING

18 RIDE BOTH DIRECTIONS

A rider who can only go one way cannot come back.

There is nothing conceptually new here, which is exactly why it gets skipped. The weak side does not arrive on its own; it has to be practised deliberately, and every session you spend avoiding it is a session of ground you cannot get back.

Tacks have names, and the names have consequences

Starboard tack means you are travelling to the right with your right hand and right foot leading. Under the right-of-way rules, starboard has priority and holds course, speed and heading. Port gives way. You cannot apply that rule if you do not know, without thinking, which one you are on.

What actually changes

Almost nothing, and that is the difficulty. The kite behaves identically; your body does not. The leading foot swaps, the hand that steers swaps, and the shoulder you look over swaps with them. A rider who has only ever gone one way has built all three habits on one side and none on the other, which is why the weak tack feels like a different sport rather than a mirror of the same one.

WATCH

Look upwind before you change direction. A transition is a manoeuvre in traffic, and the person you cannot see is the one behind and above you.

KNOW

Practise the weak side when conditions are easy, not when they are hard. The temptation is the opposite — to spend the good day on the side that already works.

19

PART D · RIDING

RIDE UPWIND

The skill that separates a rider who needs a lift back from a rider who does not.

This is the one. C2SKY's own rental gate is riding upwind, self-rescuing and packing down alone — which is IKO Level 3 stated in operational language. Everything before this chapter is preparation for it.

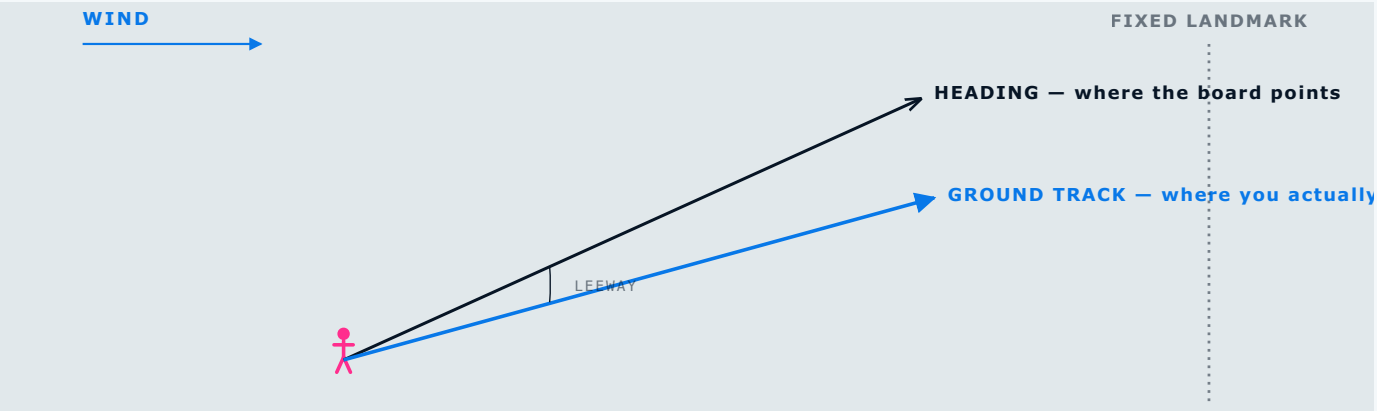
You cannot sail straight into the wind

There is a no-go zone either side of straight upwind that simply cannot be sailed. Progress upwind is made by riding a close reach — as close to the wind as you can hold — and zigzagging across it. It is the slowest point of sail, and it is worth every metre.

Upwind comes from the board

Kite low and forward, board hard on its edge, weight back. The kite is not pulling you upwind; the edge is converting the kite's pull into a direction the kite cannot go by itself. This is why IKO teaches speed control before upwind and not after.

FIG 19.2 TOP-DOWN · LEEWAY



Judge upwind progress against something on the shore that does not move. The board lies to you; the beach does not.

The board points higher than you travel. A current makes the gap bigger, and neither shows up on the board — only against a fixed mark ashore.

KNOW

The board points higher than you actually travel, and the gap is called leeway. Judge your progress against something fixed on the shore, never against where the board is pointing.

WATCH

One good tack and one bad tack is a net loss. Whatever you gain going one way, you give back going the other, and the beach recedes anyway.

PART D · RIDING

20 TRANSITIONS

Changing direction without stopping, and without the walk that follows a stop.

IKO states the Level 3 outcome as change of direction without stopping. The version taught there is the sliding transition, and it is deliberately the one where you shed speed rather than carry it.

The kite leads

Send the kite across the window before the board turns. If the board goes first you have a board pointing one way and a kite pulling the other, which is a short conversation that the kite wins.

01

Slow down on purpose.

Ease the edge, let the board settle. You are not carrying speed through this one.

COMMON MISTAKE

Arriving at the turn with everything you had, which is the power jibe and a Level 4 skill.

02

Redirect the kite.

Steer it up and across toward the other side of the window. Smoothly — a fast redirect here is a large power stroke.

COMMON MISTAKE

Sending it hard and being lifted mid-turn.

03

Change edge as the pull comes across.

Weight moves, board pivots, new edge engages.

COMMON MISTAKE

Looking down. Your body follows your eyes.

04

Ride away, then check upwind.

Your priority under the rules has just changed with your tack.

COMMON MISTAKE

Assuming the water behind you is as empty as it was thirty seconds ago.

KNOW

A jibe conserves speed — the front of the board goes through downwind. A tack turns through the wind and the board stops for an instant. They are different manoeuvres, not two words for the same one.

PART D · RIDING

21 TOESIDE & JIBE

Riding on the other edge, facing the other way.
Uncomfortable, then indispensable.

Toeside is riding with your weight on the toe edge, facing where your toes point. It is the mirror of everything you have built, which is why the first attempts feel like starting over — and why IKO pairs it with the jibe as a single skill, because the jibe exits toeside.

Why bother

Two reasons, and neither is style. Toeside is how you exit a jibe, so without it every change of direction ends in a stop. And it is the stance almost everything above Level 3 is built on — wave riding, foiling and most of the tricks assume you can hold it without thinking.

The jibe

A jibe turns the front of the board through downwind, which is why it keeps its speed: the board never points into the wind and never stalls. A tack does the opposite — it turns through the wind, and the board stops for an instant while it does. Both are useful. Only one of them lets you keep going.

WATCH

Everything from Chapter 17 has to be relearned on the toe edge. The edge bites differently, the weight sits differently, and the kite is less forgiving of a late correction.

KNOW

This is the last Level 3 riding skill before self-rescue, and the gate to almost everything in Level 4.

PART E · JUDGEMENT

22 RIGHT OF WAY

Eight rules, five kinds, and one duty that overrides all of them.

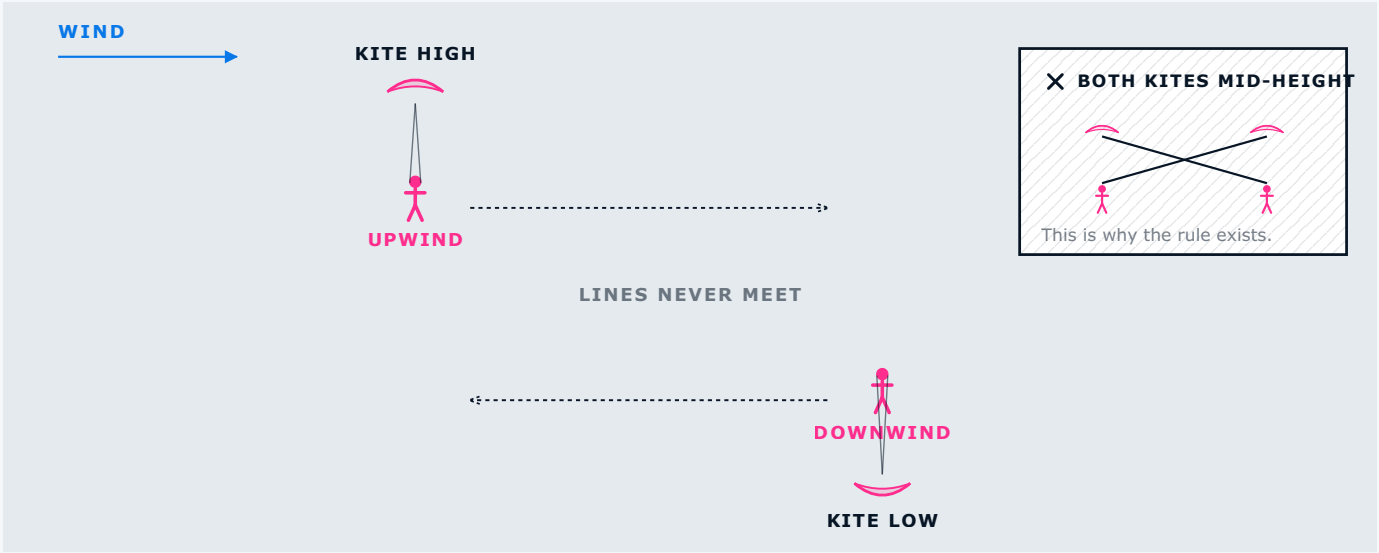
These rules are not a courtesy. They are how twenty people share a strip of water while attached to twenty-five-metre lines, and they only work if everyone is running the same set.

The rule above the rules

Avoid the collision. Right of way is not permission to hold a converging course into somebody who has not seen you. Everything below assumes you are already trying not to hit anyone.

When you meet

FIG 22.2 TOP–DOWN · PASSING



Passing upwind, kite high. Passing downwind, kite low. Agree it in a second, from thirty metres, without a word.

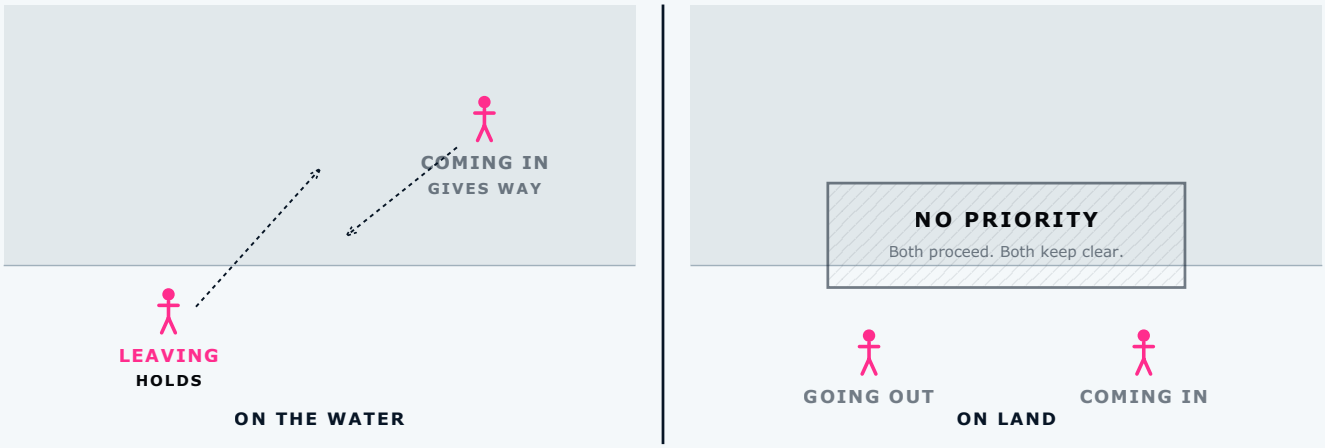
Starboard has priority. The rider with their kite on the right-hand side holds course, speed and heading so the other rider can plan around them.

Passing upwind, kite high. Passing downwind, kite low. This is the one you will use every session, and it is agreed silently at thirty metres.

Overtaking gives way. Two riders going the same way: the faster one behind avoids the slower one in front.

Coming and going

FIG 22.4 TOP–DOWN · TWO CASES



IKO puts it this way, and it is the version a C2SKY card is assessed against. Several club codes elsewhere state the water case the other way round.

The rider leaving the beach holds. The rider coming in gives way. On the sand nobody has priority at all.

On the water, the rider leaving the beach holds and the rider coming in gives way. On the sand, nobody has priority at all: both parties proceed and both keep clear of each other.

WATCH

Several club codes elsewhere state the water case the other way round. IKO's version is the one a C2SKY card is assessed against, and it is the version above — but if you have learned the opposite somewhere else, you now know why you and the other rider disagreed.

Who you give way to

A rider surfing a wave has priority over one jumping or going the other way.

Every other water and beach user has priority over you, and you pass *downwind* of them.

To jump you need fifty metres clear downwind and thirty upwind. If you do not have it, you do not jump.

DANGER

Downwind is where your kite and your lines go. Fifty metres is not a courtesy figure; it is roughly how far a rider travels when a jump goes wrong.

LOCAL NOTE

Local conventions sit on top of all of this and are almost never written down. Ask on the beach, on the first day, before you rig.

PART E · JUDGEMENT

23 SELF RESCUE

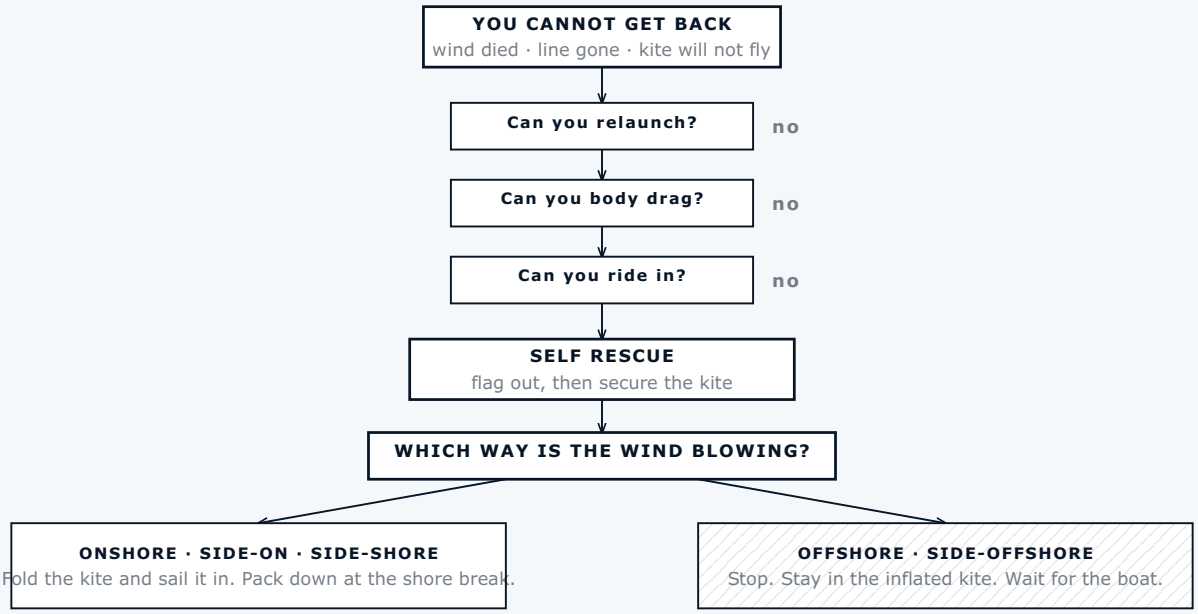
The kite is not coming up, and nobody is coming out. Everything from here is yours to do.

You will use this when the wind dies, when a line goes, when the kite will not relaunch, or in any situation where you can neither body drag nor ride back. It is the last chapter in Level 3 and the one that makes the rest of the level mean anything.

INSTRUCTOR CHECK

This is the highest-consequence procedure in the guide and reading it is not rehearsal. It is practised first in light wind on land or in shallow water with an instructor, then in deep water under supervision. The technique also depends on your safety system: it works with four-line re-ride and five-line systems, and IKO states plainly that a mini five-line system is not safe and will not do it.

FIG 23.1 FLOW · THE DECISION



The fork is the decision. Everything above it is the same; everything below it is not.

Four questions, then one fork that changes the whole procedure. In offshore wind you do not sail the kite — you secure it, stay with it, and wait.

Slow down before you start

You are almost certainly not in a hurry. Check the drop zone is clear, and then work deliberately — going fast makes every step harder and less safe, and it burns the energy you will need at the shore break.

Secure the kite

01

Let go of the bar, then fire the chicken loop release.

The kite depowers and flags out on one line. You are now connected only by the leash line.

COMMON MISTAKE

Firing the leash release as well. That gives the kite away.

02

Climb the line, hand over hand.

Palms down, thumbs up. Lie back with your feet up — it takes the tension out of the line and makes the whole thing easier.

COMMON MISTAKE

Wrapping a line around a hand, wrist, arm or leg. Never, under any circumstances.

03

Lock the safety line short against the bar.

Two half hitches, then a figure of eight back around the bar, then lock it again. Done properly, the safety line is now shorter than the others and the kite cannot power up.

COMMON MISTAKE

Leaving it loose, so the kite reloads while your hands are busy.

04

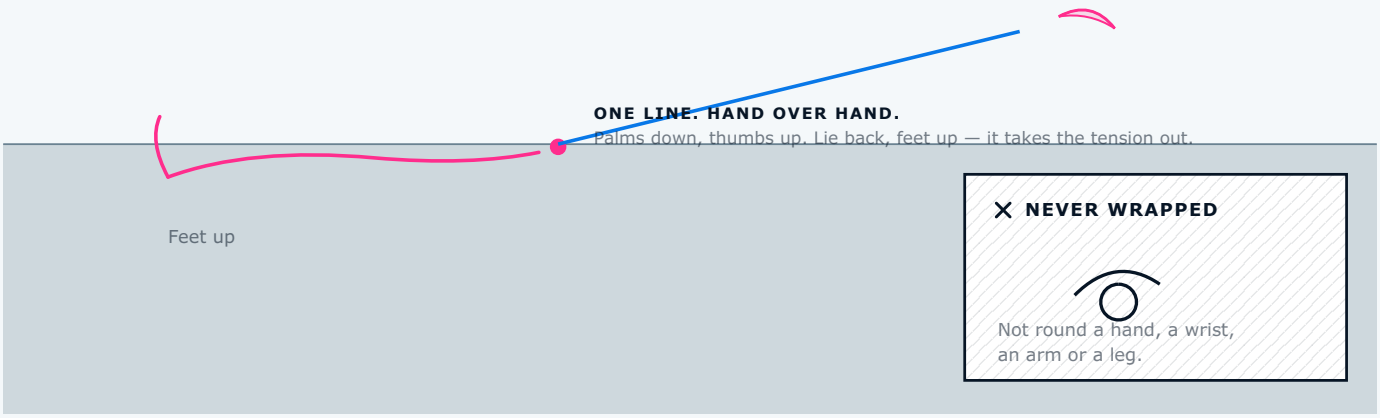
Gather the rest and take the leading edge.

Work up to the kite, hold it under your armpit or a leg so there is no line tension, and finish tidying. The leash stays connected.

COMMON MISTAKE

Letting the kite drift away while you deal with the lines.

FIG 23.3 IN THE WATER · TECHNIQUE

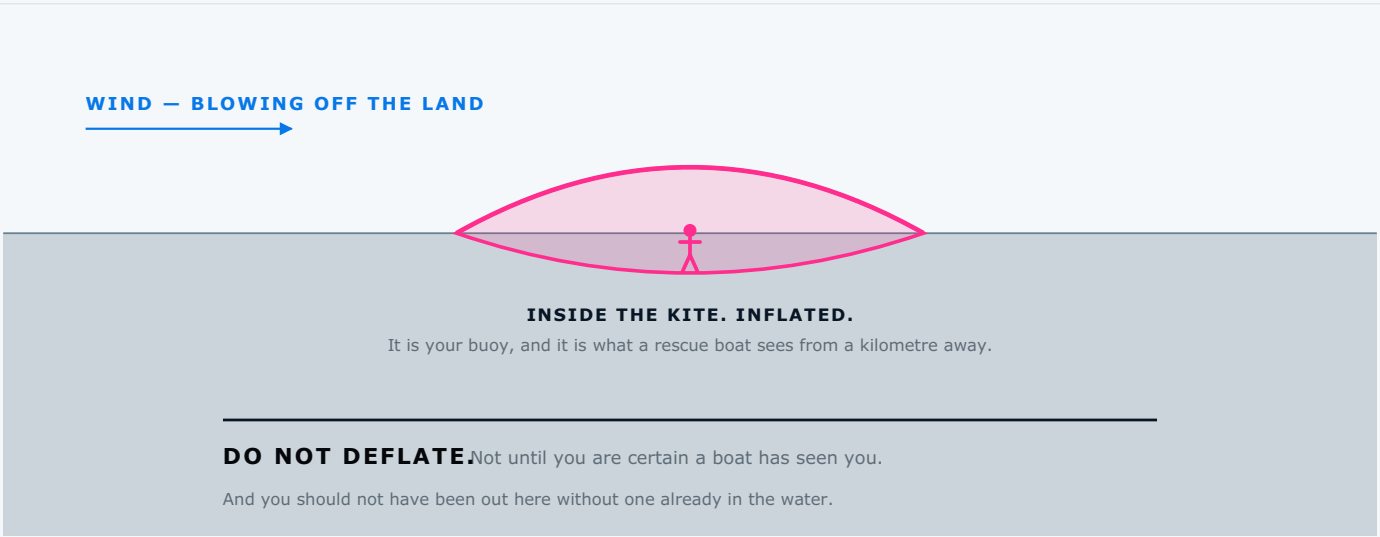


Two details that get lost every time this is retold: the hand position, and the fact that lying back with your feet up takes the load off the line before you start.

Then the fork

Flip the kite so the canopy faces upward — the “U” or smiling position — by folding one wingtip under and pushing the leading edge up with your shoulder. What happens next depends entirely on the wind direction.

In onshore, side-onshore or side-shore wind, fold one tip over the other and use the kite as a sail. Steer with an extended arm or leg, exactly as you did body dragging upwind. The kite still has its aerodynamic properties; your hand and body position control your speed and angle.



In offshore wind the self-rescue stops here. The kite stays inflated, you stay in it, and you wait. Packing down early costs you your flotation and your visibility at the same time.

DANGER

In offshore or side-offshore wind you do not sail. You stop at the secured kite, stay inside it, inflated, and wait for the boat. And the rule that should have prevented this: never ride in offshore wind without a rescue boat already in the water and somebody ashore who knows you are out.

Pack down — but not yet

DANGER

Never deflate before you are certain of rescue. In deep water an inflated kite is your buoyancy and the thing that makes you visible from a long way off. Deflating early costs you both at once.

When a boat has definitely seen you, or the breaking waves are close, then pack down: canopy up, strut hoses closed on a one-pump kite, deflate valve open, fold, take both tips, roll to the centre strut, squeeze the air out, and *close the valve again* so water stays out. Lay the bar over the centre strut and strap the bundle with your harness. It floats well enough to swim on.

The last twenty metres

At the shore break, release your leash but stay with the equipment until you reach the breaking waves. Once they break, push everything away from you into the wave and swim. The waves will deliver the bundle to the beach. If you are being picked up instead, hand the kite up leading edge first — the water drains out and the wind cannot reopen the canopy.

AWAITING LOCAL DATA · Awaiting instructor confirmation

Mui Ne shore-break behaviour, at which course rung deep-water self-rescue is taught, and whether boat cover is available. All three are instructor answers.

PART E · JUDGEMENT

24 CHOOSE YOUR KITE

There is no honest table that turns a wind speed into a kite size. There is a way of reasoning that gets you there.

Every manufacturer publishes a wind range chart, and every one of them labels it a rough guide. Duotone says “a rough guide only”. CORE says its stated ranges are indicative and set with reference to experts — meaning the published range assumes a rider considerably better than you. They are not being coy; the number genuinely depends on seven things at once.

What actually moves the answer

VARIABLE	PUSHES YOU
Heavier rider	Bigger — roughly one size per significant step
Lighter rider	Smaller
Gusty air	Smaller. Size for the gusts, not the average
Bigger board	Smaller — it planes earlier
Less experience	Smaller, and a narrower usable range than the chart implies
Rough water	Smaller
Different kite model	No transfer at all. A C-shape has a much narrower range than a bow

Compiled from Duotone, Cabrinha, CORE and Ozone. Where three of four manufacturers agree independently: when in doubt, go smaller.

DANGER

Do not use an oversized kite. An overpowered rider has fewer options every second the wind builds, and the decision is much harder to reverse in the air than on the sand.

KNOW

Control systems have a maximum design rider weight — Cabrinha states 120 kg for one of theirs — and release force can rise with wind strength. Both are worth knowing about your own gear.

AWAITING LOCAL DATA · Awaiting equipment confirmation

C2SKY quiver sizes and the rider-weight bands the school works to. Until these are confirmed this chapter teaches the logic and quotes no numbers of its own.

PART E · JUDGEMENT

25 WEATHER

Two mechanisms make almost all the wind you will ever ride. Learn which one you are relying on.

Kiteable wind comes from a seasonal or synoptic flow — trade winds, a monsoon — or from a local thermal sea breeze, or from both adding together. Knowing which one you are on tells you when it will build and when it will not.

The sea breeze

Land heats faster than water. Warm air over the land rises, cooler air comes in off the sea to replace it, and the result is a wind that builds through the day and fades in the evening. It is why so many spots are afternoon spots, and why the morning forecast can look wrong at three in the afternoon.

LOCAL NOTE

Mui Ne is both. The northeast monsoon sets the season; an afternoon thermal sea breeze sets the day. C2SKY's own analysis found that coarse reanalysis models, sited inland, systematically *understate* this spot — a real effect and a useful one to know before you write the day off.

Tide does four things

Changes the depth where you are teaching or launching.

Exposes obstructions that were not there an hour ago.

Changes the current.

Moves the usable beach, sometimes into somebody else's space.

DANGER

No thunderstorms. Not the edge of one, not the far side of one. Every manual in the source register says the same thing and none of them qualifies it.

WATCH

A model forecast and a measured station are different objects. Never quote one as the other — and check the gust column, not just the average.

AWAITING LOCAL DATA · Awaiting local confirmation

Mui Ne tide range and any longshore current. Neither is recorded in any C2SKY source.

PART F · MUI NE & INDEPENDENCE

26 RIDING MUI NE

A monsoon that sets the season and a sea breeze that sets the afternoon.

Two spots, twenty minutes apart, doing different jobs: the kite beach in front of the centre, and a flatter, shallower spot used for wingfoil and for first days on a board. Which one a session runs from is decided on the day, on the wind.

A working afternoon on the C2SKY beach. Every kite on the sand belongs to somebody deciding whether to rig it.

C2SKY

The season

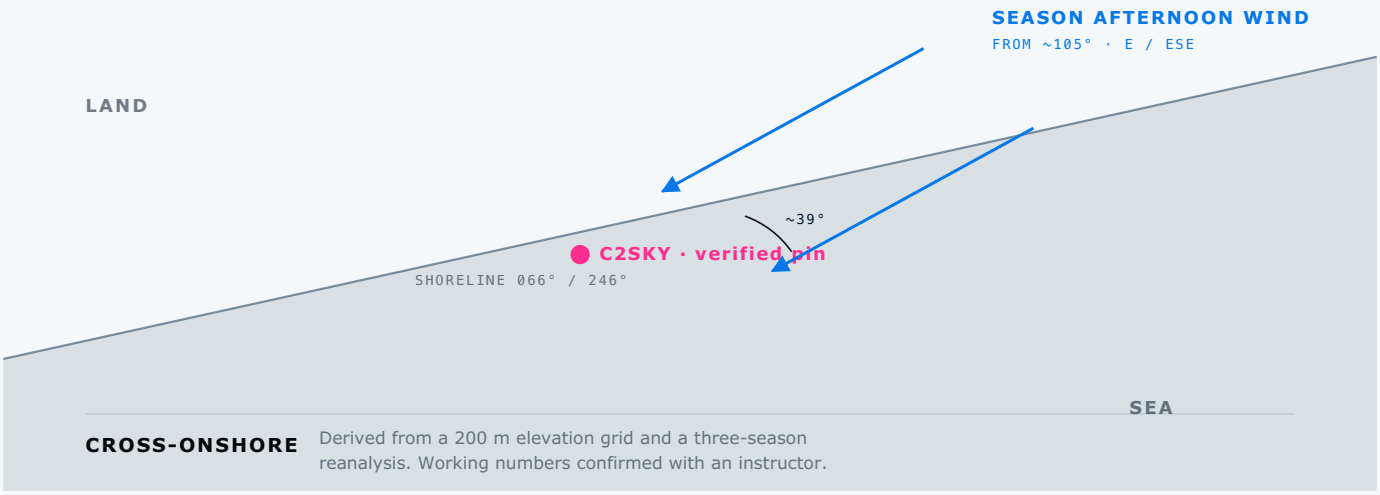
Kite season runs November to April; the wing spot runs roughly October to the end of April. May to September is the monsoon and it is genuinely quiet — that is weather, and saying so is more useful than a brochure.

The walk out. By this point every decision in Part A has already been made.

C2SKY

The wind, derived

FIG 26.1 TOP–DOWN · DERIVED GEOMETRY



The shoreline runs 066°/246° and the beach faces about 156°. Season afternoon wind arrives from about 105°, which puts it roughly 39° onto the beach — cross-onshore, which is what the school has always called it.

Two things here were derived rather than remembered. The coastline at the centre runs about 066°/246°, so the beach faces roughly south-south-east; that comes from a two-hundred-metre elevation grid around the verified C2SKY pin. Season afternoon wind arrives from about 105° — east to east-south-east — from three seasons of reanalysis at the same coordinates. Put together, the wind meets the beach at around 39°: cross-onshore, which is exactly what the school has always called it.

The same data shows the daily cycle plainly: about 3.6 knots at dawn, building through the middle of the day, peaking mid-afternoon, easing after six. That is a sea breeze, and it is why lessons are afternoon lessons.

WATCH

Those are modelled figures for the grid cell, not measurements at the beach, and the same analysis that produced them shows models read low at this spot. Treat the *direction* as solid and the *speed* as a floor.

LOCAL NOTE

The teaching water is waist-deep for the first days, and the first hour of a course is on the sand with a trainer kite. Nobody moves on until they can stop and depower on command.

AWAITING LOCAL DATA · Awaiting local confirmation

Working wind bearing in the school's own words, waist-deep extent, tide, shore break, current, downwind hazards, launch and landing areas, the beginner area, and local spot rules. This chapter publishes what has been derived and nothing that has been guessed.

PART F · MUI NE & INDEPENDENCE

27 PROGRESSION MAP

Twenty-five named skills, four levels, and an honest answer about hours.

Hours are what you buy. Levels are what you are assessed against. The two are related, but only loosely, and anybody who promises you the second in exchange for the first is selling.

The IKO ladder

LEVEL	CODES	WHAT IT MEANS
1 · Discovery	1A–1E	Spot assessment, setup, safety systems, first piloting, launch and land, self-land, packing
2 · Intermediate	2F–2I	Water relaunch, body drag with and without the board, board recovery, right of way, power strokes
3 · Independent	3J–3N	Speed by edging, upwind, sliding transition, toeside and jibe, self-launch and deep-water self-rescue
4 · Advanced	4O–4Y	Jumps, power jibe, rider and board recovery, signals, full ROW, equipment, weather and tides, aerodynamics

Level 3 is the meaningful one: it is what lets you ride alone and rent equipment at IKO centres worldwide. Minimum age for Discovery is 12.

How C2SKY's courses sit on it

COURSE	HOURS	TYPICAL DAYS	WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS
Taster	2	1	Can be completed within half a day
Discovery	7	3–4	Kite control, water start practice, first attempts on the board
Go For It	12	6	The typical point where students may be starting to ride
Real Deal	15	7–8	Working towards independence
Ultimate	18	8+	Working towards independence

Owner-confirmed ladder, August 2026. A one-hour refresh sits below the ladder as an add-on, not a rung.

KNOW

Riding is described from twelve hours and independence from fifteen to eighteen. Progress depends on your starting point, the wind you get, and the shape of the spot — IKO's own course pages carry the same caveat.

Every rung of that ladder is a C2SKY course, and the hours above are the school's own published figures.

Compare the courses →

AWAITING LOCAL DATA · Awaiting instructor confirmation

Whether C2SKY issues the IKO card and at which levels, and which IKO level each course rung typically reaches.

PART F · MUI NE & INDEPENDENCE

28 INDEPENDENT RIDER CHECKLIST

Independence has a definition. Two of them, from different directions, and they agree.

IKO's Level 3 and C2SKY's rental gate describe the same rider from different angles. IKO asks for riding in all directions including upwind, speed control, changing direction without stopping, riding among others under the rules, and self-rescue with a full pack-down in the water. C2SKY asks whether you can ride upwind, self-rescue and pack down alone. Same person.

0 OF 18 CONFIRMED

- [ ] I can assess a spot before touching any equipment. IR-01
- [ ] I can rig, check line lengths and run a full pre-flight, in the same order every time. IR-02
- [ ] I can operate and reset my own release system, and say what happens after each stage. IR-03
- [ ] I can launch and land for somebody else, and I know the signals. IR-04
- [ ] I can launch and land as the pilot, and self-land. IR-05
- [ ] I can relaunch the kite from the water, on both sides. IR-06
- [ ] I can body drag upwind and recover a lost board. IR-07
- [ ] I can control my speed with my edge rather than by depowering the kite. IR-08
- [ ] I can ride consistently in both directions. IR-09
- [ ] I can ride upwind. IR-10
- [ ] I can change direction without stopping. IR-11
- [ ] I can ride toeside and jibe. IR-12
- [ ] I have performed a full self rescue and pack down in deep water, with an instructor watching. IR-13
- [ ] I can ride among other people and apply the eight right-of-way rules. IR-14

- [ ] I can choose a kite size by reasoning rather than by looking one up. IR-15
- [ ] I can read a forecast critically and tell it apart from a measurement. IR-16
- [ ] I can decide not to ride. IR-17
- [ ] I can state my equipment's limits: rider weight, wind range, leash mode. IR-18

DANGER

Two of those rows are not established by reading, and never will be: operating your own release under load, and a full deep-water self-rescue. Both are rehearsed with an instructor or they are not true.

Edge against the bar, not against the kite. This is the whole of Part D in one frame.

C2SKY

Independence is conditional

Independent in fifteen knots on flat water is not the same as independent in thirty with waves. The list has an unwritten column: *in what conditions*. Widening that column is the rest of your kitesurfing life.

WATCH

Skills decay. After a long break, re-check the release and the self-rescue first — they are the two you will have lost and the two you will not notice you have lost.

KNOW

A card is evidence, not competence. C2SKY's own position is that a card helps and a short check on the water settles it either way.

THE OTHER FIELD GUIDES

THE PLACE

THE MUI NE FIELD GUIDE

Wind, coast and a twelve-kilometre strip

18 CHAPTERS · 77 PAGES IN PRINT

THE THEORY

WINGFOIL FIELD GUIDE

From the beach to independent flight

30 CHAPTERS · 109 PAGES IN PRINT

All three are free to read and free to download. See all three →

Ready to put this into practice?

Reading is the half you can do anywhere. The rest happens on the water, in waist-deep sand-bottomed shallows, with somebody watching.

BOOK A COURSE **SEE THE COURSES** **ASK ON WHATSAPP**

THEORY → LESSON → INDEPENDENCE

The water half happens with an instructor.

C2SKY KITE & WING CENTER · MUI NE · c2skykitecenter.com