

6 WAYS TO

IMPROVE
YOUR

Surfing

BY MADNESS SURFCRAFT



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INTRODUCTION

The goal of this eBook is to help you improve your surfing whether you are a novice learner or skilled surfer. When you shift your ambition towards mastering the basic skills and strategies we list, then you'll begin to catch more waves and surfing to your highest potential. In the coming pages we will go through many steps and practices that will improve your surfing experience.



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Mastering the Basic Surfing Fundamentals

Learning the basics and performing them in a controlled environment is relatively easy. We see few beginner and intermediate surfers trying to accomplish this. It seems to us that they're so focused on riding more waves, that they're overlooking the basics skills that allow them to achieve that goal. Mastering the basic surfing fundamentals performing them in sequence, on demand in any conditions and/or situation the ocean throws at you is a whole new challenge.

We created this eBook to help all level of surfers improve & ride more waves by focusing on the basic fundamental skills from stepping foot into the ocean until you step foot out. Do not focus about how well you ride waves (that will automatically get better), and start concerning yourself with mastering these next 10 tips. By practicing these tips together, your surfing will improve drastically in no time.



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Tip #1

Paddling Technique



If you want to surf better, you need to paddle better. A major aspect of effortless surfing comes down to how refined your paddling technique is. We paddle to get out to the lineup, to hold position and jockey with other surfers for position, to get back outside, and to catch waves. Regardless of how many years you've been surfing...As a matter of fact, the longer you surf, the more you realize how important it is to be a great paddler.

So care deeply about your technique. If you have your own coach, ask them how you can paddle better.

Ask for specific elements you can focus on to make sure your paddling is always improving. And don't accept the answer, "paddle harder" because the goal is to make your surfing effortless with proper technique, not full of effort. The moments of paddling hard should be reserved for very few occasions. The majority of your paddling should be slow to moderately paced and with meticulous attention to your technique to maximize your

The three elements of proper technique are:

1

Position

*Chin up /
Head straight*

2

From

*Keep your eyes in
the direction you
want to go*

3

Stroke

*Long deep stroke one
arm at a time while
cupping your hands*

Each element contains infinite subtleties and nuances, but for the self teacher, these are the three considerations you should focus on while paddling.

Tip #2 - Standing Up

As a beginner, how many times have you been told that you need to do your pop-up really fast? To call it a surfing misconception would be the understatement! What beginners don't realize, and many surf instructors fail to explain is that a truly expert "pop-up" is the result of a well practiced, slow, stand-up technique. A music teacher of mine once said to me, If you want to go fast, you need to go slow.



If you've been practicing fast pop-ups you need to clean the slate and slow down. Start in the privacy of your home, or somewhere where you won't feel self-conscious. Focus on standing up with control, balance, and good foot placement.

Instead of "popping", using speed and momentum to swing your feet beneath you, I'm asking you to control your weight as you stand up and position your feet.

Pressing up through your hands, placing your feet (lunging the front foot and sliding the back foot to position) on the center of your board, approximately shoulder width apart, And then slowly extending until you're standing, one foot in front of the other, knees bent, hands lifted to waist level, head pointing the direction you would be going.

You need to give yourself one thing to practice at a time, and if you try to practice your stand-up technique, while dropping into the open face of a cresting wave, chances are that you will be spending most of the time getting pitched through the air (danger!) and then tumbling under water, or just as bad, cultivating bad habits to avoid getting pitched (like getting to your knees first before planting your feet).

Learning how to do a proper take-off on the open face of a wave is more advanced and requires a few additional skills to execute successfully, the most fundamental of which is the stand-up technique. Hone your stand-up technique by diligently practicing on land and in the white water.

Tip #3 – Observe the Waves & Surroundings

This is the ultimate goal as a surfer. To look at and read waves without having to think about anything else. In order to achieve this state and still use the correct skills to catch waves, your fundamentals need to become second nature. We call this, fundamental fluency. Look at the waves when you first arrive at the beach. Look while you paddle out. Look while you're wiping out. Look when you're scared. Look when you're confident. Look through squinted eyes when you're getting splashed in the face. Look at the wave... Look at the lip; Look at the pocket; Look at the shadow a cresting wave creates on its own face; Look at the trough; Look at the shoulder; Look down the line; Look at the shape of the face; Look at the peak of the wave; Look at the section you're riding towards; Look at the next section after that; Look at the waves you miss; Look at the re-entry as you're starting a cutback; Look at how waves break differently at different surf spots on the same day; Look at how they break in different areas of one surf spot; Look at how they stand tall, but don't break sometimes; Look how they seem flat and then jump up and lurch. Look at the wave develop; Look at the wave back off; Look at the set of waves approaching; Look how that set remains stacked and developing all the way in; Look how the peak shifts down the line as the wave comes in; Look how that one tubed...the lip went through the air from crest to trough. Get the picture?

Our secret we cannot stress enough to is always be aware of every wave and every moment in the water from paddling out, to catching waves, to getting tumbled over the falls and held under. This will teach you more than anything about the ocean and about surfing fundamentals, oh and always look in the direction you want to go!



Step #4

Board Control

Have you ever been in waves where you felt you needed to bail your board to avoid getting killed? Have you ever been in waves where the board got ripped out of your hands? These are two clear signals to a beginner that they are in waves above their level.

If you don't have the technique or skill to manage your equipment in the surf, turn yourself towards the beach, head in, and wait for smaller days. You'll feel terrible, and surfing will be ruined for you if you are responsible for the injury of someone else because you couldn't control your board. Part of being a good surfer is knowing and respecting your limits. Inability to control your board is a clear sign your pushing it too far.

The 4 actions regarding board control cover the absolute, most basic things a beginner should learn at the start of their journey learning to surf. These skills allow you to move around in the water efficiently and with total control of your board, and are, without exception, prerequisites to learning how to catch and ride waves.

Without these skills you will feel helpless, intimidated by waves, and scared of other surfers, not to mention anxious and flustered every time you try to catch a wave. That is no way to begin your surfing journey. We control our board with a variety of turning skills and techniques that allow us to stop from any position, and get through breaking waves efficiently. The skills are basic, but when mastered will loyally serve you and connect the dots of your surfing so that you can move through the water gracefully from one wave to the next.



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Tip #5

Catch More Waves

Beginners- Start in the white water - If you're a beginner, you're a beginner! Catch white water and catch tons of them per session. This is far more noble than the beginner who skips this step and goes to the outside to either struggle to catch waves or get pushed in by someone. The idea that you need to be catching waves before they break as a brand new beginner is preposterous. It requires awareness of a number of other skills/principles/techniques and proficiency to be done successfully. As you've definitely realized by now, the theme of this book is to use basics to improve, not shortcuts.

Practice the basics by catching tons of waves after they've broken in order to build a foundation that supports the next level, catching unbroken waves. When you practice in the white water you'll have endless opportunities and little to zero competition in catching them. The white water is where surfers take their first steps. Which reminds me of an expression, "learn to walk before you run"

Intermediate- As you transition from the inside zone of the lineup in the white water, to the outside where waves haven't broken yet, it can be easy for you to turn and try to catch any wave you see, but there is an important principle that will make catching unbroken waves easier. Taking off from the peak describes the concept of positioning yourself in front of the peaking, or cresting part of the wave, as opposed to the round, undeveloped shoulder. When you aim to paddle for the wave with the peak behind you, you won't catch the wave...the wave will catch you. Start practicing this concept on small waves where consequences are low and better surfers generally pass up for bigger days and work your way up in size of wave and crowd.



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Tip #6 - Go Surf

you should surf all the damn time, whenever you can. Surf with people who are better than you. Surf tiny little micro waves because they're more difficult to catch and ride. Surf sloppy waves because they're so dynamic and ever changing they'll make you a better wave reader.

Surf when it's closing out to practice your take-offs, kick outs, and the rest of your 101 fundamentals. Surf when it's mushy, it'll force you to draw new lines and find different ways to maintain speed. Surf when the wind is onshore, because all the spoiled surfers won't be out.

Surf when it's raining. Were you worried about getting wet? Surf when you only have 45 minutes. 45 minutes is better than 0 minutes. Mind surf waves that you're watching from the beach. It's proven. Mental practice makes you better. Go surfing even if you can't catch waves yet, maybe this session will be your first time. Get out there in the water on your surfboard and train.

Do your very best to practice these skills in all conditions because it's the only way to improve your surfing, and be wary of the spoiled surfer who turns away and grumbles that "conditions aren't good enough". Don't let that surfer taint your stoke. Remind yourself that almost all conditions are good for beginners, except when the waves are too big. You should be surfing in everything, especially poor conditions and tiny waves, because those are the times when you'll really be challenged and most surfers won't want to partake.



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