

How to do a Barefoot Toe-Hold by Michelle Lillie

Hey there Ski Bums! I hope everyone is set and ready for the new season! To start it off with a bang, how about giving this trick a try? This toe-hold trick is appropriate for all intermediate barefooters out there. However, before you head out on the water to give it a try, ask yourself these questions:

1. Can you ride up and down the lake on a solid one-foot stance?
2. Can you touch the toe strap with your toes and hold it in place?

If you feel comfortable doing the above exercises and you are feeling confident, you should definitely give the toe-hold a try! Your first toehold should be done on your strongest foot, meaning whatever foot you feel most comfortable lifting is the one you should put into the toe strap first.



Follow these steps

1. Make sure the boat driver is going at a speed that is the same or a bit faster than your one-foot speed.
2. To get in the right position to attempt the trick, bend your knees, keep your head up and lower the handle towards the water.
3. Make sure to *always* keep your head up. Remember this famous saying: “look down, go down!!!”



4. Now that you are in the right position, start to slide your strong foot forward. *Do not lift it just yet*; slide it up slowly. If you make an immediate lift you might throw yourself off balance.
5. When your foot is forward and you feel strong, make sure your body position remains the same as you begin to bring your foot up to the handle.
6. Maintaining your position, bring your foot up to the toe strap. You might want to move your chest forward a little to help put your foot in the strap but keep your head up and knees bent while moving forward. Now that your foot is in the toe strap

comfortably, keep holding onto the handle and follow the next steps!

The release of the handle

1. Some people like to continue to practice putting their foot in and out of the toe strap without letting go of the handle. I recommend that you do that **ONLY** if you feel unstable. I think if you are a strong barefooter and you have the right body position you should just go for it!!!
2. When your foot is snug in the foot strap, keep your body forward slightly and slowly release your hands from the handle, keeping your head up at all times!! If your body was in the right position and you allowed your body to come forward slightly you should be riding with your toe in the strap successfully!

Sometimes the first few times you try this trick, your foot will slide out of the strap; it is usually because you are not flexing your toes enough. This trick takes practice and confidence. Do not get frustrated if you cannot do it right away; remember, even if you are getting your foot into the strap and releasing the handle but falling, you are still having lots of success!

In a tournament the toehold is worth 100 points so be confident, keep your head up high, and ski for fun, not work! That’s all for now! Keep in touch!

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