

## Hints and Tips

Monday, 06 August 2007

With any sport there are always faux pas, such as skating mongo footed (pushing with your front foot), and snowboarding is no exception. In fact the number of things that people do wrong in snowboarding seems to out number any other sport. Be it dumb grabs, poor fashion, or foolish tricks, not a day goes by without some one being guilty of looking dumb. I believe the original intention of trick tips, which pollute so many pages of reputable snowboard publications, was to inform the herbs how to do certain tricks. Where these segments have gone wrong is that no kid who reads them in hopes to learn that cool new trick is reading to learn Kinger Flips, or even rodeos. The only tricks that should be explained here are frontside 360's and maybe ollies. Anyone who's good enough to do any of the higher level tricks doesn't need to have each step of them spelled out. Beyond learning the tricks, there are many things in snowboarding you might not be able to figure on your own. Maybe these little things are what trick tips should zero in on. Since no 'real' magazine will do it, I'm taking this opportunity to do it myself, mainly because I cringe every time I see some idiot looking so uncool off a rock star kicker.

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Bend your knees

This is the absolute simplest part of snowboarding. It makes sense, if your knees are bent you have more control, and can better absorb impact from all the little bumps on the trail, and you are less likely to blow them out. Oh yeah, and you can't turn with your legs straight! Perhaps, you've come up with a method of scraping out turns without bending your legs, but let me assure you, it looks foolish. If you are guilty of not bending your knees, you probably don't know, but do this little exercise. When you are riding pay attention to how you are standing on the board if your knees are locked, you're doing it wrong. If you determine this much, then make sure to bend your knees. If your muscles don't burn at the end of the day, you still aren't doing it.

Fix your stance

"But nothing is wrong with my stance."

Your stance sucks if your toes are pointing together, this is called pigeon toed and it is very uncool, as well as something which makes it nearly impossible to ride well. If you're just starting to snowboard, you probably want to learn how to turn. If you've ever seen someone on hard boots, you notice that they ride very sharp angles on their front and back feet. Why? Because it makes it super easy to turn. What this means for you, is that you should ride angles on both feet until you feel totally comfortable carving. Once you feel you are ready to ride switch, you can straighten out your back foot or angle it slightly back. This called riding duckfoot, and although it went through a brief period of being shunned, it is again socially acceptable, and will make it easier to land and ride switch. However, it is okay to keep your angles, as most halfpipe pros do too.

Never under estimate the power of forward lean

If you're unsure what forward lean is, or what it does, you're probably not riding with enough. Forward lean is more than just Burton socks, it is what makes riding with your knees bent and holding an edge up the backside wall possible. If your

still riding low backs, you probably don't have forward lean adjusters, and you fall under the uncool catagory, cause low backs SUCK, but if you're riding any recently made high back, that plastic thing on that back is a forward lean adjuster. Crank it down so the backs of your bindings are not at a 90 degree angle from the board, and you'll be set. A warning, forward lean hurts the first few days, so slowly increase the amount every time you ride. You may find you like a different amount for riding halfpipe and freeriding. You make the call.

### Ditch the baggy pants

Fashion has this nasty tendancy of changing, and if you're still rocking the 1992 stylings of size 48 pants, you need to get out more. Even if you claim not to care how you look, you should, cause there is something wrong with looking retarded. Try picking up a snowboard magazine, here you'll find example of all the lastest fashion. While you might not have the ducketts to go out and buy all the new Special Blend gear, Army Navy Stores and the Salvation Army can provide cost effective street ware alternatives. A good idea is to spend a decent amount of money on good outer ware, because if you shop wisely it can last you for years, and you'll be much happier if you're warm up on the hill. Whatever you do though, I urge you to stay away from Camo. That is a trend which must DIE NOW!

### Don't do stupid grabs

So you're ready to hit jumps. The first thing you want to learn are strait airs. A strait air is any trick that doesn't involve rotation. The best way to stay balanced in the air off a jump is to grab, but whatever you do, don't grab tindy. This is a very natural grab (between your back binding and your tail), so it can be enticing to do as a safety grab, but trust me, you should put the effort into grabbing between your bindings cause tindy's are just plain wrong. Other no no grabs include tail fish (in between your back foot and your tail) and girl methods, (a method which is kicked straight back, no tweak). If you do any of these grabs, don't expect any high fives from your bros, as they should in all reality, be embarrassed to be seen with you.

### If you can't clear a jump, don't try to spin off it

Makes sense right? Nothing is more painful to watch than someone barely even pop off the lip of a jump before hucking around a 360, and then crashing about 5 feet after the take off into the flat of the table. Also, if you're pre rotating 270 degrees on the take off, making your actual rotation in the air 90 degrees, it does not constitute a 360, so don't expect props, dude.

### Learn straight airs before you learn rodeos

Rodeos are probably one of the easiest and most popular tricks right now. The reason they are so easy, is that the rotation is fairly natural, so what happens is a lot of kids with no comprehension of getting hurt will be able to huck around a rodeo, when they don't even have enough control to do a straight air.# Don't believe me? You obviously didn't make it out to Hood this summer, where every kid could do a perfect stomped rodeo, yet no one could do a method. Rodeos are a cool trick, but if they're your only trick you are not.

## Don't vibe

A few years back, snowboarding was very different than it was today. There were only so many snowboarders on the mountain, and you, as a snowboarder, knew everyone of them. If someone new came riding, you made it a point to take runs with them and get to know them. There was always some vibing going on, but at least you knew what the person was about before you decided you hated them. Now, the vast popularity of the sport of snowboarding has made it impossible to know everyone on the hill, but the least you can do, if you happen to get on a lift with another snowboarder, even if they aren't rocking a brand new forum snowboard, is say Hi.! It's always nice to have a good conversation, make those high speed quads move that much faster. You gotta figure you both have snowboards on your feet, so must you have something in common. Basically, just be civil to everyone, this isn't high school, it's snowboarding. Snowboarding is fun