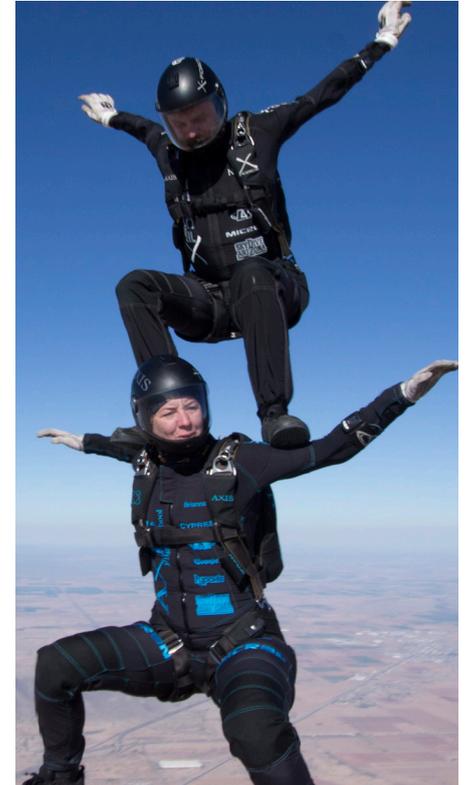


FOUNDATIONS OF FLIGHT | MIXED FORMATION SKYDIVING RANDOM F (TOTEM)

Brought to you by Niklas Daniel and Brianne Thompson of AXIS Flight School at Skydive Arizona in Eloy. Photos by David Cherry. Information about AXIS' coaching and instructional services are available at [axisflightschool.com](http://axisflightschool.com).



**Move Description**

Both performers have identical headings in the head-up orientation. One performer makes contact with the soles of both feet on the upper arms of the other performer, right foot to right arm and left foot to left arm.

**Execution**

In any formation that involves multiple levels such as this one, the lower flyer risks burbling the higher flyer. Communication is also difficult in this formation because both performers are facing in the same direction. The lower flyer is considered outfacing with respect to the center of the formation, and it is this flyer's responsibility to keep looking over a shoulder to ensure good communication with the top flyer.

**Lower Flyer:**

The lower flyer should attempt to hold still to present a solid landing platform for the top flyer. In addition, the bottom flyer should slow down the fall rate (float) a little once the top flyer makes contact.

This is to ensure that the top flyer's feet stick to the bottom flyer's shoulders by making solid and stationary contact simultaneously with both feet. If the jumpers don't control the fall rate in this manner, the formation typically does not build well, becomes wobbly and ultimately breaks apart. The bottom flyer should wing her elbows out and keep her arms solid, anticipating the contact.

**Top Flyer:**

Although the bottom flyer is not taking grips with the hands, solid formation-flying fundamentals are still key to pulling this off successfully. First achieve the correct level before closing the distance, and only then make contact with the other flyer. This will help ensure that the contact will be light.

The top flyer can prevent crashing into the lower flyer by focusing on flying his feet at the level between the top of the lower flyer's head and top of her shoulders. This

prevents the top flyer from coming in too high or steep and thus lessens the risk of head and neck injury to the lower flyer.

**Helpful Hint**

In competition, it is the team's responsibility to ensure that the video is scoreable by clearly presenting the correct formations and inter, as well as complete separation between points, to the videographer. The formations do not need to be perfectly symmetrical, but the team must perform them in a controlled manner and close them with stationary contact (meaning the soles of the top flyer's feet may not slide around on the bottom flyer's upper arms). For more information, refer to Chapter 5 of the USPA Skydiver's Competition Manual.

*The authors intend this article to be an educational guideline. It is not a substitute for professional instruction.*