

CapeFearSurfKite

Learning to Kiteboard
Carolina Beach, Wrightsville, Surf City, NC

www.CapeFearSurfKite.com

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Introduction to Carolina Beach, NC

Learning to kiteboard: In this lesson plan we will teach and talk about the specifics of Carolina Beach, which is located near Wilmington, NC. We will be teaching about what makes our area so unique and safe for learning to kiteboard here.

Our curriculum will be broken down into 3 main sections at the beginning.

Lesson One - Classroom, Wind, Weather, Area Overview, Equipment, Launching, Flying

Lesson Two - Basic of Flying, Launch, Power Strokes, Body Dragging, Self Rescue

Lesson Three - Pop-up (w/Board), Water Starts, Edging, Staying Up-Wind, Transitions, etc.

Instructor Introduction, Lesson One, 3-4 hrs



Lead Instructor: Drew Rathgeber

From San Clemente, California, he grew up on the beaches in Southern California, a competitive surfer, ultra-marathon long-distance swimmer, and water polo player in his youth—an all-around extreme water nut!

PASA Kite Instructor Certified, CPR Certified,

Professional Air Sports Association (PASA)

PASA (the Professional Air Sports Association) is a non-profit (501(c)(6)) organization, founded in 1997 and charged with setting up standards for the operation of flight schools and certifying kiteboarding, hang-gliding, and paragliding flight schools (in both solo and tandem instruction) that operate in compliance with those standards. PASA's board is made up predominantly of hang-gliding and paragliding industry leaders as well as industry leaders from kiteboarding.

PASA established standards, best practices, and standard operating procedures for kiteboarding instruction during the infancy of the sport and continues to provide certification of kiteboarding schools and instructors. The certification program provided by PASA has allowed kiteboarding schools to get and maintain liability insurance.

URL: <https://www.pasaschools.org/kiteboarders/>

Level 1 Kiteboarder

- Determine wind direction, speed, and quality to assess safety.
- Understand the requirements for a good launch area.
- Understand the rules of the road with other kites.
- Set up equipment independently and safely and perform a pre-flight check.
- Use and reset all safety features on the equipment.
- Perform self-rescue techniques to disarm the kite and get to shore with gear.
- Perform a safe launching and landing of the kite.
- Execute kite water re-launches.
- Body Dragging in control of direction

Level 2 Kiteboarder

- All of the skills listed in criteria for Level 1 Kiteboarder
- Meteorology knowledge for risk management decisions. Go, No-Go.
- Perform water start on the board and maintain control of the kite and board solo.
- Control their speed with advanced kite and board handling.
- Work the board and kite in harmony for extended rides.
- Can perform basic turns and transitions.

Level 3 Kiteboarder

- Using a trim strap and loop to adjust 4-line kite power intake.
- Consistently going upwind.
- Perform advanced turns and transitions under power.
- Maintain control in most wind conditions.
- Perform simple jumps.

Weather Overview | Carolina Beach, NC

What makes Carolina Beach? First off, minimal crowds, shallow bottoms.

- Northeast wind quality (Nor'easter, Gusty)
- Westerly wind quality (Gusty)
- Southerly flow wind quality (Safest, best wind, & most consistent in summer)
- Easterly wind quality (So-so winds, switching launch site to boat ramp)
- Consistent summer S, SW, thermal winds.

Launch & Landing Sites for Carolina Beach

In the next few slides, you will see map details of launch landing sites.

- The “Basin” Fort Fisher Boat Ramp
- State Park Recreation Area
- Tennessee Avenue (Tiki Bar)
- Wrightsville Beach
- Surf City

Map Layout: The Basin, Fort Fisher Boat Launch

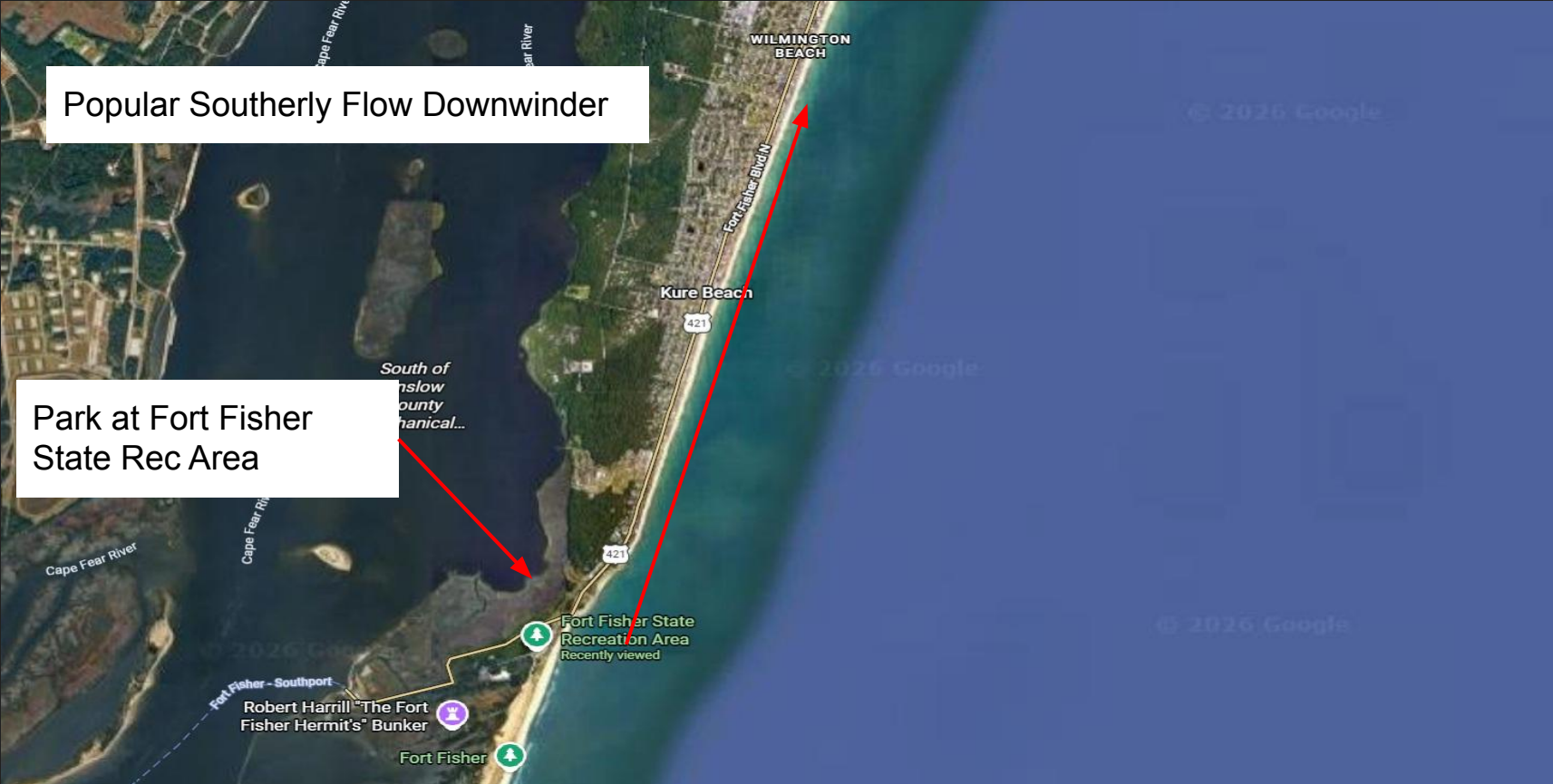


Fort Fisher State Recreation Area (Ocean Side)



For south and southeast winds.

Local's Favorite Downwinder



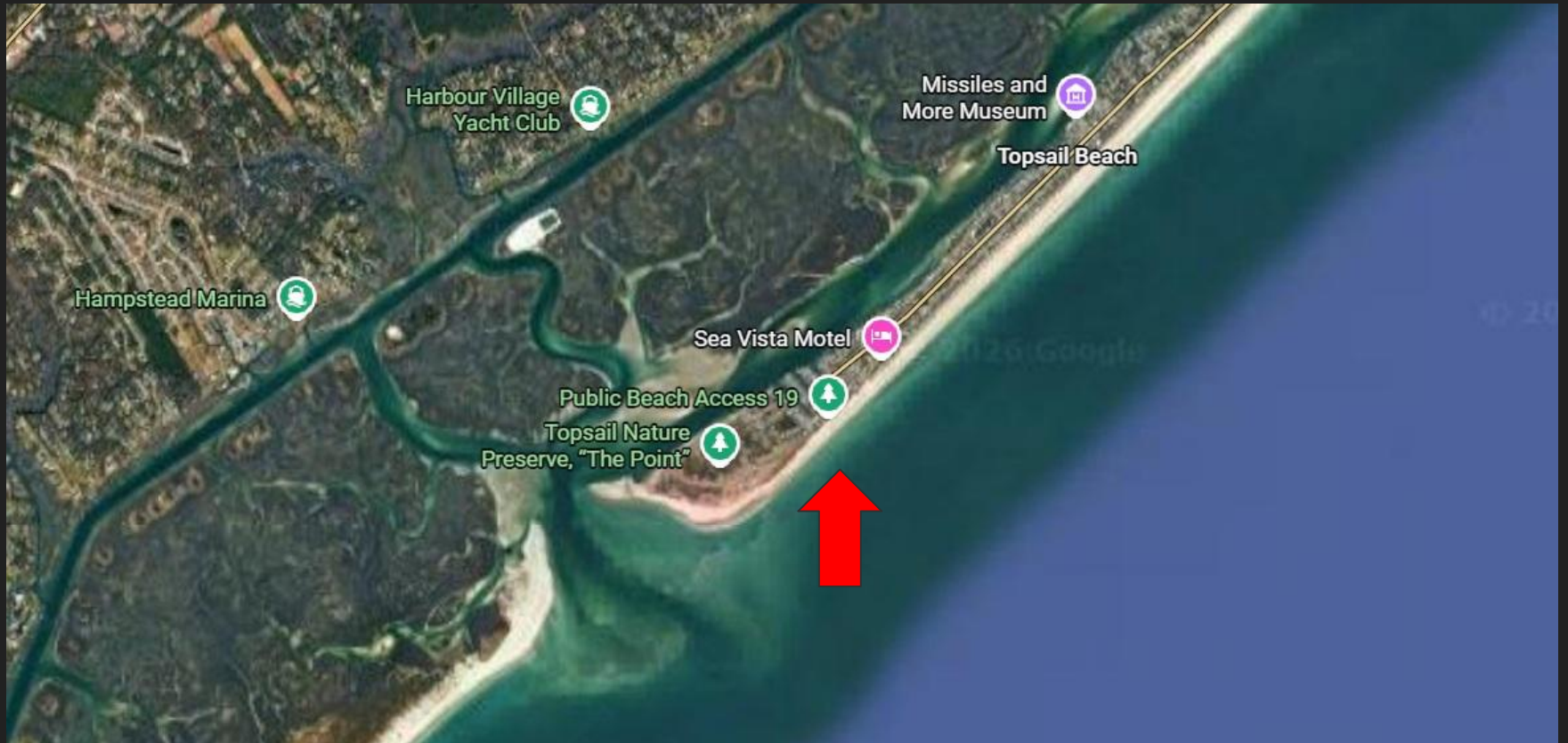
Popular Southerly Flow Downwinder

Park at Fort Fisher State Rec Area

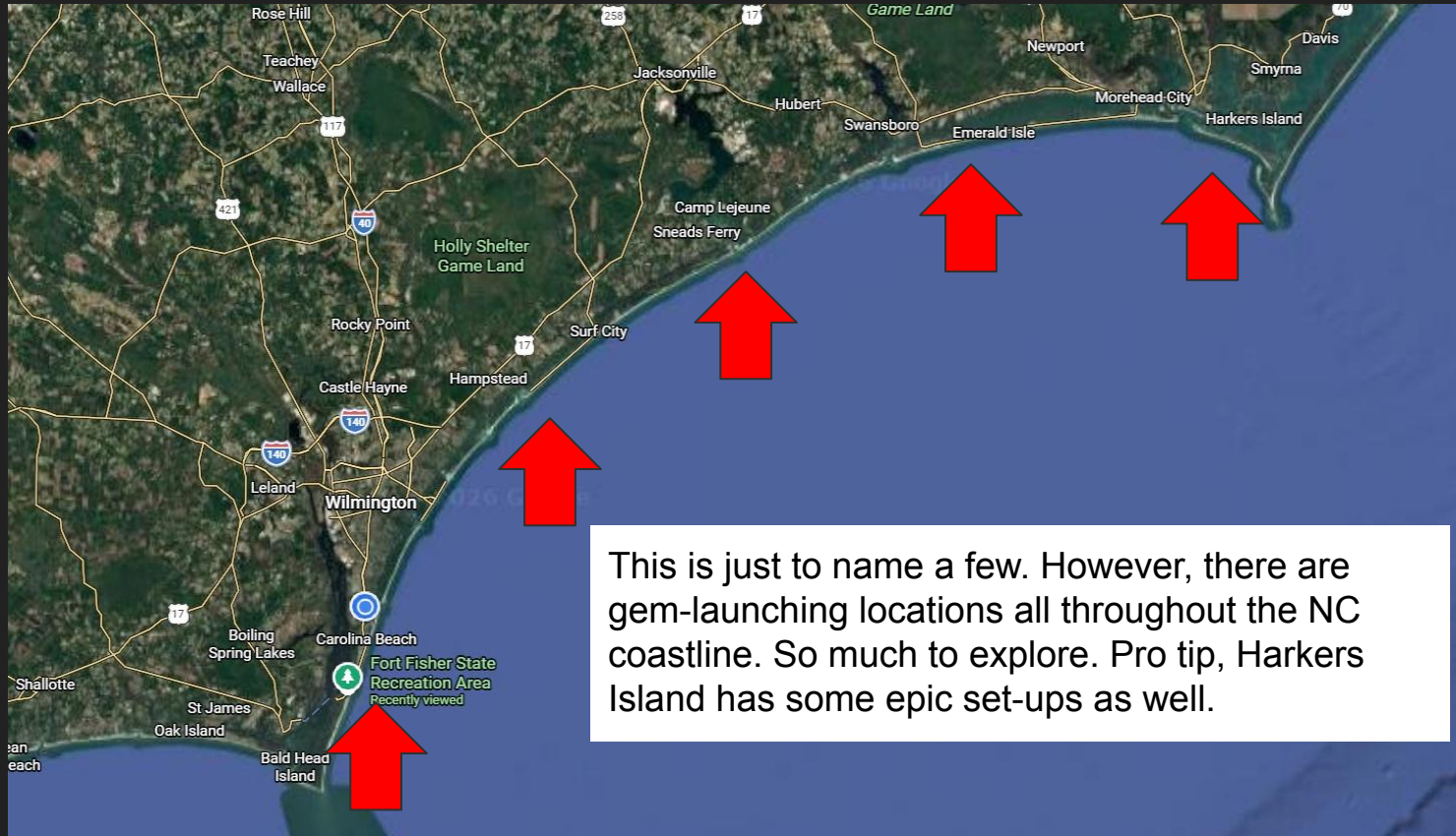
Wrightsville Beach, South End



Surf City, Public Beach Access 19



North Carolina

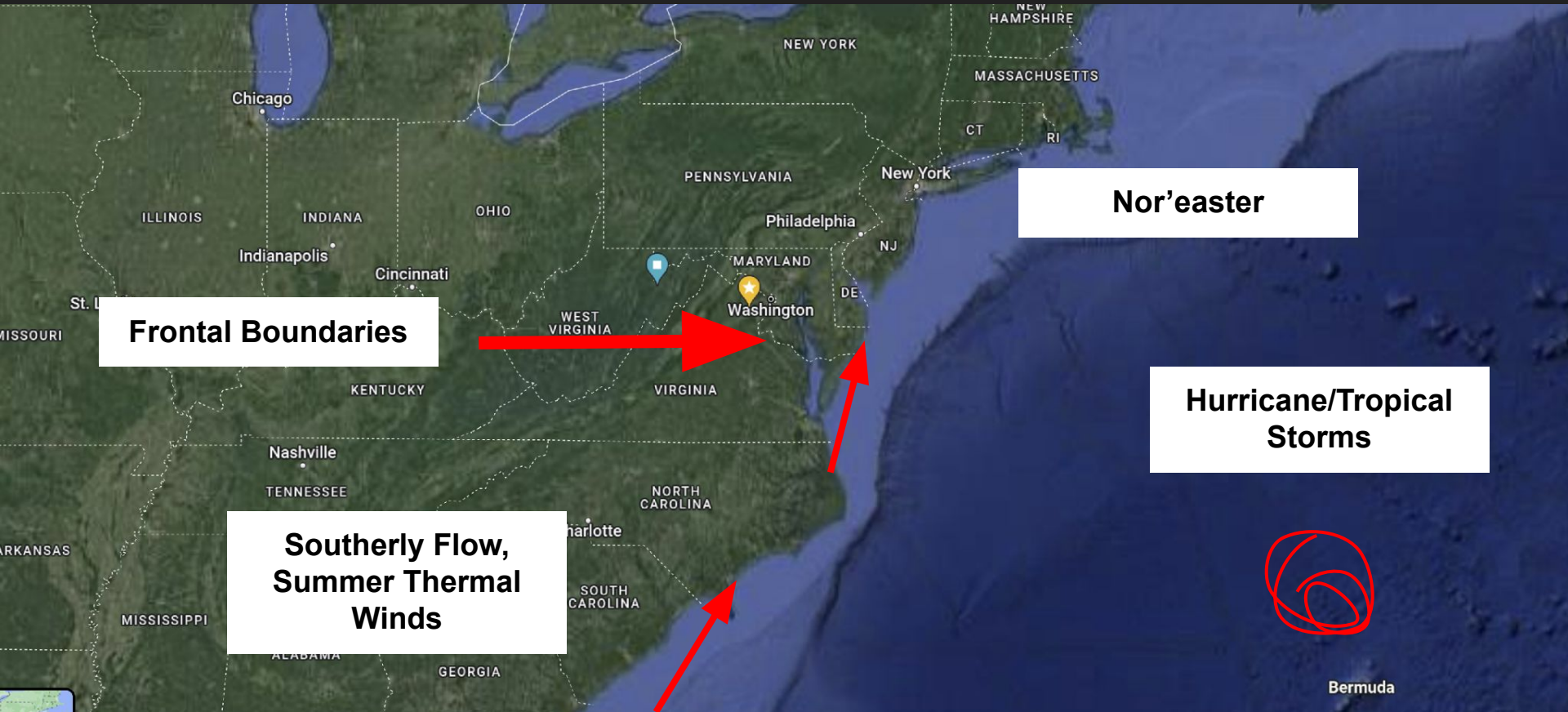


This is just to name a few. However, there are gem-launching locations all throughout the NC coastline. So much to explore. Pro tip, Harkers Island has some epic set-ups as well.

Safe Launch Area

- Launch free from debris & building wind shadowing.
- Clean winds, pointing out no building or wind shadowing.
- Side-shore and side-onshore; also discuss UNSAFE offshore.
- When learning preferred winds of 15 mph with a max 25 mph gust variation.
- No power lines within 300-400 ft of our training area.
- Reiterate the caution to keep feet and kite from beach seashells and oysters.
Always when kiting bayside, you must have booties to avoid oyster bed(s).

Weather | Frontal Boundaries, T-Storms, Southerly Flow



Weather Apps

- Windfinder (Good map overview)
- Windy (Good hourly accuracy)
- SurfCaptain.com (Wave height, winds direction, water temps, forecasting)

My personal preference is WaveCaptain.com; good friend Micah Sklut, who is a native East Coast surfer and ex-Surfline.com forecaster, has this one dialed in. Personal observation with weather apps. Quite often due to the thermal part (warming of the day), you can't depend on them 100%. Quite often if it's forecasted 13-15 mph, I'll go physically check, and it will be 15-20 mph.

Wind Window Discussion

- 12 o'clock not the safest.
- Walking around 11 or 1 o'clock
- Landing 9 or 3 o'clock
- Edge of power zone
- Power zone
- Safe flying techniques

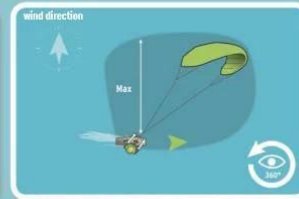


Rules of the Road

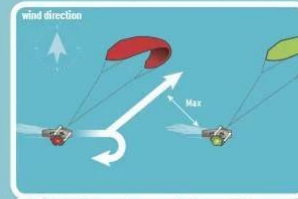
Kitesurfing - Right Of Way Rules



1 The kiter entering the water has right of way over the kiter coming in.



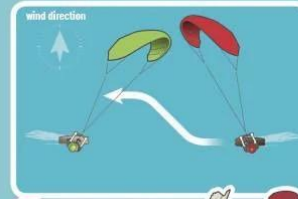
2 Keep a safe zone downwind and always look around before changing direction or before doing any maneuver (jump)



3 The kiter who wants to overtake must give way while keeping a safe distance



4 The kiter surfing a wave has right of way over other kites



5 The starboard kiter (right hand forward) has right of way. The port kiter (left hand forward) must give way



6 The starboard kiter stays UPwind and brings his kite UP. The port kiter goes DOWNwind and brings his kite DOWN.



Equipment Overview

- Pumps
- Leash (short vs. long)
- Life Jack/Impact Vest
- Sand Bags (safe practice)
- Helmet
- Bars (different sizes)
- Harness (spreader bar)
- Kites (different sizes, weights, and wind speeds)
- Self-Launching Tether (always have available for safety)
- Cell Phone (emergency)
- Reef Booties (Protect feet from seashells and oyster beds)
- Cold water, wetsuits, booties, dry suits

Lesson One: Arriving at the Site

We will drive/boat to our launch site. Go over terrain, trees, & water hazards. The launch site could be one of many options depending on wind conditions. Also, the site could range from a local sandbar to a park drive-on. Either land, jet-ski assistance, or a jet-ski assist depending on the package purchased.

Review launch site—what makes it safe, etc. Point out trees and sandbars, why our spot is dedicated to teaching, and why it's so safe!

Lesson One, Unpacking Gear

- Review proper unpacking
- Board/Bar/Kite
- Sand Bag
- Laying the kite down (LE into the wind)
- Kite Pumps, Harness, Helmet, Impact Vest, Bar
- Setting up Tether

Pumping Up Kite/Kite Set-Up

- Make sure the main valve is perfectly clean of dust and sand.
- Proper PSI, pump up kite with LE into the wind, pump tied to kite
- Bridle Inspection
- Properly flipping the kite over softly to NOT damage the kite on seashells or rocks.
- Properly unwinding of lines/bar set-up (walking the lines)
- Setting up lines on correct pigtail (high, medium, low)
- Centerline set-up and attaching.
- Before launch - one more final line inspection and connection points
- Go/No-Go decision-making process, re-evaluating all conditions!

Harness Set-Up

- Seat Harness vs. Waist Harness
- Proper size and fitting
- Spreader bar options on market (no-roll up version)
- Leash options (short vs. long)

Launching the Kite

TANDEM



- Friend walks kite to edge of wind window (NEVER DIRECTLY DOWNWIND)
- Kiteboarder does FINAL visual line inspection
- Kiteboarder give FINAL hand signal (thumbs-up); friend releases kite

SELF-LAUNCH w/TETHER




- Engage chicken loop to self-launch clip
- Walk the kite to edge of wind window
- Line inspection before letting go
- Monitor kite behavior while holding LE for 30-60 seconds, re-inspecting lines.
- Briskly walk back to tether/bar, quickly connecting bar chicken loop to spreader bar, and leash
- Unclip tether safely fly-up to 11 or 1 o'clock

Drift & Boat Launch (Advanced Lesson)




Intro to Flying


Initial Steps & Operations

- Launching the kite (Thumbs up, first the instructor, then student) 
- Flying the wind window
- Bar Pressure (Sheeting)
- Letting the Bar Go

Control Techniques

- Flying kite down to 9 o'clock and 3 o'clock 
- Explain 12 o'clock is not safest due to gust and lofting (fly slight right/left)
- Change kite over to student (rinse and repeat)

Emergency & Progression

- Self-Rescue/Water Re-Launch (disarming kite) 
- Intro to body dragging in control both directions with and without board

Landing the Kite



Hand signal for landing (pat on head)



Placing kite at 9 o'clock or 3 o'clock position for safe catch



Self-land with tether



Putting kite down properly with LE into the wind



Proper breakdown (clean LE)



Proper line wrap - Figure 8



Proper fold-up (Saltwater vs. freshwater, airing kite out)

Breakdown

- Putting everything away properly
- Grabbing tether, pump, boards, helmet, vest
- Proper line break down - figure 8
- Double-check your pick-up—one last walk-through

Lesson One Debrief

- Go Over the lesson - engage questions to student.
- Give PASA lesson evaluation

Lesson Two, 2-4hrs

- Flying a kite in a wind window comfortably.
- Water relaunch
- Power Strokes
- Getting up on board (slightly edging)
- Self-rescue



Flying a kite in a wind window comfortably.



Water relaunch



Power Strokes



Getting up on board (slightly edging)



Self-rescue

Lesson Three, 2-4 hrs



Pop-Up pop-up (power stroke)



Gaining Speed



Edging



Transitions



Stance



Debrief

**Depending on student progression, we may have to schedule additional lessons by revisiting certain parts of the lesson plan.*

Local Emergency Procedures

- 911
- Novant Hospital, Phone: (410) 641-1100
- Fort Fisher Ranger Station, Phone (910) 458-5798
- Report Incident (Excess \$5,000) to PASA: Report/Contact Page:
<https://www.pasaschools.org/contact-us/>
- Instructor(s) must be current CPR