

BACKHAND BOTTOM TURN

The backhand bottom turn involves the same principles as the forehand bottom turn. It needs a good steep line in to use maximum wave steepness, and good leg compression to keep speed throughout the turn. You also have an advantage on your backhand - rail compression is easier on your heel side.

1. Aim the board towards the beach

Aim your board vertically down the wave face to accelerate. When reaching the flats, immediately go into the bottom turn.

2. Lean

When going fast on a bike, you have to lean to be able to turn sharply. On a surfboard the same principal applies. Lean back on your heels to start turning and direct your line. If possible, touch the water with your leading hand: you gain a valuable pivot point to turn around. The more powerful the wave, the more you will have to dig in and lean over the rail.

3. Look above your shoulder

As your board starts accelerating through the turn, look over your shoulder targeting the lip. Focusing on the lip keeps your turn fast and tight. Keep low with a hand in the water until your board is aiming at the very top of the wave.

Total extension

Spring out of the compressed bottom turn when your board is aimed at the right zone. Use this total extension to then complete your shoulder rotation, placing your board in the target zone you want to reach.

This tight rotation will then set up a good wave position from which to execute your top turn and flow into the next section.

Function:

Rebound from wave base with maximum speed.

Goal:

Use maximum speed from the drop to project up to the top of the wave.

Trajectory:

Draw a tight 'U' line to stay vertical and close to the pocket.

Technique:

Start the bottom turn with your shoulder axis closed, parallel to the stringer.

Try:

Touching the wave as far away as possible from your board with your inside (leading) hand, to ensure you're leaning into the turn and using your rail. Use it as a center point of rotation to draw your 'U' around until it is time to extend.

Avoid:

A common mistake on your backhand is to turn your shoulders too early, in order to have a better view of the wave. If you open your shoulders too soon, your body extends, loses power and reduces the rail compression needed for acceleration.

+ TIP

Use a full shoulder rotation to get to the lip, holding the rotation until you pass mid-face to gain maximum drive. Your back shoulder is like an 'eye' - it should 'see' your target before you reach the top of the wave.

