

Platform Launch

This technique is ideal to use when launching from a jetty, pontoon or off the back of a boat.

Introduction

Launching from a pontoon, boat, or jetty offers near instantaneous foiling. As you push off from the platform, the foils already have sufficient lift to get you riding on the water's surface, giving you, as a new rider, the best chance of foiling on your first attempts.

Launching in the right water conditions

When learning to ride your Hydrofoiler, it's best to start off in calm water conditions, with deep enough water to launch from.

It is important to find a suitable location, well clear of obstacles, traffic and also away from people. **Smooth waters, free from weed and debris** are the ideal first ride conditions, so stick to these.

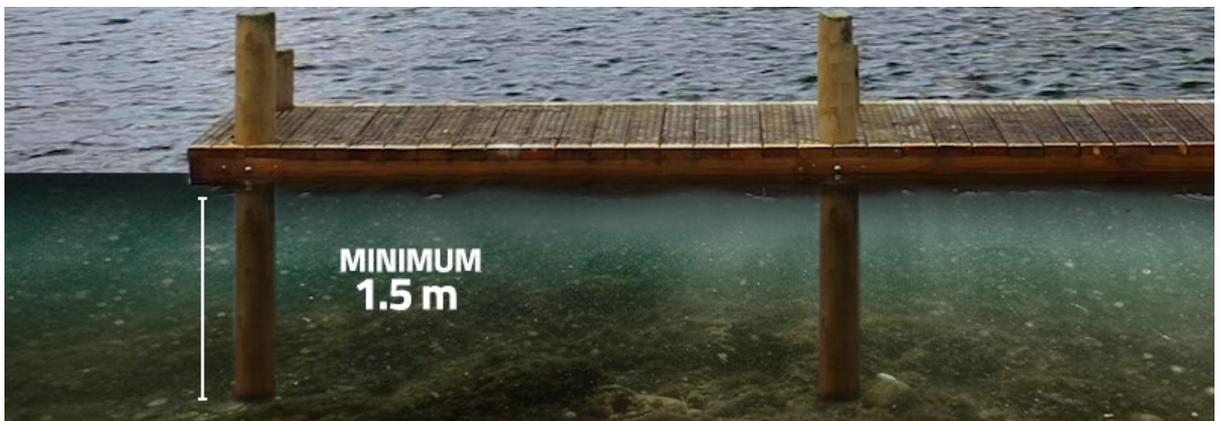
Selecting the right platform

Not every jetty is suitable for launching. When choosing the location, make sure the jetty available for the launch has the following characteristics:

- **Height:** Ideal platform height is around 0-30 cm from the water surface, with relatively high water conditions. If you do not have these conditions, use the assisted beach launch technique for your first rides instead.



- **Water Depth** - a draft of 1.5 m minimum is needed to safely platform launch and foil in. **HINT: If you are unsure how deep the water use the detached rear foil and dip it into the water. If you don't hit the bottom you have at least 2 m - good enough to foil.**



- **Surface** - The surface area where you will be pushing from will require traction, so make sure there is enough grip, avoid slippery surfaces. Most jetties will be wet, so a good practice is to wear non-slip footwear like diving boots and test out the surface's grip prior to the launch.



Launching

Step 1: Placing the bike in the water

Step back over the rear foil to stand behind the bike and place both hands at the back of the bike - one under the seat and the other on the rear cowling. Pull your bike towards your body lifting the front of the bike off the ground.

Move your hand from the rear cowling to the underside of the buoyancy modules and lift the bike up, carefully placing it into the water.

HINT: This step can be tricky, for your first few attempts you may need a friend to help you maneuver your bike.

ATTENTION: Make sure to be aware of where the rear of the bike is in the water, avoid damaging it against the jetty.

Step 2: Position the bike for launch

Now that you have placed your Hydrofoiler into the water, stand behind the bike with your non-dominant hand gripping underneath the seat and your dominant hand holding the handlebars.

Once the bike is floating comfortably, we **highly recommend rotating your dominant foot's crank and pedal to a 2 o'clock position**. This means that when you step off the platform and onto the bike with your dominant foot you'll already be rotating the propeller, giving you that forward motion earlier, plus it makes it much easier for your foot to find the pedal mid launch.

Just before you are ready to launch, lift your bike up so that the buoyancy modules are just above the water line. This brings the bike closer to you so when you make the push from the platform to your bike, there is less room for error.

Step 3: Launching - BIG PUSH!

- This can be a bit nerve wracking for first time riders. Remember, back yourself and make sure to give a **really strong push** out and fully commit to landing both feet onto the pedals. The bigger the push you give, the longer your grace period before you need to start pedaling.

- As the pedals turn **90 degrees, the motor will kick in** and you will be able to begin foiling. Shift your weight forward to improve steering authority and ride as upright as possible.

HINT: We can't stress it enough...Big push out horizontally.

Common Mistakes

- **Sitting down too quickly:** you should be standing until the buoyancy is completely out of the water, so that you can give 5-10 hard pedal strokes.
- **Not leaning forward enough:** you will notice the bike leans back, and you stall. The bike should never be pitching more than 10 degrees.
- **Not pushing hard enough:** If the bike sinks before you can begin pedalling then it is likely that the initial push off the jetty was too soft.
- **First 10 pedal strokes are too soft:** getting the buoyancy out of the water is the hardest part of the ride. It is important to pedal hard until this happens, then you can relax.

Key Takeaways

- **Ensure handlebars and bike are facing straight forward**
- **Lift your bike out of the water when ready to launch**
- **Crank set to 2 o'clock**
- **Big push off the platform**
- **Expect to get wet, especially the first few goes - this is a technique that has to be learned**