How to initiate Toe side Turns – 1

So you’ve gone from beginner to intermediate with your snowboarding, meaning you can handle many kinds of terrains.

When you’ve reached the intermediate level you can probably handle making great and clean turns on groomed terrain.

However steep slopes or ungroomed terrain cause a lot of learners trouble. Most find themselves having a difficult time doing toe side turns.

So this time I’d like to think about why that happens, and how to stop it from happening to you!

Humans are used to walking straight, but when you’re on a snowboard you’re sliding sideways.

However even though you’re riding sideways, your upper body is more than likely be facing forward.

This posture is the cause of why initiating toe side turns is difficult.

First, let’s understand the mechanism for initiating turns.

(You have 2 ways of changing your direction while snowboarding.)

Horizontal Rotation

Simply put, a spin, where you switch the position of the nose and tail of your board.

Changing your edge

For example, changing your edge from the right side to the left.

Combining these 2 movements will initiate a turn.

So now let’s think about why you can’t initiate a toe side turn while your torso is facing forwards.

A lot of beginners turn their board sideways, and even intermediate level students use this technique quite often when going down steep slopes that require many fast and quick turns.

First off, when you turn your board it feels the same as if you’re about to do a spin.

For example, if you want to turn right you move your upper body in that direction and your lower body will follow it.

Kind of feels like a 180 spin doesn’t it?

Now let’s think about this and apply it to turning.

Let’s assume that you’re facing forward while sliding.

If you wanted to initiate a heel side turn, then your body is already facing forward and the direction you’d need to shift to anyways.

That’s why it’s easy to rotate your lower body.

Next, think about the toe side turn.

Before initiating the turn your chest is facing forwards, the exact opposite of the direction you need to rotate it.

It’s human nature to want to face forward, so forget about even entering a toe side turn, you just instinctively resist your chest facing backwards.

Initiating a toe side turn with your chest facing forwards is an extremely difficult task.

This is one of the reasons you can’t initiate a toe side turn.

<Tip>

To help you, try leaning your front shoulder and hip on the toe edge when trying to go for a toe side turn.

If you feel too uncomfortable doing this, try pulling your rear elbow behind you as quickly as you can.

Pulling your rear elbow behind is another way to rotate your upper body in the direction you want to turn, so it’s the most effective way for beginners and even for intermediates to learn.

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Next time we’ll talk about why you can’t initiate a toe side turn with moving from edge to edge.

Look forward to it next time!