



# ***AIR QUALIFICATION SYSTEM***

Air bag ♦ Water ramp ♦ Snow

FREESTYLE CANADA

Aerials ♦ Halfpipe ♦ Moguls ♦ Slopestyle/BigAir

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**TABLE OF CONTENT**

INTRODUCTION ..... 3

AIR QUALIFICATION AND LTAD ..... 3

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT THROUGH AIR COURSES ..... 3

    The Skill Development and Risk Management Model of the FC Air System ..... 3

        Air 1 ..... 3

        Air 2 ..... 4

        Air 3 ..... 4

        Air 4 ..... 5

FC AIR QUALIFICATION ..... 7

    Inverted maneuvers ..... 7

        Corked /Bio Trick Qualifications ..... 8

    Important rules to apply to qualification ..... 8

    Air progression chart ..... 9

    Qualifying Spinning Inverts ..... 10

    Coaches’ responsibilities ..... 11

    Re-qualification of all inverted moves ..... 11

    Single inverted maneuvers competency challenge process ..... 11

    Athlete qualification for doubles ..... 12

QUESTIONS AND ENQUIRIES ..... 12



## **INTRODUCTION**

This document is to help our members and partners understand Freestyle Canada's revised Air Qualification system.

Thanks to Sport Canada, Canadian Sport For Life, Gymnastics Canada and Canada Snowboard for their input, leadership and support in developing this system.

## **AIR QUALIFICATION AND LTAD**

The Freestyle Canada coach pathway is aligned with the Freestyle Canada Long Terme Athlete Development model that can be found here: [www.ltad.freestylecanada.ski](http://www.ltad.freestylecanada.ski) as well as the National Coaching Certification Program.

Moguls, Aerials, Slopestyle, Halfpipe and Big Air all require controlling a variety of forces on take-off, landing and in the air. Acrobatic mastery is critical to perform safely in constantly changing weather and course condition, and also for competitive success.

The skills contained in the program have been carefully revised and chosen to build an athlete's «acrobatic literacy» and develop the control in the air to succeed in a wide variety of disciplines.

## **SKILLS DEVELOPMENT THROUGH AIR COURSES**

Freestyle skiers depend on highly refined skills to execute difficult tricks at fast speeds in a wide variety of conditions. Over the years, Freestyle Canada has been improving air qualification system to ensure that athlete are progressing well and in safely. The coach's courses had been involving making sure they have the technical knowledge to teach acrobatic skills to different level of athletes and in different environment.

### ***The Skill Development and Risk Management Model of the FC Air System***

#### Air 1

The course teaches basic trampoline skill mechanics:

- how to create flip and spin rotation,
- how to land safely

Overall this course develops great foundation skills that will be the building blocks of Air 2 skills.

Certified Air 1 coaches can coach non-inverted maneuvers on trampoline (except the front tuck).

### Air 2

This course teaches a wide variety of on and off axis flips on trampoline with a focus on making sure athletes learn in safe progressions. Tools such as:

- Throw mats,
- Visual cues,
- Create confidence, success and minimize risk.

Certified Air 2 coaches can coach single inverted maneuvers with twist on trampoline.



### Air 3

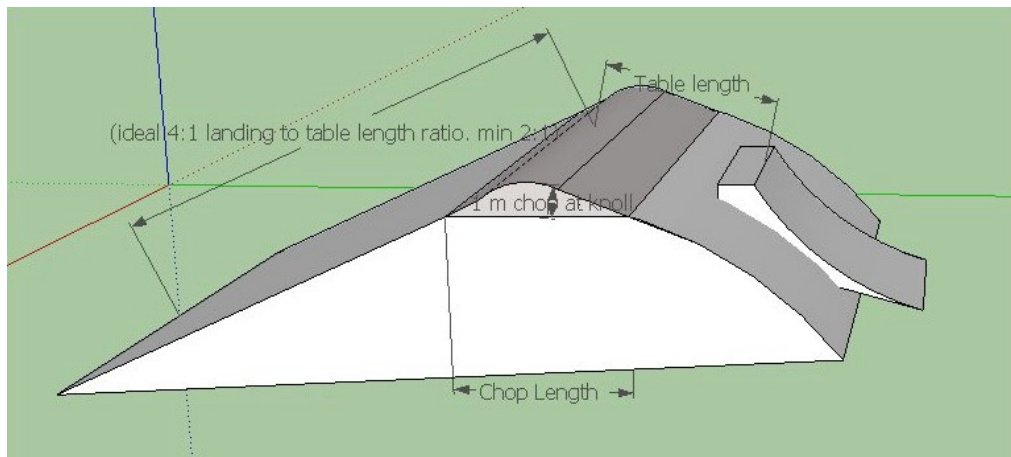
This course takes the skills mastered in Air 2 to a logical progression for the athletes on water ramps and/or air bags. Skiers learn to manage the forces of speed and the weight of ski gear and the timing required for takeoff. Skiers must qualify most of the inverted maneuvers on water or air bag before attempting on snow. Qualifying is a time-tested way to prove the skier is ready and confident to go to the next step.

Certified Air 3 coaches can coach single inverted maneuvers with twisting on water ramps and on the air bag.



Air 4

This course is teaching the coaches how to safely bring the athletes to perform on snow the inverted maneuvers that they have learned on the water ramps and/or air bag.



It is never recommended for skiers to do their first inverts in an open Terrain Park setting with flat take-offs and hard landings. Powder and chopped landings provide a better introductory flipping/training

Freestyle Canada – November 21



experience

In Air 4, coaches are trained to manage a wide variety of single inverted maneuvers with and without twisting in freestyle ski competitive environments (aerials site, moguls jumps, slopestyle/big air course and halfpipe) up to early Train to Train stage. Please note that this focuses on the acrobatic skills component with an orientation on managing the environments. More specific strategies for performing skills in competition are contained in the Air doubles offer in the Competition Development context.

Certified Air 4 coaches can coach single inverted maneuvers with twisting on snow. Coaches are also responsible to ensure the training environments is optimized for their athlete.

The Air coaches' pathway can be find here:

<https://www.freestylecanada.ski/files/Locker%20Freestyle%20Pathways.pdf>



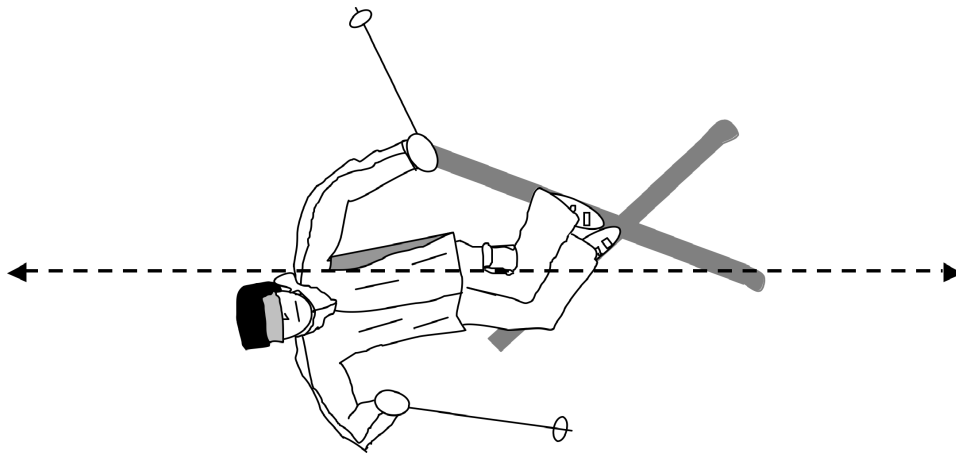
## **FC AIR QUALIFICATION**

Single inverted maneuvers will be **required** to be qualified using the following system:

- The Air Qualification form is required to be fully and properly fill out.  
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe1LGiS9Ec7ET3C4UC8JWBSDPkP\\_QychFrLdhW3\\_YwqzYSpBQ/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe1LGiS9Ec7ET3C4UC8JWBSDPkP_QychFrLdhW3_YwqzYSpBQ/viewform?usp=sf_link)
- For the air bag and the water ramps qualification, athletes must do at least 50 repetitions of the jump wanted to be qualified before the qualification.
- For the on-snow qualification, athletes must do at least 15 repetitions of the jump wanted to be qualified before the qualification.
- The coach that qualifies the athletes should have seen more than half of those repetitions.
- In order to be qualify, the athlete will need to perform that same jump 5 times in a row and have a minimum total score of 75 for each jump.
- If the qualification is missed, it can't be repeated the same day.
- The qualification must be done on the same type of jump that the athlete will be competing on during the winter.
- The coach doing the qualification needs to send a copy of the qualification form to the athlete's PSO and to [info@freestylecanada.ski](mailto:info@freestylecanada.ski) .
- Athletes still **need to qualify front or back tuck before moving on to inverted spinning maneuvers** in that same take-off category. (e.g. Misty, Rodeo, Flatspin etc)
- Athletes are required to qualify bio/corked tricks where feet or hips go over their head (see diagram below) \*\*NOTE Young skiers doing less inverted (feet or hips stay below the head) off axis spins on small and medium jumps MAY perform corked 540 and 720 without being qualified. It is recommended to take them through the qualification process to build confidence.
- This skill development system applies to athletes of all ages – with the exception of National Team athletes.

### ***Inverted maneuvers***

An inverted maneuver is any maneuver whereby the athlete's feet or hips go above the athlete's head at any time during the said maneuver (see diagram below). For purposes of clarification Misty, Rodeo, Flat Spin, Flair, and Underflip are all considered to be inverted maneuvers by Freestyle Canada. If there is any question about the status of other new maneuvers, they must be clarified before being performed on a FC sanctioned snow-training site.



### Corked /Bio Trick Qualifications

To understand which Cork/Bio maneuvers should be qualified. Some young skiers will perform slightly off axis spins off of small and medium jumps where they are not actually inverted, these are not required to be qualified but it is recommended coaches use the qualification process to build confidence. Any athletes performing a maneuver and their feet/hips go over their head in competition that are not qualified may receive a DNF for that jump, or if it is determined they have purposely trained and performed a non-qualified invert they may be disqualified from the event.

### ***Important rules to apply to qualification***

- Athletes will only be required to qualify one inverted spinning skill in each category:
  - Front,
  - Back,
  - Sideways take-off (reflects primary direction on invert takeoff)Athletes may go on to perform more complex skills, (e.g. more spins) in each category once they have qualified a base skill.
  
- In circumstances where athletes demonstrate a high level of competency but have not had the opportunity to move through the FC Air Qualification System, they may do a competency challenge as outlined below at their own cost.
- FC Technical Delegates will be directed to check on-line qualifications at all domestic FC sanctioned events where inverts are performed.



**Recommendation:** Coaches are expected to have their athletes prove competency in the progression of all skills and are encouraged to use the qualifying process internally to build athlete skills and confidence. (Ex.: before increasing difficulty from a Misty 540 to Misty 720 on snow, an athlete and coach should have practiced the move 50 times on water ramp or air bag and feel very confident about performing on snow)

### ***Air progression chart***

It is recommended that skiers master all of the skills listed below, but skiers are required to only qualify the skills in **bold**.

Doing the straight over front and back tuck position flips teach athletes to control speed of rotation, and to maintain control in the brief time when the skier loses sight of the ground. Athletes who do not master these skills put themselves at higher risk to lose their location in space relative to the ground, which can result in loss of confidence and potentially injury.

**Coach certification required** to supervise athletes for the specific invert training is also in **bold**.

| Type Move                         | Coach Certification Required                | Minimum # Completed on Water and/or Air Bag Landing prior to attempt to qualify | Minimum # Completed on snow prior to qualifying on snow |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| 360 (both ways)                   | <b>FUNDamentalz Coach (FC)</b>              | 0   | 0   |
| 540                               | <b>FUN</b> + Park & Pipe Module recommended | 0   | 0   |
| 720                               | <b>FUN</b> + Park & Pipe Module recommended | 0   | 0   |
| <b>FRONT TUCK</b>                 | <b>Air 4</b>                                | 50  | 15  |
| <b>BACK TUCK</b>                  | <b>Air 4</b>                                | 50  | 15  |
| <b>LINCOLN</b>                    | <b>Air 4</b>                                | 50  | 15  |
| <b>Cork 720</b>                   | <b>Park &amp; Pipe Module* or Air 4</b>     | 50  | 15  |
| <b>Bio 720</b>                    | <b>Park &amp; Pipe Module* or Air 4</b>     | 50  | 15  |
| <b>All other spinning inverts</b> | <b>Air 4</b>                                | 50  | 15  |



\*Cork or off axis skills where the feet/hips are not going over the head.

### **Qualifying Spinning Inverts**

Freestyle Canada requires that athletes must qualify one spinning invert from the front spin, back spin, and sideways spin takeoff categories before performing any spinning inverts in that category.

The following category charts include the common tricks done with forward, backward, and sideways/looping take off.

| <b>CATEGORY 1<br/>Front Spin Takeoff</b>                  | <b>CATEGORY 2<br/>Side Spin Takeoff</b> | <b>CATEGORY 3<br/>Back Spin Takeoff</b>   |
|---|---|---|
| Example Base Skill:<br><br>MISTY<br><br>RODEO*<br><br>BIO | Example Base Skill:<br><br>RODEO*       | Example Base Skill:<br><br>FLATSPIN D<br>SPIN<br>UNDERFLIP/FLARE<br>RODEO*<br>CORK<br>BACK FULL |

\* It is coaches/qualifiers discretion which base non-spinning skills will proceed Rodeo, a minimum of Front, Lincoln, or Back. This is because of the many different techniques currently taught on take-off for Rodeo.

**1st Example:** Lukas has qualified Front, Back, and Rodeo 540 – after working hard all summer on a Rodeo 9 he wants to do one in competition. His coach has given him the thumbs up – is he OK to do this trick? Answer: YES! He has all the prerequisites qualified!

**2nd Example:** Leslie has qualified Front, Misty 540 and feels ready to do Flatspin 540 to win Junior Nationals. Is she OK to do this trick? Answer: NO! Her coach has checked and Leslie has to qualify a Back Tuck – luckily Junior’s is 8 weeks away. Leslie is going to hit the air bag to get a total of 50 of each skill before she tries to qualify on air bag and will do at least 15 good back tucks on snow before she tries to qualify on snow, and then at least 15 good Flatspins before she attempts qualification.



### ***Coaches' responsibilities***

If you, as a coach and at any time, don't think that you have seen enough of the athlete's jumps to take the responsibility to do a qualification process with an athlete, you have the right to not do it.

Also, if your athlete has qualified an inverted maneuver during the summer on the water ramps or on the air bag with another coach, you have the responsibility to communicate with the coach that qualify this athlete. It's not because the athlete is qualified that you have to make him/her do that jump on snow. You, as a coach, decide when the athlete is ready to do his qualified jump on snow. It is not the athlete or the parent's decision, it's yours.

### ***Re-qualification of all inverted moves***

Athletes are not required to re-qualify moves from year to year. It is the coaches' responsibility to implement a system where the athlete proves they are ready to take moves to snow at any time. (e.g. use existing 5 jump Air Qualification Form system)

Coaches, or major officials, may remove athletes' qualifications in the unique circumstance that they feel the athlete has lost competency in the skill, or skill category. FC must be notified, and the athlete is then required to re-qualify the skill.

A coach or major official may determine that an athlete is having a bad day and not able to perform a skill in the interest of athlete safety during a practice or competition session – but this does NOT automatically mean the qualification for that skill has been removed.

### ***Single inverted maneuvers competency challenge process***

FC coaches and officials agree there are rare occasions where an athlete has not qualified a skill but has the experience to perform safely – for example an out of country athlete, or an athlete that has not come through a provincial team program.

In these rare cases, an FC approved Air 4certified or an Air Doubles coach may verify that they stand by the athletes ability to perform trick(s) in writing by email to [info@freestylecanada.ski](mailto:info@freestylecanada.ski)

Coaches/qualifiers may require any preliminary steps they feel are necessary to ensure the athlete is ready to attempt the skill and deny any athlete they do not believe is very competent to land consistently with have control in the air.



### ***Athlete qualification for doubles***

Athletes can be qualified by their own coach for doubles if the coach is Air Doubles certified on air bag, water ramp or snow.

### **QUESTIONS AND ENQUIRIES**

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