



# Chapter 2- The Anatomy of a Landed Skate Trick

## The Three Principles That Compose Every Trick

Earlier we talked about four scientific aspects of skating are foot placement, pressure, timing, and landing. When learning any new trick, there are a lot of techniques to learn and to practice. One way we have consistently expedited the trick-learning process is by breaking the process into four parts. There are four sectors of every trick (the kickflip, Ollie, pop shuvit, even the 900) We call them the Big Three of skate tricks. In order the Big Three are

### The Big Three :

- Foot placement
- Pressure
- Timing

### Foot placement must be right before doing anything else.

Foot placement makes sure that prior to the trick your feet are in the correct spots to add pressure. The is one complication to foot placement- Grip tape. Varying brands of griptape and vary levels of stickiness. If the trick you are doing require sliding your foot, you will need to make the adjustment. For example with sticky grip, you want to start your foot positioning closer to the pressure point. With less sticky grip, you want to start further away from the pressure point.

The difference in foot placement is usually little (less than one inch) however if you change grip tapes and don't make the small adjustment, you will fall more. When buying new grip, it is best to stick with the same brand of grip tape. Your feet and mind are already familiar with it.



## Points to Remember

- \* Skateboarding is a science.
- \* Every trick is triggered by putting pressure into parts of the board.



# Chapter 2- The Anatomy of a Landed Skate Trick

## Pressure Points

**Proper pressure will determine how high your board will pop.**

Pressure refers to how hard you push on the board. Pressure applies to your front and back feet. Usually with tricks like the ollie and kickflip, your back foot initiates pressure in the tail of the board. The "pop" is when the tail of the board hits the ground.

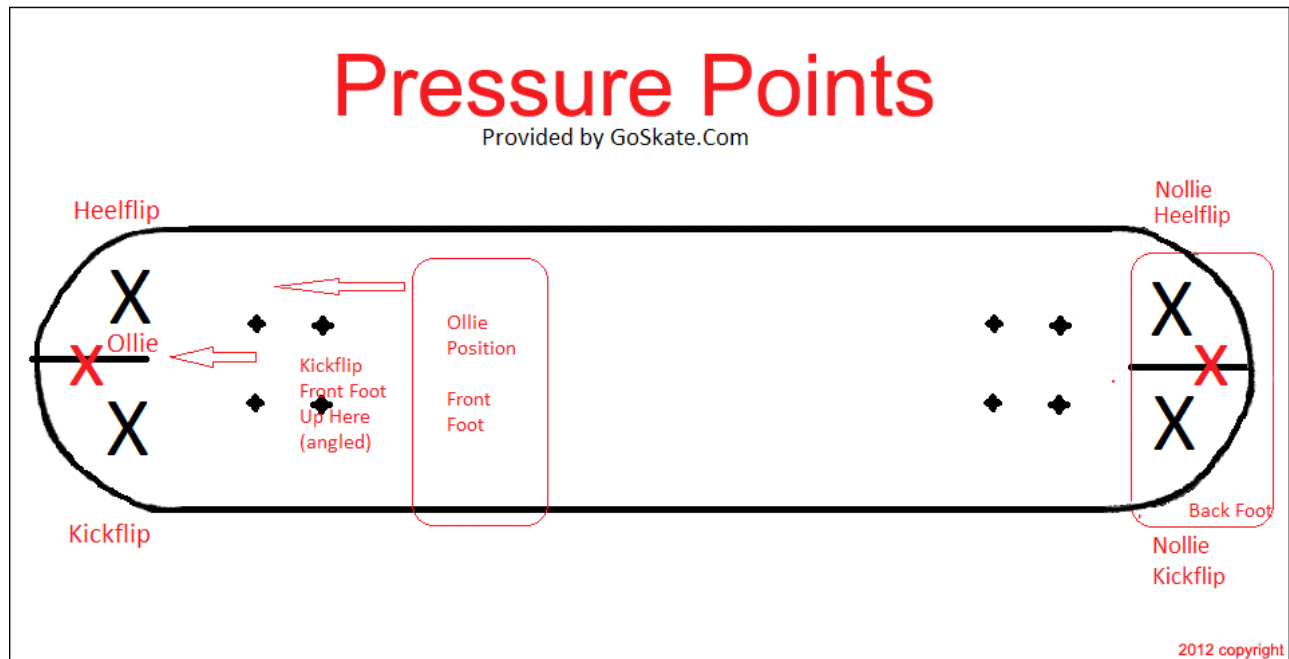
When the pressure point is hit, the most powerful and perfect ollies are executed.

With an ollie and kickflip, the pressure points are both on the nose of the skateboard.

The pressure point for the kickflip, is slightly behind the pressure point for the ollie by 25%.

Here is a diagram to clarify:

We will cover more pressure point later as we go trick by trick.





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## Chapter 2- The Anatomy of a Landed Skate Trick

### Pressure Points—Part 2

The second part of pressure is the weight you place into the front foot. The front foot is more often used to tell the board what to do. Depending on the pressure point, the front foot can make the board, pop shuvit, kickflip, heelflip, or ollie all while the back foot should remain in the same place. I will refer to these parts as pressure points. A pressure point is a target where you want to aim your front foot in order to do a trick. For example with an ollie, the pressure point is exactly in the center of the nose of the board.



### Timing controls over-flipping or under-flipping your tricks.

Timing means how quickly between actions your feet move. Most skate tricks require two actions. The first action is your back foot and the second action is your front foot. The timing between these two actions is critical.

Let me give you an example, let's say I am going to do a kickflip. My first action is to briskly push into the tail with my back foot. My second action is a kick of the front foot to the kickflip pressure point. If I make the kick to the pressure point too quickly after the first action, the board will either not flip all of the way, or not give me enough height or control to land.

If I stretch the timing out too long, the board will end up over flipping and possibly doing a flip and a half or more. There is a sweet spot for timing in each trick. The exact timing depends on how hard your pop is. This is often the hardest thing for beginners to understand.

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## Pressure Points

Starting out, give the timing some practice. Try adjusting the timing slower and quicker. Timing should only be experimented with after foot positioning and pressure points are perfected.

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All Big Three are equally important. No skater will become great by only know three of the pinnacles. Foot placement will affect pressure. Pressure will effect timing, and timing will affect the landing. It is a chain of events so you want to make sure you have mastered the first pinnacles before continuing.

The Big Three are so accurate that they work every time. When a skater has mastered all four, he/she is no longer needs to experiment with anything, but has arrived at a certain technique that works every time. If you are landing kickflips, three out of every ten tries, you have not mastered the Big Three. You have only mastered the Big Three when you are executing the trick at least every nine out of ten tries.

In the Expert skaters, after years of practice, will get the Big Three in their subconscious; Thereby, enabling them to do many tricks without looking or without falling. The further you are able to engrave these four principles on your subconscious, the better of a skater, you will become.

## The Importance of Peers and Practice

Paul Rodriguez, a paid professional skater since he was 13 years old, has been asked how he became so talented so quickly. In explaining, Paul attributed his success to the people who he surrounded himself with. Before and after school, Paul would skate his fun box in his driveway. Paul became connected to some of the top skateboarders in the San Fernando Valley (like Jerome Wilson and eventually Kareem Campbell). He would skate with these skaters who were much better than him everyday, 30-40 hours in a week.



## Chapter 2- The Anatomy of a Landed Skate Trick

### An Instructor is the Most Effective Learning Tool

Shaun White grew up in Encinitas, California and took his first lessons from Go Skate. After lessons Shaun says, “From growing up, I knew all the vert skaters like Bob Burnquist, Kevin Staab and Bucky Lasek.”

The help and encouragement of those peers helped excel Shaun into the X-Games fame. Not everyone had the ability to skate with pro’s growing up. PJ Ladd, a professional skater for Plan B, is the son of an auto-mechanic in Boston, Massachusetts. Ladd, virtually unknown until a video released called PJ Ladd’s Wonderful Horrible Life, has now had parts in eS Footwear and Flip Skateboards videos. PJ is known for his technical and smooth tricks. Growing up in the cold Massachusetts winters did not seem to affect Ladd. He converted his Dad’s garage called, Ladd’s Auto Repair into a place to skate. PJ took advantage of the garage and built a box to skate. He practiced several hours every day and night with his friends. In a Transworld Interview, PJ attributed much of his success to his practice in the Garage.

Whether you are just getting started or you are a veteran skateboarder, knowledge of the three pinnacles of skateboarding will help you. Remember the importance of visualization, persistency, peers and practice. May you excel greatly in skateboarding. If you want to learn the Big Three of every trick that you try, let a Certified Go Skate Instructor give you a hands-on lesson at your local skate park. That is the quickest way to success!

### Key Points:

**Find a Tutor** or peer who is as good as you want to be.

If you need help, find one at [www.goskate.com](http://www.goskate.com)



## Chapter 2- The Anatomy of a Landed Skate Trick

### **The Historical Importance of the Upper Body Dates Back to Surfing**

Skateboarding was invented in 1959 to mimic the surfboard on land. The first skateboarders sought hillsides to practice their gentle curves and surf moves. The style of surfing was apparent in their foot placement and hand movement.

In the current day of skateboarding, many skateboarders have lost touch with the roots of skateboarding. In result, many styles of skateboarding have been developed such as hand rail skating, stair skating, and park skating which has helped diversify skateboarding. The downside to this transformation is that many skateboarders have become disconnected with surfing's use of the upper body.

If there is any part of the body which is most responsible for landing tricks apart from the feet, it is the shoulders and arms.

### **The Shoulders Have a Specific Duty in Each Trick**

If one studies the flat ground technique of PJ Ladd, Chris Cole, or Paul Rodriguez you will notice that on tricks without rotation (kickflip, heelflip, nollie, nollieflip), their shoulders remain directly over the bolts of the skateboard, Their collarbone is parallel to their board.

Next, look at the level of the shoulders. No shoulder is higher than the other when popping or landing. In fact, the tricks landed with the most control, are those in which the shoulders are level with each other throughout the trick.

There are troubling effects of not keeping shoulders level including uneven flips, landing too far on the nose or tail, or having mobbed trick (tricks where the back two wheels are closer to the ground than the front). For this very reason, it is important that one is aware of their shoulder before popping any skateboarding trick.





## Chapter 2- The Anatomy of a Landed Skate Trick

### Shoulders Control the Center of Balance

The shoulders are the only part of your body which can counteract a loss in balance. For example, as one's center of balance falls forward, one can lower his back shoulder bringing weight back. In result, this pushes the center of balance further back on the board overcoming the forward fall.

### The Importance of the Arms

Think of a game of charades. The game where you must act out a word in order for the people around you to guess. The average American for the word "surfing" would place their arms out on each side of their body in the iconic style. Yet, when the average American would act out skateboarding they would kick their back foot as if they were pushing a board. This is because there is an extreme ignorance of the importance of arms in skating.

While learning any trick one should have your arms out to your sides, slightly bent. And ready to catch one's self in case of a fall. However, the importance of the arms goes beyond safety. It acts as a method of maintaining a center of balance which is crucial in any skate trick. To start any skate trick, the arms should be by one's side and level.

The interesting part of the arms is that the actions of the arms closely follow the shoulders. While the arms can't completely change a center of balance they can influence the shoulders.





# Chapter 2- The Anatomy of a Landed Skate Trick

## The Difference Between Scoop and Pop

Listen very closely. Throughout the remainder of this book, the wording scoop and pop will be used frequently. Be sure to understand the difference.

### Pop

A pop is when the back foot pushes the board directly into the ground. This is done by applying pressure into the toes and extending your foot at the ankle.

The pop is used in several different tricks like the ollie, nollie, kickflip, heelflip, nollie flip, nollie heelflip, 50-50 grind, and much more.

### Scoop

A scoop is when the back foot causes the board to rotate by hitting the tail to the ground at an angle. This is done by extending the foot at the ankle and moving the back leg slightly forward or backward.

The scoop is used in rotational tricks like the front-side 180, backside 180, 360 ollie, shuvit, 360 flip, boardslide, tail slide, varial flip, and much more.



An example of pop on an ollie.

### Great Skate Park Resources:

-[Skateboardpark.com](http://Skateboardpark.com) - One of the largest directories of parks.

-[Concretedisciples.com](http://Concretedisciples.com) - The most photos of skate nationwide skate parks.

-[Goby.com](http://Goby.com) - Sort parks by zip code proximity

### Skate Park Tips:

-If it's a private park, check the session times first.

-Respect other skaters by taking turns with them .





## Chapter 2- The Anatomy of a Landed Skate Trick

### Goal Setting

It is imperative that you formulate a list of tricks which you intend to learn. You should have daily goals, short-term goals and long-term goals in skateboarding.

A piece of paper and create a list with two columns. One labeled: Short Term Tricks another labeled: Long Term Tricks. Under short-term, only write tricks which are very possible for you for learn in the next 90 days. These maybe the kickflip, heelflip, or 360 flip.

Under long-term goals, write some more difficult tricks which you wish to learn in the next 1 or two years. These should be more difficult but not impossible.



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# Chapter 2- The Anatomy of a Landed Skate Trick

## The Power of Visualization

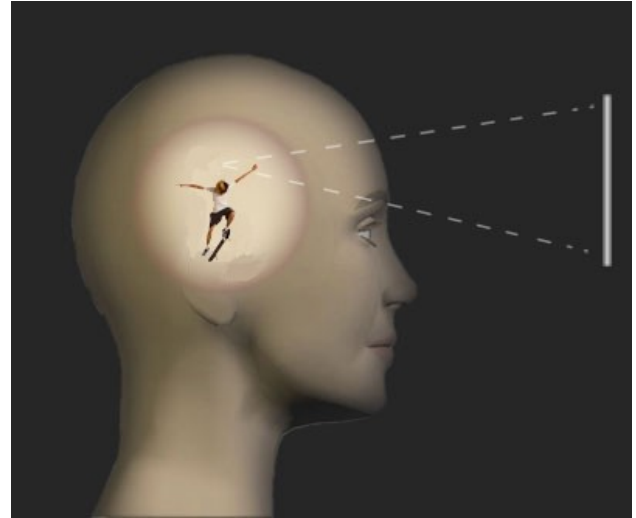
It should be a habit that before trying a trick, one takes a moment to visualize themselves landing. Run the trick over and over in your mind, until the power of visualization has made the trick seem comfortable to practice.

## Visualization to Overcome Falling

If you become discouraged in a skate trick, stop. Take a moment to find out what you are doing wrong and make a correction in your mind of properly executing and landing the trick. Visualize trick over and over for 5 minutes until it convinces your mind that it can land it.

## Visualizing to Land Tricks

Before you start your skate day, visualize the tricks that you want to land that day for 20 minutes. Think each of them through and plan the order in which you will try them. Next, visualize the feeling, the happiness, of ending the skate day with these new tricks added to your arsenal.



Visualization starts with a mental picture.

### Visualization Resources:

-The Secret; by Rhonda Bryne (a book and movie)

-Think and Grow Rich by Napoleon Hill (a book about success which can be applied to skateboarding)

### Visualization Tips:

-Find time to do nothing but think. Sit in quiet and do nothing but think about your skating, your direction, and your accomplishments.

-When you visualize.. you must truly believe in your capabilities.