

Dear Pilot!

Paragliders who already love flying the Dutch dunes want to continue to do so for years to come. It is a fantastic and unique flying alternative in the Netherlands; in fact the only way to fly the airspace for hours without mechanical help, and enjoy nature.

It looks very easy to take off and fly the dunes, but in practice it is rather more difficult. Even for people with lots of mountain take-off experience! Mastering reversed take-offs turned out to be not enough. Only if you can control your glider under every condition – walking up the dune, with or without crosswind, kiting, walking backwards up the dune- then you are prepared well enough to fly the dunes.

The richest point about the story is that when you master your wing well, you can take off from the beach, in front of the fence, if the contours of the dunes allow this technique. If it doesn't work this way, then you can always quickly – using your glider- kite up the dunes, turn out in a split second and fly away. This way you will be off in seconds with only a few feather light steps in the dune. These take-offs are not only the fastest, but also the best methods not to harm the dunes. Besides, with every step on the other side of the fence or in the dunes you risk a 50 Euro penalty.

The reason why we gave you this flyer is because we hope that you, if you want to soar the dunes more often, or want to start soaring, probably would enjoy to fly the Dutch dunes for a long period of time. Like we do.

Whether this will succeed is very dependent on all the pilots coming to the coast and so in fact, also on you. We now fly more or less tolerated by the authorities because it is forbidden to walk in the dunes. Unfortunately there still are pilots, who enter the dunes. If the dune-area-authorities or the beachpolice see us often walking or practicing in the dunes, then that will undermine our negotiations for good solutions and regulations, and a certain ban will become inevitable.

Then the only way in the Netherlands, to fly without mechanical help, will be lost for ever. But there is no need for this, if all pilots flying along the dunes agree together to take-off and fly as neat as possible. That means that you always and everywhere try not to or hardly enter the dunes. At the back of this flyer you will find some tips on how and where to practise to be ready for dune-flying.

Of course it is true that non-flying beach visitors often enter the dunes, but unfortunately we have the disadvantage to have those huge colourful wings above us. Besides, our sport is often seen as dangerous. That is why it is important not to attract too much attention.

Despite everything you will sometimes encounter, we hope that you, as we, want to help prevent losing the current tolerated status.

A group of enthusiastic dunesoaring pilots.



**This initiative is supported by the
paragliding department of the
Royal Dutch Aeronautical
Association (KNVvL)
www.knvvl.nl/afdelingen/schermvliegen
(Dutch language only)**

Practising before taking off!

Don't practise in the dunes! Search for a suitable, legal field, or go to the beautiful grass slopes near Nieuwegein (close to Utrecht) to practise. Follow the road signs 'Nedereindseplas'. On this site is a nice hill on your left. You can practice on this grassy dunelike slope with winds from south-south-east, south and west-south-west. Look for wind not too gusty and not too strong. Up to 3 Beaufort will do.

You practise reverse inflation and keeping the wing above you, after that try to walk with the wing inflated forwards, backwards and sideways.

Then you try to keep your glider as a kite next to you and let you drag, in a controlled manner, by your glider.

If that works, let your glider drag you upwards on the hill. Once up, get the glider fully above you and you can take off.

After the landing, keep the glider above you and try again.

Keep practising this, with the wind at a straight angle to the hill and with crosswind.

If all this practice succeeds, then you have trained enough for a take off from the dunes!



Taking off from the bottom of the dunes!

Go to the coast with a wind mainly from the west and not too strong, but also not too weak; 10-15 knots is ideal. For the first attempt, 20 degrees crosswind is safe to try.

Search for a quiet spot with higher dunes and not too close to a beach entrance or pavilion.

Inflate your glider on the beach and walk towards the bottom of the dune. Turn forwards as soon as you recognise the wing wants to lift you off your feet. Walk a few steps sideways against the wind up the dune, with the wing above you until you fly.

Dune flying!

As soon as you fly, turn carefully alongside the dune, if the wind is stronger a bit more towards the sea. Then settle in your harness and put your feet on the speedbar so you can activate it immediately if necessary.

Before every turn you want to make, first look! You can turn only if you have enough safety height.

Flying with tailwind along the dunes can go very fast and the ground is close. This can be very dangerous.

Once in the air, fly away from the general 'take-off-area' so other pilots can takeoff. Stay in the air as long as possible and apply the common rules of ridgeflying.

Beach landing!

Flown enough, is the wind not optimal any more, or you bomb out? Fly to the beach in time and land.

And if you don't understand why other pilots still can fly whilst you cannot, don't hesitate to ask them why and ask for help.

*Are you going to practise or soar somewhere?
Copy this flyer and pass it on.
Thanks in advance!*

Dune soaring in the Netherlands

