

## Thermalling Etiquette

Following the rules keeps everyone safer.

Sometimes these etiquette rules result in non-optimal climbs but are required to ensure safety.

Sometimes two pilots have different opinions about where the center of the thermal is.

When approaching a thermal with gliders in it, never aim at the thermal, or even the edge that you are joining.

- Aim wide of it, and only tighten that up as you establish the timing to join opposite of gliders already in the thermal.
- If there are several gliders near your altitude, you might need to wait until a gap opens up.

When joining a thermal with another glider, establish yourself at the opposite side of the thermal.

- You can control that by altering your speed as you approach, or by staying wide of the thermal until the existing glider is opposite of you.
- If there are 3 gliders, you form a triangle, 4 you form a square, etc.

When in the thermal, stay on the opposite side by altering your speed and/or turn radius.

- Avoid flying behind the other glider, as they can't see you.
- If two glider scrunch together, it is the glider in the rear that should fix the separation, as the lead glider can't see the rear glider.

Never turn inside (i.e., show your belly to) another glider if you are near the same altitude (generally within 500').

- When you turn inside, there is a period of time when neither glider can see the other, so it is extremely dangerous.

Never establish a thermal so close to an existing thermal, such that the circles of the two overlap.

- Either be far enough away that they don't overlap or stay close to the established core.