

Wingsuit Pinchecks for non-wingsuit flyers

by jarno cordia

Giving a wingsuit flyer a gear-check is close to identical to a normal gear check.

On top of the customary checks of main/reserve pin, switched on/calibrated AAD, three-ring circus, chest strap, leg straps and presence of helmet, goggles and altimeter and/or dytter, a Pincheck for a wingsuit flyer has a few extra key points that deserve your attention.

- The leg straps are not visible on most wingsuits. By lifting the rig slightly by the shoulder, its fairly easy to check if the leg straps are on and fastened. But a full visual inspection before closing the suit, and thus hiding the leg straps from view, is recommend.
- As a rule, the zippers of a suit should never be closed if the leg straps aren't properly worn and fastened . Even when it's just for a dirt dive, briefing or trying on someone else's wingsuit. .
- Depending on the type of wingsuit used, there will be zippers and/or (yellow) rigging cables on the wings to attach it to the rig. On the front and back of the wing, there will be a hole or skipped 'tab' where the webbing and leg straps of the rig pass through the suit. The rigging cables or zippers should always run in a smooth line, without them being tensed up or bulging in any part touching the cutaway and/or reserve handle. Simply ask a wingsuit flyer to spread the arms and legs into a flying position so you can visually see and check how the suit is rigged.
- Most wingsuit have a small loop attached to the end of the arm-sleeve. This loop wraps around the thumb or hand to assist in tensing up the arming for flying and closing and opening the zippers on the sleeve. Make sure this thumb or hand-loop is worn over the altimeter, and not underneath. Thus preventing the jumper from having to take off his altimeter (or use the secondary cutaway system) to free his arms so the risers and/or toggles are within reach.
- There are a lot of extra things to think about while gearing up for a wingsuit jump. Especially for newer wingsuit flyers, this can cause them to focus so much on the wingsuit and new aspects of their gear-up sequence, that they forget really basic things such as goggles or gloves. Make sure you don't skip even the most basic elements of a normal gear-check.
- Check if the cables and/or zippers that connect the wingsuit to the rig are fully closed/done up.. On the suits with yellow rigging cables, there can sometimes be a small bit of slack visible near the armpit (front and back). This is piece of visible cable is used by more experienced jumpers so they can visually check the cables themselves for correct rigging. But this is not mandatory (or even possible on all types of wingsuits) and is just based on personal preference.
- Using an aggressive or small main canopy for wingsuit flying is commonly regarded a bad idea. Also make sure nobody uses anything but a normal BOC/Throw-out opening system (no pull-out!)
- Ask an unknown wingsuit pilot for his experience, so you know for sure he or she is in full accordance with the common safety requirements and/or manufacturers recommendations for making a wingsuit jump. A minimum of 200 jumps, and having received a proper briefing from a coach or experienced wingsuit flyer with a good background in instruction is also an important factor to check.

When allowing un-experienced jumpers up in a plane flying a wingsuit, they are not just a danger to themselves, but to everyone else on the load.

- Ask the wingsuit pilot if he informed manifest and pilot about his wingsuit jump. This to prevent people on the ground from panicking due to not immediately seeing the correct number of canopies after a drop. And to let the pilot know he should mind the wingsuit flyer who is still in freefall and moving about when he starts his descent.
- Wingsuit flyers are *always* last out in the exit order. Putting them out in front of normal free fallers introduces a lot of extra risks, such as the 'normal' jumpers on the load accidently passing the wingsuit flyer in freefall if he or she didn't fly a perfect pattern (or the pilot of the plane slightly turned/changed the direction of jump run).