

Flying Basics for Fighter Kites

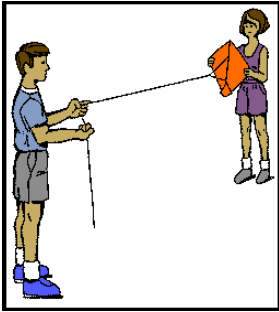
From the book [The Fighter Kite Book!](#)

by David Gomberg

Fighter kites can do things no other kite can do. Even in the lightest of winds, a fighter in the hands of a skilled flier can amaze onlookers by not only staying in the air, but doing figure eights, dives, twists, and dancing its way to great heights. All you need is a little information and a bit of practice.

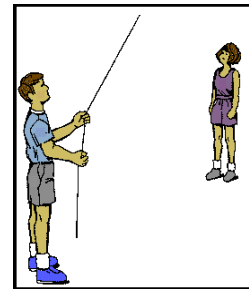
Assisted Launching: Launching is a lot easier at first if you have a friend to help.

Stand with your back to the wind with about 10 feet or so of extra line beside you loose on the ground. Have your assistant stand about 50 feet away, lightly holding the kite at its outside corners with the nose pointing up.



Positioning the kite is very important. When you launch, the kite is going to move in the direction it is pointing. Make sure it's pointing up at the sky instead of at some obstacle - like a spectator. Having extra line is also important. You need to let line out to control your fighter. If you use all of your line, you won't have any control.

On your signal, your helper should allow you to pull the kite out of their hands and into the air. Continue a strong steady upward pull on the line to start the kite up and into the wind. Maintain tension on the line to keep the kite climbing. When you feel the pressure of the wind on the kite, slowly let line out.



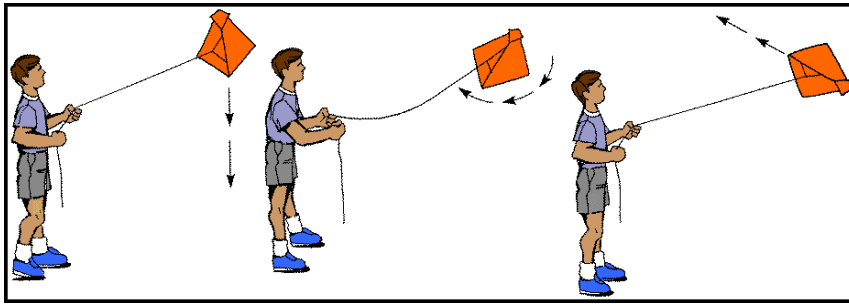
Maneuvering Your Fighter: Handling fighters is a matter of pulling in line to make it move, and playing out line to achieve distance and control direction.

Try giving the line quick, rhythmic jerks or tugs - line in to climb - line out when you feel wind pressure. Tugging creates extra wind pressure on the kite. Allow the kite to climb to a height of 50 feet or more where you can practice maneuvering and line handling without smashing into the ground.

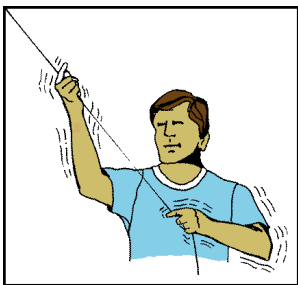
If the kite is moving in the wrong direction, let out line. A quick loosening of line tension will slow or stop forward motion. Depending on the wind, your fighter will relax and float, change direction, or begin to spin.

When the kite is pointed in the direction you want, put tension on the line and the kite will

move in that direction. Pull in - either in a steady hand-over-hand motion for long, sustained flights, or in sharp tugs to make the kite quickly dart a few feet.



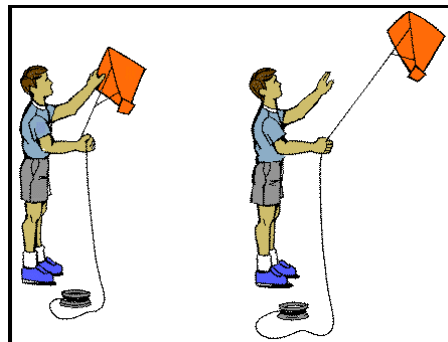
If your kite dives toward the ground, pulling on the line won't make it go up again. It will make the kite zoom toward the ground even faster. Loosen the line. Let the kite become unstable. Then pull in when the kite points up and fly away from the crash. Your friends will be amazed!



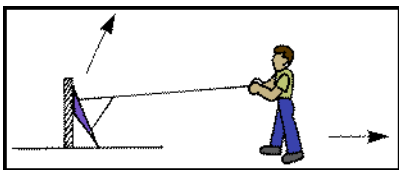
Line handling is a two handed process. Don't ever let one hand free until you have firm control of the line with the other hand. Hold the line near the tip or first joint of your index finger. Use your thumb as an anchor. Practice pulling in hand-over-hand and then letting line out quickly.

As you continue to practice, avoid slack line. Loose line leads to bad flying habits.

Solo Launching: To launch without an assistant, grasp the nose of the kite with one hand and hold the line in the other. Release the kite, let the wind carry it for a short distance, then pull up on the line to gain height. Repeat this several times to get your desired elevation.



Sometimes in light winds, hand launching can be difficult and you may prefer to begin with a bit more line in the air. At times like this, you may want to "create" a launching assistant.



A fairly cooperative assistant can be made from sand, sticks, or almost any kind of prop for the kite. Simply lean your fighter against the "assistant" and move back into the wind, playing out line as you go. When you are ready to launch, take in the slack line and lift the fighter into the air.

With a little practice, your skill and reaction time will quickly improve. Fighter flying will

become almost as easy as getting out of bed in the morning -- which we admit is easier on some days than on others.

[**The Fighter Kite Book**](#) has seventy-five pages packed with information about fighter kite flying, tuning, construction and competition. It also contains tips from dozens of internationally recognized experts. Ask your local kite shop for The Fighter Kite Book from Gomberg Kite Productions, Intl.

Ask your local kite store for
[**The Fighter Kite Book**](#)
A Complete Flight Manual for Fighter Kites
by David Gomberg.