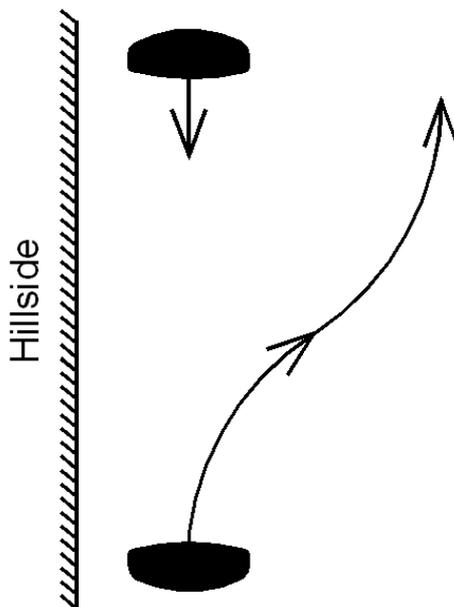


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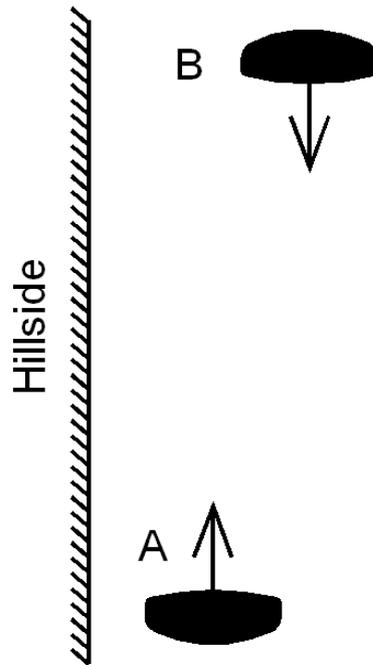
Collision Avoidance On The Ridge - Nigel Page

In paragliding and hang-gliding there is a surprising amount of confusion about what is a “right of way”. In fact what we do to avoid collisions on the hill in the UK is partly airlaw and partly convention. “Right of way” may not be the best concept. If we are keeping a good lookout and thinking well ahead we should only need airlaw, convention or “right of way” very rarely. Anyway, let's start with the obvious.



We find ourselves head on to another pilot and turn right to avoid him. He obviously cannot turn right because he has the hill on his right which is why the convention in the UK is that the pilot with the hill on his left should turn to the right.

OK, supposing we encounter someone like this.



In this case if we (glider A) were to decide to pass to the right we would have to make a sharp turn across the front of the oncoming glider (B). It is obvious to us that pilot (B) should turn to his left to avoid us. I think this is what we should expect in reality.

However pilot (B)'s sometimes have other ideas like:

“If I turn to my right and move closer to the hillside glider (A) will have to give way to me.”

Is pilot (B) OK to do this? No, definitely not at the distance apart shown in the diagram which is much closer than we would expect to be before one of us turns. If pilot (B) was very much (several times) further away and moved into the hill pilot (A) could not really grumble. The key point is that both pilots should have decided what to do about it a long time before reaching this situation. Does this seem a bit of a “grey area” or “wishy washy” to you? Good! It is a grey area, and it's no good pretending it isn't. As always both pilots have a responsibility to each other, to keep a good lookout, and to think ahead.

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