



***Special Olympics***

## **AQUATICS COACHING GUIDE**

Teaching Aquatics Skills

Stroke Development



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### The Strokes

One of the fundamental goals of any swimming program is to provide an opportunity for all swimmers to develop good swimming technique in all four strokes. Special Olympics aquatics coaches need to have a good knowledge of the basic principles required to master these strokes. These principles are developed through a variety of progressive practices within this coaching guide.

Throughout this section we will look at the body position, leg action, arm action and breathing aspects of the four strokes. We will also look at teaching the stroke and give teaching points and practices. This exercise is not exhaustive. Experienced coaches may have further teaching points and practices that can be incorporated in the development of the athlete's swimming program.

In addition, we will generally move the teaching progression from land drills to pool drills and activities in shallow to chest-deep water. A distance is sometimes added to the activity which oftentimes includes the complete stroke – arm stroke with the respective kick.





Skill Progression - Freestyle

<b>Your Athlete Can:</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>
Make an attempt to swim on front	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform freestyle using flutter kick for 15 meters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform freestyle with rhythmic breathing for one pool length	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make an attempt to start, from in the pool	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform proper start, standing on the pool edge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform proper start, using a starting block	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make an attempt to turn around without stopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform an open turn after swimming freestyle without stopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform a flip turn in waist-deep water	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform flip turns after swimming one to two pool lengths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Totals</b>			



### Freestyle/Front Crawl

Freestyle is regarded as the fastest of all competitive swim strokes and one of the first taught to the beginning swimmer. The stroke action involves the arms moving forward alternately with the legs kicking continuously throughout the stroke. The swimmer's body remains horizontal and streamlined in the water with the swimmer's head turned to one side to breathe after each full arm cycle. The teaching and development of the stroke can be achieved by breaking down the skill into its various components.

#### Body Position

The body position is almost flat. The constant propulsion from the alternating arm and leg actions make it a very effective and efficient stroke.

#### Key Points

- Flat with a slight slope down to hips. The waterline is between the eyebrows and hairline.
- Eyes look forward and slightly downward.
- The slight slope down to the hips enables the kick to stay in the water.
- Shoulders roll into the stroke, utilizing the strong chest muscles and generating a strong propulsive force.
- Slight head adjustments change the position of the legs. If the head is held high out of the water, the legs will drop and if submerged, the legs will rise out of the water.
- The legs work almost within the body depth. This creates the least resistance to forward motion.

#### Leg Action

The freestyle/front crawl leg action helps the body stay in the horizontal position and balances the arm action. It may also contribute to the propulsion within the stroke.

#### Key Points

- Leg action starts at the hips.
- Alternating action is required.
- There is a slight bend in the knees.
- Feet kick up to the surface and churn the water without splashing.
- Ankles are relaxed to allow toes to point and give a natural in-toeing effect.
- The number of leg kicks may vary for each arm cycle.

#### Arm Action

The continuous, alternating arm action is the strength within the stroke and enables constant propulsion. Throughout the full stroke there are five main areas that require attention - entry, down sweep, in sweep, up sweep and recovery.

#### Key Points - Entry

- Hand is turned with the palm facing half outward for a thumb-first entry.
- Hand enters between the head and shoulder line with a slight bend in the arm.
- Hand then reaches forward under the surface. Note: this is a natural stretch, not overreaching.



### Key Points - Down Sweep

- Hand sweeps downward and slightly outward to the catch position.
- Hand continues this sweep downward and outward.
- Elbow starts to bend. It is important that the elbow is kept high.

### Key Points - In Sweep

- Hand pitch changes and curves inward toward the body's center line. This is similar to a sculling action.
- Elbow has a 90-degree bend.
- Hand accelerates.

### Key Points - Up Sweep

- When the hand has reached the body's center line, the hand changes pitch to upward, outward and backward.
- This enables acceleration through to the hips.
- Hand then exits the water little-finger first.

### Key Points - Recovery

- This movement is relaxed and uses the momentum from the up sweep.
- Elbow will exit first and is kept higher than the hand.
- Hand passes as close to body as possible. This is dependent on the swimmers flexibility.
- Once the hand passes shoulder level, the arm will reach forwards to the entry position.

### Key Points - Breathing

- Head is turned smoothly in time with the natural roll of the body.
- Head is turned, not lifted.
- The in breath is taken when the breathing arm is completing the up sweep.
- The non-breathing arm enters the water when the breath is taken.
- Head is turned back to the center in a smooth action as soon as the breath is taken.
- The breath is released gradually or held until just before the next in breath.
- Breathing occurs every two arm pulls (one stroke cycle). This is unilateral breathing. It may also be taken after every three arm pulls (1.5 stroke cycles). This is bilateral breathing.

### Key Points - Timing

Usually there are six leg kicks in one arm cycle. This may vary between swimmers. Swimmers who prefer middle- and long-distance swims tend to kick less frequently.



### Teaching the Freestyle/Front Crawl

In order for the athlete to achieve an almost horizontal and streamlined body position, the athlete should be confident enough to have his/her face in the water. Breathing is best left until the stroke basics are mastered.

#### Practice full stroke without breathing

##### Teaching Points

1. Hold head so that the athlete can see forward and slightly downward.

##### Coaching Tips

- Stabilize kickboard or pull swimmer through the water as they kick, if necessary.
- Demonstrate to the swimmer a streamlined body position.
- Swimmer stands out of water in a streamlined position.
- Encourage the swimmer to be as streamlined as possible with hips high in water.

### Teaching Body Position

#### Practice push and glide

##### Teaching Points

1. Push from the wall with strong legs.
2. Stretch long and thin.
3. Ears between the arms.

### Teaching Leg Action

#### Practice legs only at side of pool

##### Teaching Points

1. Up and down movements of the legs.
2. Kick from the hips.
3. Long straight legs.

#### Practice legs only with a flotation device under each arm

##### Teaching Points

1. Keep legs close together.
2. Fingers grip end of the floats and knuckles touching.
3. Up and down action.

#### Practice legs only, holding one float, arms fully extended

##### Teaching Points

1. Long straight legs.
2. Feet turned slightly inward.





### **Practice push and glide without float; add leg action at end of glide**

#### Teaching Points

1. Long straight body.
2. Kick when reaching the surface.

#### Coaching Tips

- In the pool, assist the swimmer's legs in a kicking motion. Repeat often, gradually removing assistance.
- Stabilize kickboard as necessary for one pool length.
- Swimmer kicks alone, keeping legs straight, kicking from the hips with toes pointed slightly inward (pigeon-toed).
- Keep toes under the water during kick.
- Encourage swimmer to kick with face in the water.

### **Practice freestyle kick in the water**

#### Teaching Points

1. Hold onto wall or similar stationary support in prone position.
2. Bend knees slightly, keeping feet together with toes pointed slightly inward (pigeon-toed).
3. Repeat kicking action, and encourage swimmer to put face in water to help raise hips.
4. Hold onto kickboard or similar flotation device with arms extended in front of the body and repeat kicking action.
5. Extend arms out in front of the body without the kickboard, assuming streamlined body position for balance, and repeat kicking action.
6. Encourage swimmer to put face in water and keep hips high.

### **Practice freestyle flutter kick, kicking in prone position one full pool length**

#### Teaching Points

1. Flutter kick for one length of the pool without stopping, with or without a kickboard, maintaining a good streamlined body position.
2. Keep legs relaxed, toes pointed slightly inward (pigeon-toed).
3. Kick more from the hips than the knee.
4. Encourage swimmer to put face in water and keep hips high.



### Practice freestyle kick with assistance

#### Teaching Points

1. Sit on edge of pool with legs in the water.
2. Keep legs together, toes slightly pigeon-toed.
3. Kick so that the feet are just below the surface of the water.



#### Coaching Tips

- Swimmer sits on edge of pool with the coach standing in the water facing athlete.
- Hold the swimmer's feet, toes pointed slightly inward (pigeon-toed).
- Swimmer kicks from hips with toes under water. Assist swimmer in keeping legs straight.
- Encourage the swimmer to make a little splash with the feet.
- Good for warm-ups.

### Practice deck drills for flutter kick

#### Teaching Points

1. Athlete stands on a step or side of the pool, if possible, so one leg can swing back and forth without hitting the ground. Swing the leg from the hip with the knee and foot relaxed. Notice when the knee bends naturally.
2. Athlete stands on the deck with one foot slightly forward and the other back. Feet are no more than one foot apart. Athlete jumps slightly and switches feet – forward to back – back to forward. Repeat this movement. In water aerobics, it is called a cross-country leg action.
3. Sit on the edge of the pool with the legs overhanging the water. This works best when the water level is lower than the deck. Lean back and with legs straight, imitate the flutter kick from the hips.



### Practice water drills for flutter kick

#### Coaching Tips

- Once this is learned in slow motion, the athlete can increase the speed until they feel like they are "whipping" their lower leg back and forth.

#### Teaching Points

1. Flutter kick while holding onto the pool side. Works best if one hand is on the top of the wall and the other is directly below it approximately one-half-meter deep for support.
2. Kick while gliding away from the wall. These drills can be done with or without kickboards.

#### Exploration Drills

These drills are meant to help athletes feel their kick better and to help them to correct their own mistakes. You can ask the athlete to do it incorrectly so that they can feel the correct form better.

- ♦ Kick as fast as you can.
- ♦ Kick as slow as you can.
- ♦ Kick with lots of splash.
- ♦ Kick with no splash.
- ♦ Kick with no leg bend at all.
- ♦ Kick as if riding a bicycle.
- ♦ Flutter kick on your side. Use a kickboard or some other flotation device. This assists the athlete to feel the kick both forward and backward.
- ♦ Kick with fins.
- ♦ Kick across pool with head up. If swimmer can do this and keep their mouth above water for breathing, they know they have a very strong kick.

#### Coaching Tips

- Do not point toes. This will cause a cramp in the arch of the foot. Relax the ankle and let the force of the water move the ankle joint for maximum force from the foot.
- Pull the knee back. Do not pull the foot backward. Pulling the foot back often causes a cramp in the calf.



### Teaching Breathing

All of the preceding practices can be achieved with the head above water. This enables the swimmer to breathe without any head movements. Once the preceding skills have been mastered, it is now possible to introduce breathing and the movement of the head. All of the following practices can be done with the face in the water. The athlete is looking forward and slightly down.

#### **Practice leg action with one arm bent, the other arm fully extended with the thumb on top of the nearest corner of the float.**

##### Teaching Points

1. One arm is fully extended and holding the leading edge of the float.
2. Look toward bent arm and breathe.
3. Breathe out under water.
4. Smooth head movements.
5. Change sides.

#### **Practice leg action with a floatation device held by one hand; the other hand is out in front**

##### Teaching Points

1. Head in water, breathe and pull arm through to thighs.
2. Turn head to side when hand passes thighs.
3. Long straight legs, up and down movements.

#### **Practice the push and glide, add leg kick. Breathe as required and pull through to hips**

##### Teaching Points

1. Turn head to side for breath.
2. Turn head as hand is near to the hip.
3. Continuous leg kick.

## Freestyle Breathing Rules

### **Do not hold breath**

If athletes are not inhaling, they are constantly exhaling slowly through both their noses and mouths. Holding one's breath can cause water to go up the nose.

### **Exhale into the water**

If the athletes do not exhale, they cannot inhale. They do not have time to both exhale and inhale above water, so it is better to exhale when their faces are in the water and inhale when their faces are above water.

### **Do not lift the head when breathing**

This is one of the major mistakes, as it causes the feet to sink and water to go up the nose. Keep the forehead down, and the chin slightly tucked while turning both the head and the body to get a breath.



### **Open mouth to inhale**

Do not attempt to breathe in through a small opening. This increases pressure and the chance that athletes will swallow water. If their mouths are open wide and some water gets in, have them spit it back out after getting air. This is normal. Try not to panic.

Inhale quickly and exhale slower. Inhale quickly when the head is turned and the arm is in the correct position. Exhale much slower so that it continues until the next inhalation.

### **Open mouth when exhaling**

Do not attempt to exhale through the nose. Some air will come out of the nose anyway. Forcing all of the air out of the nose can disturb sensitive membranes and create pain. If an athlete's nose drains or he/she gets headaches after swimming, check the way the athlete exhales.

### **Turn head to breathe with the arm pull**

Timing the head turn to the arm pull is crucial to breathing correctly. Athletes cannot wait until their arms gets back before turning their heads. Swimmers must perform these motions at the same time. Attempt to get the athlete's head turned just prior to the hand coming out of the water.





## Teaching Arm Action

### Practice arm action in shallow water

#### Teaching Points

1. Athlete leans forward with one foot in front of the other.
2. Shoulders are on the water surface.
3. Hands enter between the head and shoulders.
4. Thumb enters the water first.
5. Elbow high.

### Practice freestyle stroke on land

#### Teaching Points

1. Standing on pool deck, bend over at waist, keeping back straight.
2. Extend both arms fully in front of head, hands in line with shoulders.
3. Move one hand under the body with elbow at a 45-degree angle at midstroke.
4. Push hand past hips toward feet, finishing at thigh.
5. Pull arm back, relax forearm below elbow on recovery.
6. Recover hand to starting position in line with shoulders.
7. Repeat with other hand.



### Practice arm action while walking forward in shallow water

#### Teaching Points

1. Sweep outward, downward and inward toward the body's center line.
2. Sweep past hips.
3. Smooth action.
4. Alternate arm action.

### Practice the push and glide and add arm action

#### Teaching Points

1. Strong kick.
2. Smooth arm action.
3. High elbow.



### Coaching Tips

- On land/pool deck, stand behind the swimmer and hold his/her arms. Move one arm up and forward through the stroke motion. Alternate arms.
- On pool deck, have the swimmer practice arm action.
- In the water, using kickboard and fins, have the swimmer hold the kickboard outstretched and thumbs up. Practice arm action for a short distance, using fins to keep body high in water.
- Provide assistance if necessary, with hand moving through the water under the body.
- Encourage swimmer to place face in water.

### Practice freestyle stroke without assistance

#### Teaching Points

1. Stand in chest-deep water, assume the prone float position.
2. Place a flotation device between the legs; encourage kicking or use fins to help with movement of upper body/arm action.
3. Have swimmer take a breath. Swimmer is encouraged to breathe to one side.
4. Demonstrate the correct arm stroke for two complete arm strokes.



### Coaching Tips

- Assist swimmer into prone float.
- Move with swimmer through two arm strokes, keeping hand just under body for reassurance.
- Have swimmer take a breath and put face in the water.
- Have swimmer take two complete arm strokes without breathing.
- Practice freestyle arm-pull drills.

#### Teaching Points

1. Practice pulling while standing in the water.
2. Practice the pull, one arm at a time while the other holds onto a kickboard. This is a good drill to practice breathing.
3. Practice the pull, one arm at a time without a flotation device.
4. Swim with a closed fist for a distance and then with hands open. This can increase the "feel" for the water.
5. Swim with hand paddles. Again, this increases the feel for the pull.
6. Swim with pull buoys between the legs. This reduces the effect of the kick on the body.
7. At the end of each pull, touch the thumb to the leg. This makes sure the swimmer is pulling all the way back.



### Practice complete freestyle stroke, using the arm stroke and kick, for a distance of 15 meters

#### Teaching Points

1. Have the swimmer stand in chest-deep water.
2. Assume the prone float position.
3. Combine the freestyle kick with freestyle pull.
4. Keep face in the water.
5. Turn head to breathe every other arm stroke for recovery.
6. Turn head to side after two strokes or one full cycle.
7. Breathe on the side opposite the stroking arm. Turn head to preferred side, keeping ear in water, after two arm strokes or one full cycle.

#### Coaching Tips

- Have athlete swim three to five arm pulls while kicking legs and moving arms opposite each other.
- Head follows hand on the finish.
- Maintain smooth, steady kicking action.
- Shoulders and hips turn slightly when taking a breath. Swimmer is in lateral position.
- Inhale gently; the swimmer's head will turn to the side as the hand recovers past the head.
- Allow swimmer to use buoyancy belt or fins to maintain a streamlined, balanced body position.
- Allow the swimmer to use fins to help maintain a good arm action.

### Practice freestyle arm recovery drills

#### Teaching Points

1. Practice shoulder shrugs forward while standing on deck or in the water and arms hanging relaxed at sides. Start with both shoulders moving forward at the same time and then alternate the shrugs. Add a high elbow move and then add the rest of the arm recovery motion.
2. Stand on deck or in the water. Elevate the shoulders and raise elbows high. If possible, the elbows are as close to shoulder high as possible. Move the hands forward and back as if swinging the arms like a huge crane. This helps the athlete feel the arm movement at the shoulder joint.
3. Stand in the water and have the swimmers imitate the arm recovery movement while dragging their fingertips across the surface. This helps them build kinesthetic awareness of what they are doing.
4. Swim with one hand holding onto a floatation device such as a kickboard. Pull with the other arm and recover with the fingertips dragging across the surface.
5. Swim with one hand holding onto a floatation device and focus on high elbows with hands below the elbow. Do not let swimmers bring the hand inside like a chicken wing.
6. Swim catch-up style (hands touch between pulls), and concentrate on both the pull and the recovery.
7. Swim with a kickboard in one hand. Pull, and, when you enter, aim the hand for the corner of the board and reach out under the side of the board instead of for the center. This can correct some of the common mistakes of moving the hands across the body on the reach after entry.
8. Watch the hand enter the water and make sure the elbow is high and the palm is facing away.





## Teaching Timing

### Practice freestyle stroke with rhythmic breathing for one full pool length, 25 meters

#### Teaching Points

1. Push off from the side of the pool in a streamlined, balanced position.
2. Swim a coordinated freestyle for one pool length.
3. Demonstrate correct rhythmic breathing while swimming.

#### Coaching Tips

- Have the swimmer swim a coordinated freestyle stroke as far as possible. When the swimmer becomes tired or the stroke becomes uncoordinated, stop and support the swimmer under the trunk. Encourage the swimmer to swim at least four more strokes while being supported.
- Record the swimmer's daily progress. Place a cone on the deck to indicate the distance swum during the last practice.
- Have the swimmer swim between lane lines. If the swimmer is swimming into one rope, he/she is probably pulling too hard with the opposite arm. Have the swimmer swim on top of the black line. If the line appears to be moving, then there is a possible over-rotation of the body caused by the swimmer's arms crossing over his/her center line, or the swimmer's legs are not kicking evenly.

### Freestyle - Faults & Fixes Chart

Error	Correction - Drill/Test Reference
Lack of squeeze on the recovery phase of the pull.	Tell the swimmer to clap hands together as he/she squeezes the arms together.
Kicking too wide.	Have the swimmer kick with a pull buoy on. If it falls, the knees are too wide.
Knees coming under the stomach.	Have the swimmer kick on his/her back and keep the knees at or below the water surface.
Swimmer does not get hands under the body on the pull.	Have the hands scull outward and then inward until they almost touch under the stomach. The hands now form a triangle.
Swimmer is not pushing hands past hips.	Put adhesive tape on the legs below the suit line, and tell the swimmer to touch the tape.
Swimmer can not feel the stroke pattern in the water.	Have the swimmer swim only two or three strokes at a time. Review the proper pattern.



Skill Progression - Backstroke

<b>Your Athlete Can:</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>
Swim on back	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform backstroke correctly for a distance of one pool length	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Start on back	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform backstroke start while facing the starting end; both hands on a starting block	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform the correct backstroke start and swims one pool length	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Turn on back	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform backstroke turn - assisted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform backstroke turn in chest-deep water – independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Totals</b>			



### Backstroke/Back Crawl

Backstroke, also known as back crawl, is probably the easiest of all competitive strokes to teach and learn, as the swimmer has his/her head out of the water, unlike freestyle where the face is in the water and breathing and arm coordination must be mastered.

Some learners prefer backstroke because their faces are out of the water and breathing is not an issue. Backstroke and front crawl have similarities. These similarities are useful when beginning swimmers are reminded of a skill or part of a skill which may be familiar to them.

### Body Position

#### Key Points

- Supine, horizontal and streamlined.
- Ears are submerged just below the water surface.
- Head remains still, eyes look upward or slightly down toward toes.
- Chin is tucked in to ensure that the legs are kept in the water.
- Hips are kept close to the surface.
- Shoulders roll along with the stroke.
- To keep the legs in the water, there is a slight slope down from the head to the hips.

### Kick

The leg action assists in maintaining a horizontal body position and balancing the arm action. This will minimize the legs swaying from side to side. It may also contribute to some propulsion.

#### Key Points

- The continuous up and down alternating action is started from the hips.
- Legs are close together.
- Legs are kept almost straight with the knees remaining below the surface.
- Relaxed ankles allow the toes to point.
- Feet break the surface at the end of the upbeat, trying not to splash.

### Arm Action

The arm action is continuous and alternating. The arm action provides constant propulsion. Bent-arm action is more efficient than straight-arm action. The straight-arm action may be preferred in the early stages of development.

#### Key Points - Entry

- The little finger enters the water first, straight arm and close to the shoulder line.

#### Key Points - Initial Down Sweep

- The arm sweeps downward and outward to the catch. This is assisted by a natural shoulder roll.
- The hand is pitched downward and outward by the palm.



### Key Points - Up Sweep

- The hand pitch is changed to sweep inward and upward.
- The arms are bent at a 90-degree angle at the elbow.

### Key Points - Final Down Sweep

- The arm pushes through to the thigh.
- Fingers are pointing sideways and palms are downward.

### Key Points - Recovery

- The hand comes out thumb first.
- The arm turns gradually to ensure that the little finger is ready for entry.
- Arm remains straight and relaxed throughout.

### Key Points - Breathing

- Breathing is natural. As a rule, breathe every stroke cycle.

### Key Points - Timing

- Six leg kicks to one stroke cycle.

## Teaching the Backstroke/Back Crawl

If athletes are confident on their backs, then backstroke can be an easy stroke to learn. It is also advisable to teach the athletes to stand from lying on their backs prior to teaching the full stroke. This will increase confidence in athletes.

Back float (supine) and push and glide practices are used to help maintain a good body position in preparation for teaching the stroke. Safety is very important, and all athletes must ensure that the area directly behind them is clear before they launch themselves into any practice on their backs.

The swimmers move through the water on their backs (supine) and their leg action is continuous? like in freestyle. The propulsive phase of the kick takes place with the swimmer's upbeat action.

The swimmer's arm is straight and extended behind the shoulder as the hand enters the water. Swimmers are taught to enter the water with the little finger first and with as little splash as possible. Athletes are encouraged to practice drills to achieve good stroke technique. The shape of the whole arm action/pull is in the form of an "S" shape.

Swimmers who have difficulty maintaining relaxed leg and ankle movement may find it difficult to achieve correct backstroke skills.



## Teaching Body Position

### Practice

Coach assists athlete in maintaining contact with wall, holding legs or rail, if available. Hook toes under rail. Lie out on back; arms at sides.

### Teaching Points

1. Stomach up.
2. Breathe normally.
3. Practice push and glide on back.
4. Head in water; ears submerged.

### Practice floating on back

### Teaching Points

1. Lie flat
2. Relax

## Teaching the Leg Action

### Practice with a float under each arm, push and glide, add leg action

### Teaching Points

1. Kick from hips.
2. Long straight legs, pointed toes.

### Practice holding one float on stomach or chest, add leg action

### Teaching Points

1. Relaxed, floppy ankles.

### Practice holding one float over hips, add leg action.

### Teaching Points

1. Push hips up to meet the float.
2. Long straight legs, close together.

### Practice push and glide, arms by sides, add leg action.

### Teaching Points

1. Kick up to the water surface.
2. Break the water surface with your toes.



### Practice leg action with sculling

#### Teaching Points

1. Keep knees under the surface.
2. Long straight legs.

### Practice push and glide with arms extended over the head

#### Teaching Points

1. Long straight body.
2. Long legs.

### Practice backstroke kick on land

#### Teaching Points

1. Lay on mat or bench. Have the swimmer lay on pool deck with legs in water.
2. Keep legs together, toes slightly pigeon-toed.
3. Kick so that the toes are just below the water surface.

#### Coaching Tips

- Hold the swimmer's feet, toes pointed slightly inward.
- Have the swimmer kick from the hips.
- Have the swimmer kick and feel the water with the feet.

### Practice backstroke kick in the water

#### Teaching Points

1. Using a small kickboard, assume the back float position in waist deep water.
2. Extend the arms/board over the head or knees, as this will help stop the swimmer from kicking with an exaggerated bent knee action.
3. Kick mostly from the hips. Bend the knees slightly, keeping the action relaxed.
4. Keep the legs together with toes pointed slightly inward.
5. Kick so the toes are just below the water surface.





### Coaching Tips

- Holding a kickboard over the head or knees, have the swimmer keep the knees below the water. Have the swimmer hold the kickboard with straight arms over the knees to reduce too much bent knee action.
- If necessary, assist the swimmer in keeping his/her hips up. Remind the swimmer to push hips up high in the water.
- With head at about a 45-degree angle from the water, have the swimmer look at his/her feet while kicking. Remember, too much head lift will change the buoyancy of the swimmer.
- Keep kick steady/continuous.
- Have swimmer kick so that toes barely break the water surface, in a motorboat style. Remind swimmers to kick in a fast, relaxed way.

### Practice backstroke flutter kick for one pool length

#### Teaching Points

1. Assume the back float position in waist deep water by grasping the pool edge (if at water level), a flotation device or free float.
2. Place the head at a 45-degree angle, eyes looking toward the feet.
3. Keep body and legs in alignment in the water.
4. Keep knees together, toes pigeon-toed.
5. Keep feet under water.
6. Perform the backstroke kick, arms extended over the head with or without a kickboard.
7. Perform the backstroke kick with arms extended over the knees, and, when confident, have the swimmer kick with arms extended behind body (i.e., in a streamline position).
8. Kick one length of the pool without stopping. Kick a short distance and gradually increase with development of this skill.

### Coaching Tips

- Have the swimmer assume the back float.
- If necessary, stand beside the swimmer to provide support under the shoulders and hips.
- Assist the swimmer by providing support if necessary. Gradually eliminate assistance.
- Place a flotation device around swimmer's waist, if necessary, for reassurance.
- Have the swimmer kick while keeping head from turning side to side.
- Keep up a steady kick with toes just below the water surface.
- Kick from the hips. Knees may be bent slightly, legs and ankles relaxed.



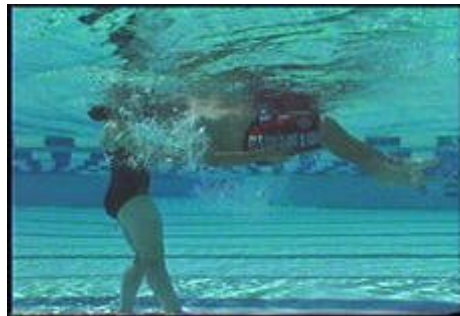
## Teaching the Backstroke - Arm Stroke

### Practice the push and glide, add arm action

This exercise can also be done with coach assistance until the athlete can accomplish the skill independently.

#### Teaching Points

1. Arm straight over shoulder.
2. Brush ear with top of arm.
3. Thumb out first.



**Practice pull along lane rope with one arm action. This encourages a bent arm action.**

#### Teaching Points

1. Reach back and pull through to the thigh.
2. Straight - Bend – Straight.





### Practice backstroke arm stroke on land

#### Teaching Points

1. The athlete stands on pool deck.
2. Extend both arms straight over the head.
3. Head is tilted forward at a 45-degree angle.
4. With either hand, begin in a straight line as close to the body as possible toward the feet.
5. Keep the fingertips pointed up toward the water surface.
6. Wrist is slightly bent.
7. Press the hand past the hips to the upper thigh.
8. Recover the arm and hand to the starting position with arm straight.
9. Repeat same movement with the other arm.
10. Keep the back, hips, and legs straight.



#### Coaching Tips

- Encourage the swimmer to enter the water little-finger first to ensure that the catch is correct.
- In the water, the swimmer is encouraged to push the hips up.
- The first arm/hand enters the “water,” same plane as the head, with the elbow straight.
- Ensure that the side of the hand and little finger are pointed downward.
- A straight line is drawn with the hand as close to the body as possible, fingertips pointing up.
- Swimmer’s hand will enter the water in line with the shoulder width.
- Backstroke swimmers are aware not to cross over their center line, as this will cause rolling of the body.



**Practice backstroke arm stroke in shallow water**

Teaching Points

1. The arms are fully extended beside swimmer to maintain a better balance in the water.
2. With either hand, begin by lifting the hand from the water, thumb first with the side of the hand, wrist slightly bent.
3. Shoulder rotates slightly as the hand presses toward the bottom of the pool.
4. Draw a straight line with the hand as close to the body as possible, fingertips pointing toward the water surface.
5. Press the hand toward the feet, finishing past the hips.
6. Recover to the starting position, keeping the arm straight.
7. Repeat the same motion with the other hand.



Exit water with thumb first.



Lift extended arm straight up and begin shoulder rotation.



Continue shoulder rotation and enter water, little-finger first.



Draw straight line, pressing hand to feet.



Finish with hand past hips.



### Coaching Tips

- Have the swimmer use a pull buoy, if necessary, to keep feet and legs elevated.
- Support the swimmer in the back float. Have the swimmer practice with one arm until the stroke is correct. Switch and practice with the other arm.
- Guide the swimmer's hand along the body, past the hips, finishing with the arm fully extended. The hand will be alongside the thigh.
- Have the swimmer keep his/her shoulders back, head tilted forward at a 45-degree angle, eyes looking toward the feet.
- Body rotates slightly to the side of the arm stroke.
- Encourage swimmer to push hips up.

### Practice complete backstroke using both the arm stroke and kick, and progress to swimming backstroke for 15 meters

#### Teaching Points

1. Assume the back float in waist-deep water.
2. Arms are extended over the head.
3. Head is kept still, with eyes looking toward the feet
4. Begin and maintain kicking with the backstroke kick.
5. Perform the arm stroke while kicking.
6. The arms rotate in opposition to each other.
7. Lift the shoulder to assist in leading the recovery hand.
8. Roll the shoulders, keeping head still, which will assist in leading the recovery.
9. Have the swimmer perform the backstroke for three to five full strokes.
10. Use fins with the swimmer's kick to help maintain a high body position and aid in working on the arm action.

### Coaching Tips

- Hips and shoulder roll slightly with each stroke.
- Breathing pattern: Inhale on right arm recovery. Exhale on left arm recovery.
- Coach may assist by holding hips up as the swimmer performs the stroke, or have the swimmer perform the skill using fins.
- Swimmer may hold a small kickboard on their stomach with one hand, and practice with one arm at a time while kicking.

### Practice push and glide, start leg action, add arm action

#### Teaching Points

1. Continuous kick.
2. Breathe normally.



**Practice complete stroke, increasing distance as stroke develops**

Teaching Points

1. Continuous arm action.
2. Lead with the hand.
3. Hand draws an “S” on its side under the water.
4. Eyes open - look toward the ceiling (roof/sky).

**Backstroke - Faults & Fixes Chart**

Error	Correction	Drill/Test Reference
Knees bending too much during kick.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage swimmer to relax legs and ankles.</li> <li>• Kick from the hips.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Practice kick by using board and extending board and arms over knees.</li> <li>2. Kick short distances. Board will help stop too much knee bend.</li> </ol>
Feet and hips are too low in water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check swimmers body position.</li> <li>• Encourage swimmer to push hips up to top of water.</li> <li>• Encourage a continuous kick with the feet making a little splash.</li> <li>• Check swimmers head position. If head is too high hips will drop.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use of fins will encourage the swimmer to push hips up.</li> <li>2. Practice kick with and without kickboard.</li> <li>3. Encourage the swimmer to practice a streamlined kick.</li> <li>4. Practice kick with head tilted back, eyes to roof.</li> </ol>
Swimmer’s body rolls in the water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swimmer is over-rotating.</li> <li>• Check for correct hand entry.</li> <li>• Check that swimmer’s hands are not crossing over center line of body.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Practice specific drills and encourage swimmer to enter water with arms straight.</li> <li>2. Overexaggerate hand entry.</li> <li>3. Ask swimmer to enter shoulder-width or wider.</li> </ol>
Too much splash when hands enter the water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check for correct hand entry.</li> <li>• Encourage swimmer to enter water with little finger first.</li> </ul>	Practice specific hand entry drill, thumb up/rotation of hand/little finger in.



## Coaches Tips for Backstroke – At-A-Glance

### **Tips for Practice**

1. Break down the teaching of the whole stroke.
2. Make use of fins to help develop upper body movement/arm action.



Skill Progression - Breaststroke

<b>Your Athlete Can:</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>
Swim breaststroke on front	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform breaststroke with rhythmic breathing for one pool length	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform two breaststroke turns in a row after swimming one to two pool lengths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Totals</b>			



## Breaststroke

Breaststroke is one of the four competitive strokes. It is also a valuable survival stroke. When swimming the breaststroke the swimmer is prone in the water, and the arm and leg actions are symmetric. The swimmer breathes in at the beginning of each arm stroke.

Breaststroke is the only competitive stroke where the arm recovery is carried out under water and where a greater amount of frontal resistance is experienced. The arm action is an out sweep, down sweep, in sweep and up sweep with recovery in a streamline position.

The leg kick in breaststroke is probably the most difficult of all kicks for swimmers to master and may take some time. The leg action is simultaneous and is sometimes described as a “whip kick.” In addition to the breathing, the correct timing of the arms and legs is very important.

Swimmers are encouraged to develop good streamlining skills when performing the breaststroke, and correct turns and finishes need to be reinforced. The teaching of a “split stroke” at the start and turn phase of the swim is very important.

## Teaching the Breaststroke Kick

### Practice the breaststroke kick on pool deck

#### Teaching Points

1. Swimmer lies face down on the pool deck.
2. Legs are fully extended, knees and ankles together, toes pointed.
3. Pull the heels straight up toward the buttocks.
4. Turn the toes out.
5. Keep heels about same width as hips.
6. Kick straight back.
7. Finish with toes pointed.

### Practice the breaststroke kick on pool edge

#### Teaching Points

1. Have the swimmer sit on the pool edge with legs together, heels to wall.
2. Swimmer turns the feet out, making a “V” shape – dorsi-flexed.
3. Keeping the knees together, move the heels along wall.
4. Have the swimmer kick around—“whip”? till both feet are outstretched in front, toes pointed up.
5. Return heels to wall.

#### Coaching Tips

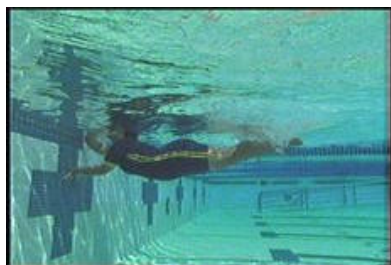
- When the swimmer lies on his/her stomach on the pool deck, it will keep the knees from coming up under the stomach.
- Initially, you may have to hold the feet so that the toes are flexed out; bring the heels up to the buttocks.
- Help the swimmer maintain a 90-degree angle at the knees.



### Practice the breaststroke kick while in the water

#### Teaching Points

1. Standing in chest-deep water, grasp side of pool at water level if possible.
2. Holding on to side of the pool, extend body to prone position.
3. The legs are extended, knees and feet together.



4. Draw heels up to the buttocks.
5. Turn feet out, with heels about the same width as the hips.



6. Kick backward, keeping the heels close to the water surface.







## Coaching Tips

- Swimmer stands in waist-deep water, grabs the side of the pool, holding onto the gutter.
- Assist the swimmer, if necessary, to keep hips up while practicing the kick.
- Make sure the knees are not coming up under the stomach by bringing the heels up to the buttocks.
- Turn the toes out. Hold the feet if needed, assisting the swimmer to feel the toes pointing out.
- With the heels at the buttocks, separated approximately the width of the hips, kick backward until the feet are together with legs fully extended.
- Ensure that you do not over-rotate the knees when helping the swimmer to turn the feet out.

## Practice the breaststroke kick for 15 meters

### Teaching Points

1. Swimmer stands in chest-deep water.
2. Swimmer holds a kickboard with one hand on each side, arms fully extended.



3. Swimmer performs the breaststroke kick for 15 meters.



4. Swimmer executes two to three kicks in a row with his/her face in the water.





### Coaching Tips

- Swimmer stands in chest-deep water.
- Swimmer holds a kick board with hands on both sides, keeping the arms straight.
- Swimmer practices the breaststroke kick for 15 meters.
- Follow behind the swimmer, holding his/her feet and guiding them through the proper movement if needed.
- Two kickboards may be used, one under each arm for better balance.
- Swimmer may hold a board to his/her chest. This will help with buoyancy, keeping legs together.
- In a streamlined position, have swimmer push off wall, do two to three breaststroke kicks, then recover to a standing position.
- With the swimmer's hands at his/her side, have swimmer push off wall on his/her back and perform breaststroke kick on back. This is also known as survival backstroke kick.

### OR

- Have the swimmer bend knees bringing heels back toward buttocks.
- Turn feet out.
- Keeping knees together, perform a "whip" kick, bringing feet back together and finishing with the body in a streamlined position.



## Practice the breaststroke arm stroke on dry land

### Teaching Points



1. Standing on the pool deck, bend at the waist and extend the arms in front of the head. Keep palms of the hands facing downward.
2. Flex wrists slightly, fingers pointing slightly down.



3. Begin stroke with the arms pressing outward and downward.
4. As the press continues, the elbows bend to establish a high elbow position.



5. Push the arms and hands as far the shoulders. The hands are pitched inward and pressed together.
6. With the arms and hands squeezed together, the arms are stretched forward, as far as possible, into a streamlined position.

### Coaching Tips

- Swimmer extends arms all the way forward in a streamline position.
- Stand on the deck behind the swimmer. Move his/her arms through the proper arm stroke pattern several times.
- Emphasis is placed on keeping the elbows high and close to the body during the backward press.
- The hands shoot forward to the recovery position, ready for the next pull.
- Swimmer stands in chest-deep water and practices the above technique. Encourage swimmer to “feel the water” with each arm pull.



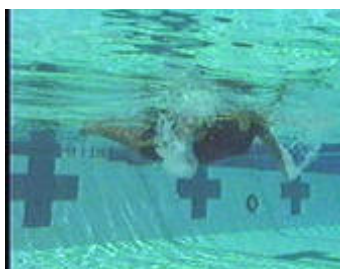
### Practice the breaststroke pull in chest-deep water without the kick

#### Teaching Points

1. Swimmer stands in chest-deep water and places a kickboard or pull buoy between legs.
2. Assume prone float position.
3. Swimmer performs the breaststroke pull.
4. Press the body forward with the hands.
5. When the hands are at the shoulders, “let go” of the water and “shoot” the hands forward to the starting position.
6. As the body slides up and forward, eye contact is made with the end of the pool.
7. At the completion of the stroke, the eyes look back at the pool bottom.
8. Chin is pushed forward to breathe.



Push hands out, slightly wider than shoulders.



Drive hands down, propelling body forward and out.



Hands come together, facing each other, completing the propulsive phase of stroke.



### Coaching Tips

- To aid in developing correct arm action, have the swimmer wear fins and use a very gentle fly kick instead of a breaststroke kick. Fins can be used in breaststroke drills where the emphasis is placed on developing and maintaining good arm-stroke technique.
- Swimmer assumes the prone float position with a flotation device between the legs.
- Arms are fully extended, pressing against the ears with the back of the hands together; body is streamlined.
- Eyes are focused on the bottom of the pool.
- Swimmer presses the hands out, down and in, bringing the elbows to the side of the body, then pushing the arms forward, aligned with the shoulders, to a streamlined position.
- Swimmer can use a small dolphin kick, using fins, if available, to maintain balance.
- The coach can also hold the swimmer up at the waist, or have the swimmer use a flotation device.
- Encourage the swimmer to make three to five pulls to help develop rhythm and “feel for the water.”
- Elbows touch the sides of the body when pulling forward.
- Encourage concentration on pressing with the hands, not leading with the elbows.
- Try to have the swimmer “feel the water.”



## Teaching Breaststroke Breathing - Timing

### Practice breaststroke with regular breathing for 15 meters

#### Teaching Points



1. Stand in chest-deep water, bending at the waist.
2. Take a breath.
3. Put face in the water and take a streamline position.



4. As the arm stroke starts, push the chin forward just enough for the mouth to clear the surface, and take a breath as the hands come under the shoulders.



5. "Jump" the hands forward to recovery.



6. Perform the breaststroke, taking a breath every stroke, as described above, for 15 meters.





**Coaching Tips**

- Have the swimmer assume the prone float position.
- Begin with the arms extended fully over the head – streamlined.
- Eyes are looking slightly forward at the bottom of the pool.
- Begin stroke with the back of the hands together and the palms of the hands facing down.
- Palms are pressed out and up to start, along with the elbows bending.
- Heels begin their kick at the point where the hands begin their press.
- As the hands “jump” forward, the feet are thrust (“whipped”) backward.
- The timing rhythm is – pull – kick - hands forward glide.

**Breaststroke - Faults & Fixes Chart**

<b>Error</b>	<b>Correction</b>	<b>Drill/Test Reference</b>
Timing of breathing/arm stroke incorrect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check the position of the swimmer’s arms in the pull.</li> <li>• Generally, breathing timing will be incorrect because the hands/arms are being pulled to hips and not under chest.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Using fins, practice correct arm action.</li> <li>2. Use gentle fly kick when performing this drill.</li> </ol>
Timing of breathing incorrect.	Check position of head during recovery.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emphasize importance of placing face in water only to hair line.</li> <li>2. Do not to get top of head wet.</li> </ol>
Body position angled or pulling to one side.	Check that both leg and arm kicks are simultaneous and same amount of pull/kick is being carried out on each side.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Practice leg kick with/without board; introduce specific kick drills.</li> <li>2. Practice correct arm pull with/without fins.</li> </ol>
Body not moving quickly or far enough under water on start/turn. Arms will be apart.	Ensure that swimmer is in a streamlined position.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Practice lots of push offs from wall in a streamlined position.</li> <li>2. Try to get swimmer to see how far he/she can go under water.</li> </ol>
Uneven leg kick/or hips higher on one side during swim.	Ensure that both feet are turned out correctly and that leg kick is even and simultaneous.	Practice specific drills to encourage correct leg kick and body position.



## Coaches Tips for Breaststroke – At-A-Glance

### **Tips for Practice**

1. Ensure swimmer can maintain a good streamlined body position.
2. Check that the swimmer is able to turn feet out without hurting.
3. Check that the swimmer has good knee rotation.
4. Use fins to help develop and maintain good arm action.
5. Introduce specific drills to help with leg kick, arm action and whole stroke.
6. Break the skill down.
7. Check correct timing of leg kick/arm action and breathing.
8. Encourage swimmer to always finish off on the wall, touching with two hands.

### **Tips for Competition**

1. Practice lots of starts and finishes.
2. Ensure that swimmer can perform a split stroke; if not, encourage good streamlining.
3. Always practice finishing on a full stroke and touching wall with two hands.
4. Remind swimmer not to look around while competing. Doing so may cause a disqualification and may cause hips to drop to one side.





Skill Progression - Butterfly

<b>Your Athlete Can:</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>
Swim butterfly on front	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform butterfly using dolphin kick for 15 meters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform butterfly with rhythmic breathing for one pool length	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform a butterfly turn after swimming butterfly without stopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perform two butterfly turns in a row after swimming two pool lengths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Totals</b>			



### Butterfly

The butterfly stroke is generally taught after the swimmer has established basic skills in the other three competitive strokes. The butterfly stroke relies on good timing and simultaneous arm and leg actions. The stroke is best taught by breaking it down into three phases: kick, arm action and breathing.

1. A propulsive kick, called a “dolphin” kick, is used to help move the swimmer through the water. The swimmer’s legs stay together and move simultaneously. The kick consists of a downbeat and an upbeat action.



2. The arm action is simultaneous with both arms recovering over the waterline. The swimmer’s hands enter the water in line with shoulder width. The arm pull/action consists of the entry and catch, out sweep, in sweep, up sweep, and arm recovery.
3. The breathing phase of the stroke starts when the arms begin to sweep outward during the catch, and the swimmer will have taken a breath during the start of the arm recovery. The swimmer’s head will be facing forward, and it is good to encourage the swimmer to breath after every second arm cycle (i.e., every second stroke).



## Teaching the Butterfly – Arm Stroke

### Practice the butterfly arm stroke on dry land

#### Teaching Points



1. Stand on pool deck, bend at waist and extend the arms straight over the head with the arms pressed against ears.
2. Keep the hands pressed together with palms facing down, fingers pointing slightly down and ready for the catch position.



3. Press hands outside the shoulders, outward and downward.



4. Finish the pull with the hands pressing under and past hips.



5. Recover hands with elbows high.
6. Sweep the hands forward over head with the hands relaxed.



7. Return to start position.



### Coaching Tips

- Arms begin the stroke with the hands shoulder-width apart.
- The thumb and forefinger lead hands.
- Elbows and shoulders follow through the same hole in the water created by the hands.
- As the hands move through the stroke, they move in an hourglass (or keyhole) pattern.
- The arms' speed increases as the stroke progresses.
- The hands explode past the hips to the recovery phase.
- As the hands recover, arms will be barely over the water surface with elbows slightly bent.
- Stand behind swimmer, holding each arm, guiding them through correct arm pattern.

### Practice the butterfly stroke in chest-deep water

#### Teaching Points



1. Pushing from pool side, take a prone float position, arms extended straight over the head.



2. Begin the stroke with the arms fully extended over the head and the back of the hands together, pressing outward and downward, fingers pointing slightly downward.



3. Move both arms at the same time in an hourglass motion.



4. Hands exit the water with straight elbows at the completion of the stroke.
5. Kick again, and push the chin forward to breathe when the hands exit the water.
6. Sweep the arms over the water with the arms relaxed.
7. Complete three to five arm strokes without pull buoy.



### Coaching Tips

- Avoid placing a flotation device around the waist, if possible. This will create more drag.
- It may be helpful to practice with one arm at a time, holding a small kickboard with the other.
- Have the swimmer take at least two strokes before breathing.

### Teaching the Butterfly Kick

#### Practice the butterfly kick in shallow water.

#### Teaching Points

1. Stand in chest-deep water, assume prone float position.
2. Kick the same as the freestyle flutter kick, moving both legs together.
3. Bend knees on the whip-like downbeat.
4. Keep legs straight on the upbeat.
5. Point toes slightly inward.
6. Keep the heels under the water.
7. Repeat three to five times.



### Coaching Tips

- It may be easier to teach the kick first as this will help when teaching the whole body movement.
- Swimmer stands in chest-deep water and pretends to be a dolphin by pushing off pool bottom.
- The dolphin kick may also be practiced on the back.
- Have the swimmer keep the hips fairly flat.
- It may be easier for the swimmer to learn the kick while holding a kickboard.
- To get the feel, the swimmer may want to practice leapfrogging - pushing off the bottom, leaping up, out and over the water head first.
- Be careful that the swimmer does not go too deep and hit his/her head on pool bottom.
- If available, use fins to help develop the kick action and whole body movement created through the kick.



### Practice the butterfly kick for a distance of 15 meters

#### Teaching Points

1. Swimmer stands in waist-deep water and holds a kickboard with arms extended or kicks without a board with arms extended, whichever is preferred.
2. Assume the prone float position.
3. Kick butterfly kick for one meter.
4. Use fins if available.

#### Coaching Tips

- Make sure the toes are pointed slightly inward (pigeon-toed).
- Make sure the feet stay under the water with the heels just barely breaking the surface.
- Swimmer can also practice this kick on the back holding a kickboard on the stomach.
- Add use of fins, if available, encouraging fast, “little” kicks.

### Teaching Butterfly Arm Stroke with Kick

#### Practice the butterfly stroke with periodic breathing, arm stroke and kick for 15 meters

#### Teaching Points

1. Swimmer stands in chest-deep water and assumes prone float position, arm extended straight over the head.
2. Begin stroke with two butterfly kicks.
3. Start first stroke with the hands pressing outward and downward.



4. Move the arms in an hourglass motion? “S” shape.
5. Push the chin forward to breathe as the hands exit the water.
6. Kick again when the hands exit the water.





### Coaching Tips

- Swimmer is encouraged to start breathing on the start of the stroke to ensure that correct timing is developed.
- The coach may support the swimmer under the waist, if necessary.
- The swimmer kicks twice for each full stroke.
- The first kick happens as the hands enter the water. The second kick is made as the hands exit past the hips.
- Swimmer pushes chin forward and up to breathe on the start of the initial arm stroke.
- Swimmer tucks the chin back down just as the hands enter the water.
- Swimmer says out loud: “Kick in (hands in)” as the hands enter the water and “Kick out (hands out)” as the hands leave the water.
- Two kicks per full arm cycle. Practice the stroke on the pool deck, concentrating on pushing the hands outward and then inward until the hands are almost touching under the stomach. The swimmer should practice “exploding” the hands past the hips to assist the recovery.

### Butterfly - Faults & Fixes Chart

Error	Correction	Drill/Test Reference
Uneven stroke.	Ensure swimmer’s legs and arms are moving simultaneously.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Practice fly kick with/without fins and kickboard; streamlined on surface and below surface.</li> <li>2. Practice arm action with fins.</li> <li>3. Practice arm rotations on pool deck.</li> </ol>
Breathing too late.	Have swimmer start breathing earlier.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use specific drills.</li> <li>2. Swimmer breathes every third or fourth stroke.</li> </ol>
Kick is low, body not streamlined and weak kick action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage swimmer to make a strong second kick.</li> <li>• Encourage swimmer to move whole body, not just the legs.</li> </ul>	Swimmer practices whole body movement with fins.
Swimmer doing short, fast strokes with body upright, (i.e., feet and hips too low).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swimmer may not be pulling through past legs before recovery phase.</li> <li>• Check for two kicks per arm cycle.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Practice kicking fast over short distances with/without fins.</li> <li>2. Encourage high body position and feet breaking waterline.</li> <li>3. Practice pulling arms through to side of legs; emphasize touching thumbs to side of legs before arm comes out of water.</li> <li>4. Practice without breathing for short distances so that breathing is not part of the stroke.</li> </ol>



## Coaches Tips for Butterfly – At-A-Glance

### **Tips for Practice**

1. Practice butterfly kicking with/without fins.
2. Encourage fast, little kicks.
3. Encourage whole body movement.
4. Encourage swimmer to have legs together, ankles relaxed and a slight knee bend during kick.
5. Practice kicking with both arms outstretched, face the bottom, complete four kicks, then lift chin to waterline to breathe.
6. Encourage movement from hips.
7. Check arm pull through water, thumbs pushing through at side of legs before recovery.
8. Practice arm recovery in line with shoulder width.
9. Check for correct hand placement ready for catch.
10. Check timing of breathing/arm action.

### **Tips for Competition**

1. Check any medical conditions that may restrict swimmer from performing butterfly.
2. Encourage good streamlining on entry and turn.
3. Encourage streamlining off blocks/wall using strong butterfly kick.
4. Encourage swimmer to breathe every second stroke.
5. Check for two-handed touch on finish and at turns.
6. Encourage swimmer not to look around when competing as this may cause hips to drop, causing uneven leg kick.





## Individual Medley

The individual medley is one of the most challenging of all swimming events. However, it can also be one of the most fun for the swimmer. The swimmer must change strokes throughout the race using the correct turns and tempo for each of the strokes.

Regardless of the distance of the individual medley event, the swimmer must swim the race using the four competitive strokes in the correct order. The athlete swims each stroke for one-fourth of the race. The swimmer begins the race from a standing or in-water start in the order of:

- Butterfly
- Backstroke
- Breaststroke
- Freestyle (any other stroke, generally freestyle).

To train for individual medley events, the coach must teach all four strokes and appropriate turns. To better prepare for a race, focus more attention on the athlete's weakest stroke. During the race, the coach will want to make sure the swimmer concentrates on the weakest stroke, not expending all their energy in one particular phase of the race.

### Coaching Tips

- Break down the event by practicing each stroke individually.
- Practice turns from one stroke to another.
- Practice two strokes at a time. For example, butterfly to backstroke, backstroke to breaststroke or breaststroke to freestyle.
- Place more emphasis on practicing the medley swimmer's weakest stroke.
- Encourage the swimmer to perform turns quickly and correctly.
- Encourage swimmer not to look around while performing turns.
- Practice talking through the event with the athlete, checking to be sure he/she remembers the correct stroke order.

### Individual Medley - Faults & Fixes Chart

Error	Correction	Drill/Test Reference
Swimmer begins to swim incorrect stroke after turn.	Practice event during training sessions.	Ask athlete to name the correct order of the strokes.
Swimmer rolls onto stomach (prone) at turn from butterfly to backstroke.	Emphasize that swimmer must be on back after touching wall in butterfly leg of event.	Have swimmer swim into wall, butterfly from flags, touch wall with both hands, bring both knees up and feet to wall pushing off wall on back in streamlined position and into backstroke leg of the event.
Swimmer does not touch wall with both hands in butterfly and breaststroke turns.	Emphasize that swimmer must touch wall with both hands on butterfly and breaststroke turn.	Practice swimming into wall, butterfly and breaststroke from the flags and touching with both hands.



## Coaches Tips for Individual Medley – At-A-Glance

### **Tips for Practice**

1. Break down event by practicing each stroke individually.
2. Break down event by practicing each swim-leg turn individually.
3. Practice both in-water start and block start in butterfly leg.
4. Practice correct changeover from one stroke to the other on turn.
5. Practice counting strokes from flags to wall in backstroke.

### **Tips for Competition**

1. Encourage swimmer not to look around when performing turn.
2. Encourage swimmer to finish on wall, correctly, with a two-hand touch in butterfly and breaststroke.
3. Encourage swimmer to finish each stroke on a full stroke onto wall.
4. Encourage swimmer not to turn onto front prone position when turning from butterfly to backstroke.
5. Encourage swimmer to make turns fast and as streamlined as possible.



## Swimming Starts

There are basically three different ways in which a swimmer may perform a start.

Grab Start



Track Start



In Water Start



Standing starts such as a grab or track start may be performed on the blocks or from the edge of the pool. A swimmer who is unable to do a standing start or is competing in backstroke events will perform a water start.

All starts are signaled by the starter who will whistle the swimmers onto the blocks or into the water. The starter will then command the swimmers to “Take your marks.” The swimmers leave the block or end of the pool when the starter signals with a gun or whistle.

Starting is a very important aspect of competitive swimming, and, in major competitions, a one start rule may be enforced; therefore, it is important that the swimmer is given regular instruction in this skill. Be aware of certain medical conditions which may restrict swimmers from practicing out of water starts. Remember, when teaching starting, to break down the skill and make it fun.

### **In-Water Starts - Freestyle, Breaststroke and Butterfly**

The freestyle, breaststroke and butterfly in-water starts are similar. The teaching points below can be applied to each of these strokes.

#### Teaching Points

1. Hold onto side of pool while in the water with either hand.
2. Place both feet on the wall, toes pointing toward side wall.
3. Bend both knees slightly.
4. Extend the other hand in the water toward the other end of the pool.
5. Ensure the swimmer is looking forward to the other end of the pool.
6. Push off the side into the prone position in a streamlined body position, kicking, where appropriate.
7. Begin the appropriate stroke as soon as the body is fully extended.



### Freestyle In-Water Start



### Breaststroke In-Water Start



Starting position – hold onto starting block



Achieve a streamline position



Begin stroke



### Butterfly In-Water Start



Starting position – hold onto starting block



Push off into prone, streamline position



Begin kick



Begin full butterfly stroke

### Coaching Tips

- Place the swimmer's feet under the body against the wall.
- Point the hand not holding the wall toward the other end of the pool.
- Provide a starting signal.
- Have the swimmer push hard off the wall into the prone position.
- For freestyle and butterfly, begin the kick as soon as the body is fully extended - streamlined.
- For breaststroke, the swimmer may take one underwater pull and one kick before coming to the surface. This is also known as a split stroke.



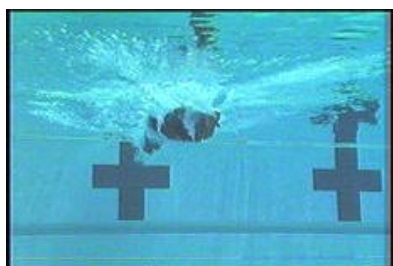
### Safety Notes

According to the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules Book, prior to beginning instruction in butterfly, the coach reviews each athlete's medical information form and determines whether the athlete has been screened for Atlantoaxial Subluxation. Restrictions from participating in the above events apply until the athlete has been examined, including x-rays of full extension and flexion of the neck, by a physician who has been briefed on the Atlantoaxial Subluxation. Water depth must be a minimum of six-feet deep before teaching the dive start from the deck.

### In-Water Starts – Backstroke

Practice the backstroke while in the water.

### Teaching Points



1. Stand in the water, facing the starting end of the pool.
2. Hold onto the pool edge or end of starting block with both hands.
3. Bend knees.
4. Bring both feet up on the wall.
5. Point the toes straight up to the surface, ensuring that the toes remain under the waterline.
6. Throw both hands out and back toward the opposite end of the pool after the starting signal.
7. Push off with the legs.
8. Extend the arms over the head and kick, using a flutter kick or butterfly kick until the body is flat - streamlined.
9. Swimmer kicks hard until the body is fully extended. The swimmer maintains a constant kick throughout the start and swim. The body is in a streamlined position to reduce as much friction as possible.
10. Begin the backstroke once the hands have broken the water surface.

### Coaching Tips

- Provide a starting signal for the swimmer.
- Help the swimmer arch his/her back as he/she throws his/her hands out and back.
- Tell the swimmer to push off hard with his/her legs. Describe the leg action as “being like a spring.”



## Pool-Edge Starts - Freestyle, Breaststroke and Butterfly

Practice the freestyle, butterfly and breaststroke start while standing on the edge of the pool.

### Teaching Points

#### Breaststroke Pool-Edge Start



1. Stand on pool, curling toes over edge.
2. Bend slightly at waist.



3. Extend both arms behind the body.
4. Look toward the opposite end of the pool.



5. Throw both arms forward at the same time.
6. Push off of the pool edge as the arms are extended.
7. Drop the head just before entering the water, squeezing the arms close to the swimmer's head achieving a streamlined body position.



8. Begin the kick immediately for freestyle or butterfly.
9. Perform a split stroke, then pull down and kick under water for breaststroke.
10. Start swimming once the hands/body have broken the water.



### Coaching Tips

- Swimmer continues to look at the far end of the pool. If the swimmer is visually impaired, he/she needs to look toward the starter.
- Assist the swimmer to feel balanced as he/she leans forward, so there is no false start.
- Provide a starting signal.
- Tell the swimmer to throw his/her arms forward and push off the edge.
- Have the swimmer reach out as far as possible.
- Have the swimmer drop his/her head before entering the water? helps the athlete bend slightly at the waist, so the swimmer does not do a belly-flop.
- Encourage the swimmer to start kicking immediately after streamlining the body.

### Starting-Block Starts - Freestyle, Breaststroke and Butterfly

Practice the freestyle, butterfly and breaststroke start while standing on a starting block. We will illustrate the following starts below. Each of the starting methods uses the basic start techniques described below.

- ♦ Freestyle Grab Start
- ♦ Freestyle Track Start
- ♦ Breaststroke Dive Start
- ♦ Butterfly Grab Start

### Teaching Points

1. Stand on starting block, and curl the toes over the front edge of the starting block. For the track start, the swimmer places one foot forward with toes over block edge while the other leg/foot is behind.
2. For the grab start, swimmer's feet may be together or slightly apart, but not wider than the swimmer's shoulders.
3. Grab the front of the starting block upon command.
4. Put head down.
5. Flex knees slightly.
6. Keep hips above feet.
7. Lift the head, throw the arms forward and push off the block upon command.
8. Swimmer drives from the block with the legs.
9. Swimmer drops head just before entering water.
10. Start the correct stroke and kick after entering water and reaching water surface.

### Coaching Tips

- Physically assist the swimmer in balancing.
- Swimmer may grab either the front or sides of block, with either a grab or track start.
- Stabilize swimmer as he adjusts balance as far forward as possible without falling in the pool.
- Provide a starting command for the swimmer.
- Work with the swimmer to have his/her whole body enter through the same hole in the water.
- Encourage the swimmer to enter the water in a streamlined position.
- By grabbing the block, the forward start enables athlete to lean forward a little more. Hopefully, this will provide a quicker reaction to the starting signal.





### Freestyle Grab Start

#### Teaching Points

1. Curl toes over starting block. Feet are together or slightly apart.
2. Head is down.
3. Knees are slightly flexed.



4. Lift head, throwing the arms forward, while pushing off the block
5. Drive from the block with the legs.
6. Drop head just before entering water.



7. Assume streamline position.



8. Start correct stroke and kick after entering water and reaching water surface.





### Freestyle Track Start

#### Teaching Points

1. Curl toes over starting block. One foot is forward with toes over block edge while the other foot is behind.
2. Head is down.
3. Knees are slightly flexed.



4. Lift head, throwing the arms forward, while pushing off the block
5. Drive from the block with the legs.
6. Drop head just before entering water.



7. Assume streamline position.



8. Start correct stroke and kick after entering water and reaching water surface.





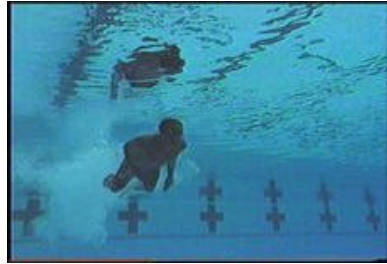
## Breaststroke Dive Start

### Teaching Points

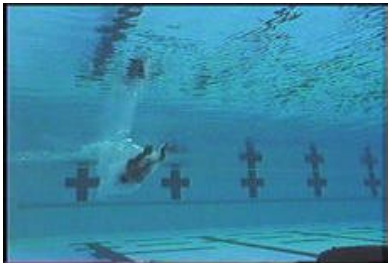
Push off starting blocks.



Begin first stroke, bring feet together.



Assume streamline position.



Extend legs.



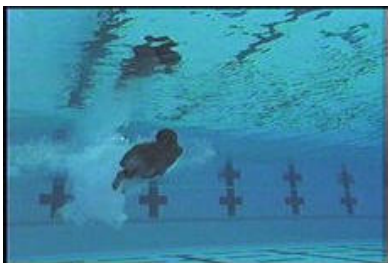
Bring arms out to sides.



Begin second stroke, head breaks water surface.



Propel body forward, pushing arms to legs.



Continue stroke.





Butterfly Grab Start

Teaching Points

Curl toes over starting block. Feet are together or slightly apart, not greater than shoulder width apart.



Begin first stroke, propelling body forward.



Assume streamline position.



Bring arms forward.



Head and shoulders break water surface.



Continue stroke pattern.





### Swimming Starts - Faults & Fixes Chart

<b>Error</b>	<b>Correction</b>	<b>Drill/Test Reference</b>
Swimmer slips off block or edge of pool.	Ensure that swimmer's toes are curled over block or edge.	Practice standing on block with toes over block.
Swimmer enters the water on an angle.	Ensure that the swimmer is well balanced and that movement off edge/block is even.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Practice jumping forward off the block.</li><li>2. Encourage the swimmer to look forward, jumping in feet first.</li></ol>
Swimmer's arms are apart during entry into water.	Ensure a streamlined body position - hands together on entry, arms squeezing against ears/head.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Practice entry into water with one hand on top of the other.</li><li>2. Preferably the stronger hand underneath as this will be the hand/arm which will pull first.</li></ol>

### Coaches Tips for Swimming Starts – At-A-Glance

<p><b>Tips for Practice</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Practice both grab and track start to find which one suits.</li><li>2. Practice a streamlined body position in and out of water.</li><li>3. Practice dive, using correct start commands.</li><li>4. In backstroke, practice streamlining off wall, using either a flutter kick or butterfly kick.</li><li>5. Practice pushing off wall, using a split stroke, under water, for breaststroke.</li><li>6. Practice starting off edge/block, using a split stroke under water for breaststroke.</li></ol>
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## Swimming Turns

### Teaching Freestyle Turns

#### Freestyle Pivot Turn

##### Teaching Points



1. Stand in chest-deep water approximately 10 meters from pool edge.
2. Swim freestyle to the wall.
3. Extend arm on the last stroke before wall to grab edge of pool gutter.
4. Pull body to the side of pool.



5. Pull legs under body and begin to turn.



6. Take a breath and complete turn.



7. Extend both hands over head, pressing arms against the ears.
8. Kick three to five kicks before beginning freestyle stroke.

##### Coaching Tips

- Help the swimmer find a place to grab wall.
- Help the swimmer bring feet up under body by guiding feet so they are parallel to the wall.
- Swimmer pushes off, beginning kick immediately after feet leave the wall.



## Freestyle Flip/Tumble Turn

Hands do not touch wall.

### Teaching Points

1. Stand in chest-deep water approximately 10 meters from the wall.
2. Swim freestyle to within 3 meters of the wall.
3. Breathe before taking the last stroke.
4. Finish last stroke before the wall with both hands next to the hips.
5. Place the feet about 6-8 inches below the water surface, parallel with the bottom.
6. Extend arms over the head, pressing the upper arms against the ears.
7. Push off the wall, kicking four times or as many as necessary before taking a stroke.
8. Take at least one full stroke before breathing, for better body position.
9. Swimmer kicks legs hard and lifts the hips as the head drops.
10. Swimmer bends knees slightly.



Complete last stroke before wall with hands close to sides.



Tuck chin, begin rotating body forward and extend arms over head.



Push forcefully off wall with both feet.



Assume streamline position, breathe, then begin stroke.



**Coaching Tips**

- Swimmer kicks to wall if he is too far away, following the last stroke.
- Assist swimmer with proper foot placement so he/she is not too shallow or too deep.
- Swimmer practices a mid-turn drill. Swimmer swims about eight strokes, and then does a somersault in the water. This drill can be done over 25 meters.

**Freestyle Turns - Faults & Fixes Chart**

<b>Error</b>	<b>Correction</b>	<b>Drill/Test Reference</b>
Turning too early into the wall.	Swimmer touches wall with one hand before executing a somersault.	Hands on wall, kick hard, then somersault, pushing off wall in a streamlined position.
Pushing off wall with one foot.	Encourage swimmer to push off with both feet.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Swimmer conducts a vertical somersault, feeling feet pushing off bottom of pool.</li> <li>2. Swimmer feels feet pushing off edge of pool then moves into a streamlined position.</li> </ol>





### Teaching Backstroke Turns

**Practice correct backstroke turn, three out of five times.**

#### Teaching Points

1. Stand in chest-deep water and assume back-float position. Athlete may also swim to the wall.
2. Float on back.
3. Extend one hand toward wall with elbow slightly bent.
4. Swim backstroke to the wall.
5. Use either hand to touch wall and begin the turn.
6. Touch wall with either hand approximately six to eight inches below water surface.
7. Bring knees up almost to the chest.
8. Keep head and shoulders flat.
9. Perform spin by pushing in either direction after the hand touches the wall.
10. Extend both arms over the head into a streamlined position.
11. Push off wall with feet.
12. Finish turn by kicking off wall in a streamlined position; kick using a flutter or butterfly kick.
13. Begin kick immediately after feet leave wall, using either a flutter or butterfly kick.

#### Coaching Tips

- Hold swimmer under the hips, if necessary.
- Assist the swimmer to bring knees up.
- Help swimmer create a 90-degree angle with the upper legs and hips.
- Assist swimmer to spin on his/her back while pushing off the wall with his/her hand.



**Backstroke Pivot Turn**



Reach toward pool wall with one hand.



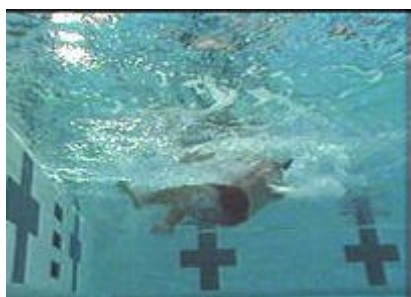
Grasp pool wall, bring knees to chest and begin rotating body.



Bring feet to pool wall.



Push off wall with both feet and extend arms over head.

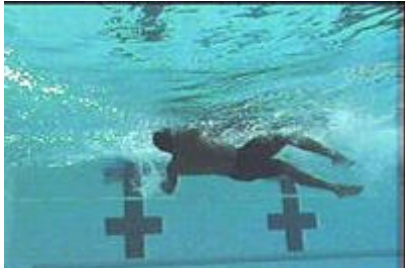


Assume streamline position and begin stroke.



## Backstroke Tumble Turn

Hands do not touch wall.



Extend one arm toward pool wall. Reach toward wall, do not touch wall.



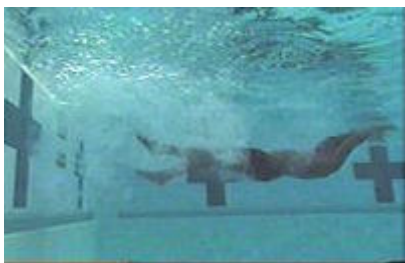
After beginning turn, bring both arms to sides and tuck head to chin.



Bring knees to chest, swinging arms out to sides.



Touch pool wall with both feet and push off. Extend arms over head.



Assume a streamline position and begin kick.



### Teaching Butterfly and Breaststroke Turns

The butterfly and breaststroke turns are very similar. The only difference is that with a breaststroke turn a split stroke is performed under water directly after the turn. A split stroke is 1.5 strokes under water. When reaching the wall at the turn and finish, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands. The hands may touch above, below or at the waterline. The hands do not have to be at the same height. However, it is vital that the shoulders remain horizontal.

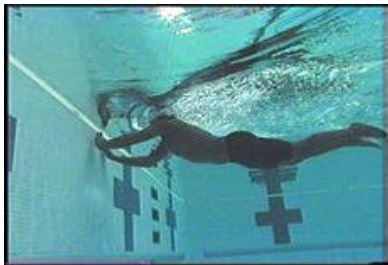
The swimmer will use a leading arm which will move along the body line, and a rotation of the swimmer's body will occur. It is important that the swimmer maintains a streamlined body position. The swimmer's head must break the surface of the water before the arm stroke is performed.



## Butterfly and Breaststroke Pivot Turns

### Teaching Points

1. Stand in chest-deep water, one arm's length from wall. Your swimmer may also swim toward the wall.
2. Bend at waist. Reach toward wall if swimming.
3. Grab pool gutter or the edge of pool with both hands.
4. Keep shoulders level.
5. Tuck legs underneath the body on the wall. Feet are parallel with the pool bottom.
6. Let go of pool edge with the bottom hand.
7. Throw other hand over head toward far end of pool.
8. Extend both arms over head.
9. Push off wall.



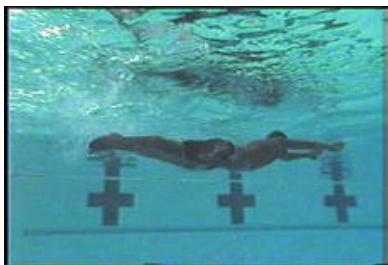
Reach toward pool wall with both hands.



Bring knees to chest and begin turn.



Bring both feet to pool wall and push off with both feet.



Assume a streamline position.



### Coaching Tips

- Tell the swimmer to swim either breaststroke turn or butterfly to the wall.
- Encourage swimmer to keep his/her face in the water after the last stroke until both hands have left the wall.
- Remind swimmer that the push off is on the side, with the body rotating into a prone position.

### Practice Butterfly and Breaststroke Turns after Swimming 15 Meters

#### Teaching Points

1. Stand in chest-deep water 15 meters from wall.
2. Swim either stroke to edge of the water.
3. Touch the edge of the pool with both hands, keeping shoulders level.
4. Keep the face in the water.
5. Bend knees slightly and rotate body in either direction.
6. Tuck legs underneath hips.
7. Take one hand off the wall.
8. Bring the other hand over the head.
9. Extend both arms over the head.
10. Push off wall.

### Coaching Tips

- Encourage swimmer to keep his/her face in the water after the last stroke until both hands have left the water.
- Remind swimmer that the push off is on the side, with the body rotating into a prone position.
- For breaststroke, the swimmer is allowed one pull down and one kick under the water, the split stroke or 1.5 strokes under water. Swimmer needs to make their body as streamlined as possible when performing a split stroke.
- For butterfly, the swimmer begins the kick as soon as the feet leave the wall.



## Stroke-Development Level Training Plan - Example

Feel free to use any section, skill or drill from this program to teach any particular point. It is also important to regularly assess and revise your athletes' program to meet their needs until the skills are learned. Remember to break down the stroke into smaller skills. This will ensure that each part of the stroke is taught correctly.

### Suggested Entry Level

#### Freestyle

1. Swim 25 meters.
2. Demonstrate relaxed recovery of arms over the water.
3. Long underwater pull.
4. Continuously kick with relaxed legs, feet just below water surface.
5. Coordinated breathing with arm recovery.

#### Backstroke

1. Kick 25 meters with relaxed legs, feet just below water surface and toes creating bubbles at water surface.
2. Extend one arm forward above head to touch wall when nearing end of a lap.

#### Water Safety

Have some knowledge of water safety skills, especially in deep water.

#### Program Length

The 16 training sessions are developed for a once weekly, 16-week season, or a twice weekly, eight-week series.

#### Length of Training Sessions

10 minutes land and 45 minutes in-water time per session.

#### Ability Grouping

Use lane ropes whenever they are available. Divide athletes into lanes, according to their swimming ability. Explain the formation for practice. For example, follow one another up the center of the lane, starting from one wall and finishing each lap by touching the wall at the other end of the pool, when possible.

- Be prepared to modify the program to suit your environment and the interests, needs and skills of your athletes.
- Be flexible and responsive.



Stroke Development Program Plan

<a href="#"><u>Training Session 1</u></a>	Introduce: Freestyle kick, arms, breathing, streamlining, backstroke kick
<a href="#"><u>Training Session 2</u></a>	Assess and Revise Training Session 1 Introduce: Freestyle starts and finishes, backstroke arms
<a href="#"><u>Training Session 3</u></a>	Assess and Revise Training Sessions 1 and 2 Introduce: Backstroke, starts and finishes
<a href="#"><u>Training Session 4</u></a>	Time Trials 15 meter/25 meter Freestyle and Backstroke
<a href="#"><u>Training Session 5</u></a>	Assess and Revise Training Sessions 1-3 Introduce: Freestyle catch up without kickboard, tumbles, freestyle turns, backstroke turns
<a href="#"><u>Training Session 6</u></a>	Assess and Revise Training Session 5 Introduce: Freestyle length of stroke training, tumble turn off wall to streamlining
<a href="#"><u>Training Session 7</u></a>	Assess and Revise Training Session 6
<a href="#"><u>Training Session 8</u></a>	Time Trials 15 meter/25 meter/50 meter Freestyle and Backstroke
<a href="#"><u>Training Session 9</u></a>	Introduce: Breaststroke kick
<a href="#"><u>Training Session 10</u></a>	Assess and Revise Training Session 9 Introduce: Breaststroke pull and finishes
<a href="#"><u>Training Session 11</u></a>	Assess and Revise Training Session 10 Introduce: Breaststroke starts and turns
<a href="#"><u>Training Session 12</u></a>	Introduce: Butterfly kick
<a href="#"><u>Training Session 13</u></a>	Assess and Revise Training Session 12 Introduce: Butterfly arms and finishes
<a href="#"><u>Training Session 14</u></a>	Assess and Revise Training Session 13 Introduce: Butterfly turns and starts
<a href="#"><u>Training Session 15</u></a>	Assess and Revise all strokes, starts, turns and finishes
<a href="#"><u>Training Session 16</u></a>	Practice Competition 15-meter/25-meter/50-meter Freestyle and Backstroke 15-meter/25-meter Breaststroke and Butterfly





## Training Session 1

<b>Goal</b> To introduce freestyle and backstroke skills.
<b>Freestyle</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Kick with board.</li><li>2. Single arm catch up with a kickboard, practicing bubbles and turning the head to the same side as the arm being used.</li><li>3. Alternate arm catch up with a kickboard, practicing bubbles and turning the head to breathe on both sides.</li><li>4. Push and glide drill - streamlining from the wall – moving smoothly into the correct swimming position.</li></ol>
<b>Backstroke</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Kick with a kickboard.</li><li>2. Kick without a kickboard.</li></ol>
<b>Warm-Ups</b>
<b>Stretches</b>
<b>Dry Land Drills</b>
<b>Water Warm-Ups</b>
<b>Water Practice</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Teach freestyle kicking drills.</li><li>2. Teach backstroke arm stroke drills.</li></ol>

### Freestyle Kicking Drill

Kick for 15-25 meters, depending on ability, with a kickboard held in front with hands over the far end of board.

#### Coaching Tips

- Toes just break water surface to make “white water.” Legs are relaxed, knees slightly bent, ankles loose.
- Hips are high in water.
- When the swimmer becomes more proficient, have him/her hold board at closest end with arms straight, thumbs up and fingers under. This ensures that the arms are in correct line with the shoulders. It also helps maintain a more streamlined body position and helps keep hips high.



## Arm Stroke Drills

### Single Arm Catch Up with Kickboard

Emphasis: Practice making bubbles and turning head to the same side as the arm being used

#### Teaching Points

1. Holding the kickboard in both hands, with arms fully extended in front, swimmers complete six beats of the legs (i.e., counting, 1-2-3, 1-2-3) while exhaling in the water to make bubbles.
2. Next, pull left arm and turn head to left side to breathe, completing the stroke back to the hold position.
3. Repeat on right side.

#### Coaching Tip

- Swimmer practices with and without fins to develop proper arm/breathing action.

### Alternate Arm Action Catch Up with Kickboard

Emphasis: Practice making bubbles and turning the head to breathe on both sides - bilateral breathing.

#### Teaching Points

1. Same as Single Arm Catch Up with a Kickboard
2. Use arms alternately, and turn to breathe on alternate sides.

#### Coaching Tips

- Learning to breathe to both sides will help develop an even, fluid stroke and will ensure even development of the upper body.
- Encourage swimmer to start learning terms like “bilateral.”
- Swimmer practices with and without fins to develop proper arm/breathing action.

### Push and Glide Drill – Streamlining

As skills develop, the swimmers will be able to develop their streamlining to go past the backstroke flags before resurfacing, in readiness for competitive swimming.

#### Teaching Points

1. One hand is placed on top of the other.
2. Arms are held straight, with elbows behind the ears (can be referred to as an ear sandwich).
3. A breath is taken.
4. An underwater push off wall is encouraged at the beginning of all drills. This drill is known as torpedoes.

#### Coaching Tip

- Swimmers are taught streamlining to get them in the habit of always protecting their heads on entry into the water from all heights and takeoffs, as well as the wall, for efficient swimming.



## Backstroke Kicking Drills

### Kick on Back with a Kickboard

#### Teaching Points

1. Hold kickboard. One hand is on each side of the board. Demonstrate thumbs up and fingers under board.
2. Arms are stretched over knees; legs are kicking continuously.
3. Shoulders and head are back and relaxed.
4. Chest and hips are pushing up.
5. Knees bend slightly on the downbeat and straighten on the up beat, with toes turned in naturally.
6. Keep the feet just below water surface, creating bubbles/splashes at the surface.



### Kick on Back without the Kickboard

#### Teaching Points

1. As above, except the arms are kept by the side.
2. Hands gently scull up and down to help keep balance and help movement along pool.



## Training Session 2

<p>Goal</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To assess and revise freestyle and backstroke skills introduced in Training Session 1.</li><li>2. To introduce the following backstroke skills.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Both arms being used alternately with a continuous kick.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Practice skill, using fins.</li></ul></li></ol>
<p>Warm-Ups</p>
<p>Stretches</p>
<p>Dry Land Drills</p>
<p>Water Warm-Ups</p>
<p>Water Practice</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Revise freestyle and backstroke drills.</li><li>2. Introduce backstroke arm stroke.</li></ol>

### Backstroke - Both Arms Used Alternately with a Continuous Kick

#### Teaching Points

1. Each arm is lifted first and enters the water with the arm beside the ear.
2. Little finger enters first; the thumb leaves the water first.
3. The arm then pulls straight to the leg, about 15-20 centimeters under the water surface.

#### Coaching Tips

- Ensure that the little finger enters the water first, so that the palm is turned out and the arm pulls against the water. The stroke is completed when the arm/hand is against the swimmers leg.
- The arm then returns to the surface, thumb first.
- The kick must be continuous throughout the arm stroke.
- Practice skill using fins, as they will help with the development of the arm stroke.



### Training Session 3

Training Session 3 is the same as Training Session 2, except a diving section has been added. Be sure to confirm any diving restrictions prior to training. Teach anyone with diving restrictions on water-start techniques.

<b>Goal</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To assess and revise freestyle and backstroke skills practiced in Training Session 2.</li><li>2. To introduce the following freestyle skills.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Dive starts and streamlining (using grab start where possible) – only if suitable pool space is available.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> In-water starts for athletes with diving restrictions.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> The importance of finishing into the wall on every occasion.</li></ul></li><li>3. To introduce the following backstroke skills.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Backstroke start.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Backstroke finishes – the correct ruling on finishing a backstroke race.</li></ul></li></ol>
<b>Warm-Ups</b>
<b>Stretches</b>
<b>Dry Land Drills</b>
<b>Water Warm-Ups</b> <p>Use Training Session 2 water practice plans and add the following dive start practice. It is imperative that you ensure that your athletes have clearance to dive before starting this phase of the program. An in-water start drill is described below.</p>

### Dive Start Practice

Introduce diving in its elementary forms of kneeling or sitting during the Learn to Swim or Stroke Development Level. The emphasis is placed on keeping the chin tucked into the chest. Throughout the dive, the arms must be extended behind the ears. The swimmer is encouraged to enter the water fingers first.

### Coaching Tips

- Always ensure the swimmer is in a streamline position when executing dive starts.
- Have swimmers stand at the edge of the pool, feet no wider than hips or shoulders, with toes curled over the edge for a safe grip.
- Bend the knees slightly, the streamlined arms pointed to a spot in the pool approximately three meters from the swimmer, and tuck ears under the elbows.
- The swimmer tips forward and straightens the knees without moving the head or arms until after entry has been executed.
- As proficiency increases, a grab start is encouraged.



### Grab Start for Freestyle Starts

Swimmers are encouraged to stand with heels at the back of the starting blocks before each dive. On “Take your marks,” a step forward is taken to allow the feet to be placed at the front edge of the block. The knees are bent and the body relaxed. The swimmer will grab or hold onto the front of the block with two hands. Hands are placed between legs.

On the “Go” command, the swimmer executes the following sequence to enter the water.

#### Teaching Points

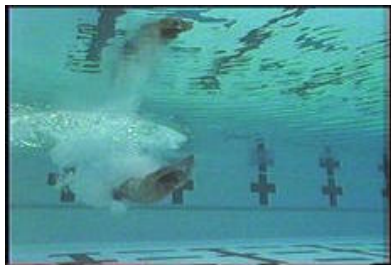
1. Upper body overbalances towards the water.
2. Arms are pushed forward.
3. Legs are straightened and push the body forward. The arms and head are streamlined.
4. Swimmers fingers break the water first, followed by body and feet last.
5. Body follows into the water through the same hole made by the hands; the body is kept straight and streamlined.
6. Six flutter kicks under water; the first stroke starts as the body rises to the surface, one arm recovers over the water.



Grab starting block and lean balanced body toward water.



Extend legs and arms – streamline and push off starting block.



Body follows hands into water, maintaining streamline position.



Body rises to water surface and stroke begins.



### Coaching Tips

- If a swimmer is having trouble entering fingers first, hold a hoop approximately one meter from the pool edge. Encourage swimmers to dive through the hoop, then streamlining - kick - pull one arm first as above.
- This is the only scheduled practice for dives for this program; however, dives can be practiced whenever time and pool space allow and will be used for time trial and Training Session 16 - Competition Practice.
- Minimum pool depth is 1.2 meters

### In-Water Starts - Freestyle, Breaststroke, Butterfly

An in-water start is permissible at any level of competition. The swimmer must have at least one hand in contact with the wall or starting block at the starting signal.

### Dive Sequence

#### Coaching Tips

- Swimmer holds rail on starting block or pool edge.
- Swimmer faces the direction he/she intends to swim, with other hand pointing straight ahead in that direction.
- Feet are curled, pressed up onto pool wall and must be kept below waterline.
- On the “Go” command, the swimmer pushes strongly off wall, tucking head down and driving the holding hand to meet up with the other, to get body in a streamlined position.
- Swimmer maintains a streamlined position with the body gliding just below or on the pool surface.
- Swimmer commences stroke as from the dive.



### Freestyle Finish

A freestyle swimmer finishes the race when any part of the swimmer touches the wall after completing the designated distance.

#### Coaching Tips

- Train swimmers to reach forward and drive decisively into the wall without slowing down kick.
- Practice swimming into the wall from five meters out without a breath, driving into the wall with a fully outstretched hand.
- Practice swimming into the wall from five meters out without a breath, driving into the wall, arm fully outstretched with body on slight lateral position.



### Backstroke Starts

Backstroke and medley relay starts are the only mandatory in-water starts in swimming. The swimmer faces the wall, grasps the backstroke handgrip and places feet on the wall with both feet below the surface of the water. It is not permissible to place the feet in the pool gutter or on any other support.

#### Teaching Points

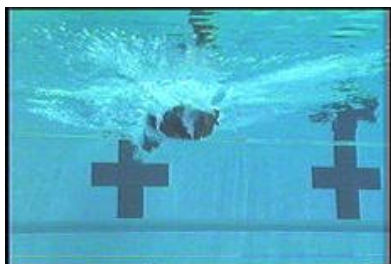
1. On the command “Take your marks,” the swimmer draws themselves up into a crouch position.
2. On the “Go” command, swimmer throws their head and arms back over the head as the legs drive off the wall.
3. Once in the water, in the streamline position, the legs begin to kick, and then one arm commences its pull to the leg.
4. The continuous arm action of backstroke follows.



Assume a crouch position, holding onto starting block.



Drive arms and head backward, pushing strongly off pool wall.



Assume streamline position and begin stroke.





### Backstroke Finishes

Backstroke swimmers must learn to touch the wall for safety reasons when finishing a drill, a race or approaching a turn. For this reason, backstroke flags are placed a regulation five meters from the end of the pool, and, where available, are in place for all practices involving backstroke.

#### Teaching Points

1. Kicking Approach. With one arm by the side and one arm extended above the head, kick toward the wall with the fingers pointing toward the bottom of the pool and with the palm facing towards the wall. As the hand touches the wall, lean on it, allowing the elbow to bend. Do not push off.
2. Practice counting the number of strokes from the backstroke flags to the wall until it is possible to arrive at the wall without looking.
3. Practice counting the number of strokes from the backstroke flags to the wall when swimming slowly and at a fast pace.





## Training Session 4

<p>Goal</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The fun of the time-trial races, where swimmers only compete against themselves and the clock. Emphasis is on self-improvement of both time and stroke techniques.</li><li>2. The stroke, start, turn and finish techniques take on a new meaning when placed in this context and learning should be invigorated and athletes motivated by the experience.</li></ol>
<p>Warm-Ups</p>
<p>Stretches</p>
<p>Dry Land Drills</p>
<p>Water Warm-Ups</p>
<p>Water Practice Time-Trial Skills Training</p>

## Time Trials

### Coaching Tips

- Introduce swimmers to the starting mechanism prior to the commencement of the time trials.
- Place swimmers in events that suit their ability.
- Strict supervision of swimmers needs to be maintained when an event finishes, not just until swimmers are at the end of the pool.
- The most important consideration is that the time-trial sessions are run with fun and enthusiasm as their central ingredients and kept as nontechnical and noncompetitive as possible.
- Emphasis is placed on self-improvement in both times and technique.
- Records need to be kept, and a chart for each swimmer is encouraged, with a record of their times given to each swimmer to take home.
- The recorded times become your first record for competition.



## Training Session 5

### Goal

1. To assess and revise freestyle and backstroke skills practiced in training sessions 1-3.
2. To introduce the following freestyle skills.
  - Alternate arm catch up without a kickboard – breathing to both sides (bilateral).
  - Full freestyle stroke – breathing to both sides (bilateral).
  - Tumble turn – somersault on spot (away from wall).
3. To introduce the following backstroke skills.
  - Backstroke turn – including underwater push off and streamlining.

### Warm-Ups

### Stretches

### Dry Land Drills

### Water Warm-Ups

### Water Practice

1. Assess and revise the freestyle kicking drill from training session 1.
2. Introduce the following freestyle drills.
3. Assess and revise the backstroke drills from training sessions 1-3.
4. Introduce the following backstroke drills.



### Alternate Arm Catch Up without a Kickboard

#### Teaching Points

1. Alternate arm catch up without a board is done with one arm extended in front, while the other arm completes a stroke accompanied by continuous kicking of the legs.
2. The arm catches up to the front arm and holds position while the legs do six kicks and the swimmer exhales all of their bubbles
3. The other arm completes a stroke.
4. Repeat cycle.

#### Coaching Tips

- Use the torpedo skill from training session 1 when pushing off the wall at the beginning of each drill. This ensures that streamlining becomes second nature to all swimmers.
- Suggest that the swimmer wears fins to maintain a balanced body position.

### Freestyle – Full Stroke

#### Teaching Points

1. Using underwater push off and streamlining, kick about six times as the body rises to the surface.
2. One arm then begins its pull while the other remains extended out in front.
3. Once the first stroke has been completed (i.e., the first hand begins to recover above the water), begin the second stroke with alternate arm.

#### Coaching Tips

- Swimmers are encouraged to become proficient in breathing on both sides? bilateral breathing—during freestyle. This can help in developing an even, fluid stroke and ensure even development of the upper body.
- Develop this skill with the use of fins.



## Tumble Turn – Somersault Only

### Teaching Points

1. Swimmer tucks chin into chest throughout the movement.
2. Knees are tucked up onto chest, with a steady stream of bubbles released from the nose until the body rights itself after rotation. Coach assistance may be necessary.

### Forward Somersault



Bend knees slightly and push off with both feet, driving both arms up toward water surface.



Tuck chin, rotate head toward pool bottom, bringing legs parallel to pool bottom. The athlete will be upside down.



Rotate head toward water surface, keeping legs straight and arms out to the sides.



Athlete is now upright as if he/she is sitting on the pool bottom. Legs are extended and parallel to pool bottom with the chin tucked to the chest and arms out and slightly behind.



Bring feet under body and land on pool bottom with both feet.



#### Coaching Tips

- Forward somersaults are introduced as soon as possible to encourage and familiarize swimmers with the basic movement of the tumble turn. Introduction to somersaults for younger swimmers is usually easier if they can stand on the pool bottom in waist- or chest-deep water.
- Two or three five-minute sessions on standing somersaults should develop this skill, if the swimmer has come through the beginner's program.
- Swimmers can be encouraged to dive into the tucked up position from the standing start to see how fast they can somersault.

#### Four Freestyle Strokes – Tuck and Tumble

##### Teaching Points

1. Swimmers do four freestyle arm strokes.
2. Tuck and tumble into a forward somersault.
3. Come back up, facing the way they are going.
4. Continue on, and do four more strokes.

#### Coaching Tips

- Be careful, as too many of these may make the swimmer dizzy.



## Backstroke Drills

### Backstroke Turn

The tumble turn is taught based upon the athlete's ability level. The pivot turn is acceptable for athletes who are unable to tumble. Both turns are legal; however, the tumble turn is faster.

#### Pivot Turn

##### Teaching Points for the Approach

1. The body is on the back at the touch and push off in this turn.
2. Swimmer approaches the wall at full speed.
3. Leading arm is stretched back and palm of the hand touches the wall with fingertips just under the water's surface.
4. Other arm continues the underwater arm pull as in a normal stroke. This helps the body balance and to get closer to the wall.
5. The head is slightly back in the water.



##### Teaching Points for the Turn

1. The second arm is still aiding balance.
2. The knees tuck. Say to swimmers, "knees to chin"; never, "chin to knees," a common mistake, causing the fault of turning onto the front.
3. Swimmer is in a tucked position slightly on their back.
4. Tucked legs swing near the water surface to the side of the leading arm as if swimmer is sitting on a plate and spinning around to one side.
5. The hands are gathered near the head, palms up.





### Teaching Points for the Push Off

1. The body is still tucked with the feet planted slightly apart on the wall and ready to drive.
2. Arms are extended backward, uppermost palms of the hands.
3. Legs and body stretch at the same time as the arms extend.
4. Body is now streamlined and gliding away from the wall.



### Teaching Points for the Follow up

The follow up after the glide is identical to the follow up after the start.



### Coaching Tips

- Teach swimmers to count their strokes from backstroke flags so that they know when to prepare for their turn.
- Get athletes to keep arms in the water at drive-off stage. This is a stage where it is common for many athletes to swing their arms out of the water.





## Tumble Turn - Roll Over Tumble Turn

### Teaching Points

1. Swimmer approaches the wall doing backstroke.
2. Once swimmer is one stroke from the wall, he/she rolls onto stomach and executes a forward roll, bringing both feet over and placing them firmly on the wall, facing up toward the surface of the water and ready to push off.
3. Push off on back in a streamline position with six, strong leg kicks.
4. Begin stroking with one arm and resurface within 10 meters of the wall.



Extend one arm toward pool wall. Reach toward wall, do not touch wall.



Begin turn by bringing both arms to sides and tuck head to chin.



Bring knees to chest, swinging arms out to sides.



Touch pool wall with both feet and push off. Extend arms over head.

### Coaching Tips

- The swimmer must not roll onto stomach until he/she is ready to execute the forward roll. Per the rules, athletes can only leave their backs when executing a turn in a continuous turning action (i.e., no pauses and no glide into the wall).
- Once the swimmer has left his/her back, swimmer must not make any kick or arm pull to assist him/her in any way.
- Strokes are counted from the flags, a regulation five meters from wall.
- Teach swimmers not to look for the wall on their approach.



### Backward Somersault

Bend knees slightly, bringing arms behind body.



Push off with both feet, and drive arms up while arching back.



Drive arms up over head, and bring knees to chest.



Let body continue to rotate.



Tuck body tight, and hold legs to chest.



Land on pool bottom with bent knees on both feet.



Stand up.





## Training Session 6

<p><b>Goal</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To assess and revise freestyle practiced in training sessions 1-3 and 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Kick with board, single and alternate arm catch up, full freestyle stroke and tumble turns.</li><li>2. To assess and revise backstroke skills practiced in training sessions 1-3 and 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Kick with/without board and with/without fins, backstroke arms and turns.</li><li>3. To introduce the following freestyle skills. <input type="checkbox"/> Length of the freestyle stroke – using alternate arm drill <input type="checkbox"/> Teach tumble turn onto the wall with a streamline push off. <input type="checkbox"/> Teach pivot turn to swimmers not ready for tumble turn skills.</li></ol>
<p><b>Warm-Ups</b></p>
<p><b>Stretches</b></p>
<p><b>Dry Land Drills</b></p>
<p><b>Water Warm-Ups</b></p>
<p><b>Water Practice</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Practice as revised freestyle skills practiced in training sessions 1-3 and 5.</li><li>2. Introduce the following freestyle skills.</li><li>3. Assess and revise backstroke skills practiced in training sessions 1-3.</li></ol>

### **Alternate Arm Catch Up without a Kickboard**

Emphasis: stroke length

#### **Teaching Points**

1. Using the alternate arm catch up in training session 3, swimmer begins freestyle arm stroke with the arm extended out in front of his/her head.
2. Pull arm under the body in a type of “S” pattern.
3. Hand leaves water once it has brushed past the leg at the thigh.
4. Encourage swimmer to not cross over body’s center line.



### Freestyle Pivot Turn

The freestyle swimmer is allowed to touch the end of the pool with any part of his/her body. A pivot turner will usually use his/her hands at the touch.

#### Teaching Points for the Approach

1. Swimmer approaches the wall at full speed.
2. When the swimmer's head is approximately an arm's length away from the wall, leading arm stretches out ready to touch the wall.
3. Palm of hand touches with the fingertips pointing sideways (i.e., pointing in direction of turn).
4. Other arm pushes back as in the normal stroke.
5. Body moves closer to the wall and the leading arm bends.
6. Swimmer's head is now close to the wall, face in the water, eyes looking slightly forward.



#### Teaching Points for the Turn

1. Body is tucked tightly, knees to chest.
2. Other arm acts as a paddle and is essential to aid the pivot.
3. Palm of that hand sweeps across the waist to the opposite side of the body, making the body pivot.
4. Leading hand presses hard into wall and pushes out behind the shoulder which completes the spin.





### Teaching Points for the Drive Off

1. Body is a little lower in the water at this point and tucked up.
2. Arms are squeezed to the sides of body, palms downward, and hands are to the side of the ears.
3. Feet are placed on the wall hip-width apart. Balls of the feet prepare for the drive.
4. Arms stretch forward at the same time as the legs drive backward. The body is now in a streamlined glide position.
5. Position is held with the head tucked between the arms until glide speed drops to swimming speed.



### Teaching Points for the Follow Up

The follow up is identical to the follow up for the start, with a glide in a stretched-out position. As soon as speed decreases, the stroke begins.



### Coaching Tip

- Teach swimmers not to overkick before the arm action is underway as it can inhibit forward movement.

### Tumble Turn onto the Wall – No Push Off

Once a forward somersault has been mastered, an approach to the wall is made, where the swimmer comes to within one-half meter of the wall. It is easy for the coach to kneel at the end of the pool where the swimmer is approaching, and reach out and touch the head of the swimmer, indicating that it is time to turn.

### Teaching Points

1. A forward roll is executed, bringing the feet over and placing them firmly on the wall, while facing up toward the water surface.
2. This is as far as the swimmers go. Once they are proficient at getting their feet onto the wall, a push off can be introduced.



### **Tumble Turn onto Wall – with Push Off – No Roll Over**

#### Teaching Points

From exercise above, swimmers push off the wall in streamline position while actually on their back and still in the streamline position.

### **Tumble Turn onto Wall – with Push Off and Roll Over**

Once the routine above has been accomplished, the swimmer moves on to the final stage of the tumble.

#### Teaching Points

1. From the push off on back into streamlined position, continue to roll over onto stomach.
2. Athlete is now in the correct position to begin the freestyle stroke.

#### Coaching Tips

- This push off is sometimes easier taught first, before the roll onto the wall, so that the swimmers know where they are going in the push off.
- Bubbles are exhaled from the nose during an underwater push off on the back to ensure water does not get up the swimmer's nose.



## Training Session 7

### Goal

1. To assess and revise freestyle practiced in training sessions 1-3, 5 and 6.  
 Alternate arm catch up, full stroke and length of freestyle stroke, pivot and tumble turns.
2. To assess and revise backstroke skills practiced in training sessions 1-3 and 5.  
 Kick without board, with/without fins, backstroke arms and turns.
3. To introduce the following freestyle skills.  
 Length of the freestyle stroke – using alternate arm drill.  
 Teach tumble turn onto the wall with a streamline push off.
4. Teach pivot turn to swimmers not ready for tumble turn skills.

### Warm-Ups

### Stretches

### Dry Land Drills

### Water Warm-Ups

### Water Practice

1. Practice as revised freestyle and backstroke skills practiced in training sessions 3, 5 and 6 in above goal.
2. Introduce the following freestyle skills.
3. Assess and revise backstroke skills practiced in training sessions 1-3.



## Training Session 8

<p>Goal</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To continue the fun of time-trial races where the swimmer only competes against him/herself and the clock. Emphasis is on self-improvement of both time and technique.</li><li>2. To teach the swimmers the etiquette and protocols of a swimming competition and pre-race procedures.</li></ol>
<p>Warm-Ups</p>
<p>Stretches</p>
<p>Dry Land Drills</p>
<p>Water Warm-Ups</p>
<p>Water Practice</p> <p>Time-Trial 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> 15-meter Freestyle</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> 15-meter Backstroke</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> 25-meter Freestyle</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> 25-meter Backstroke</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> 50-meter Freestyle*</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> 50-meter Backstroke*</li></ul> <p>* If swimmers are at this standard, this event would replace the 15-meter swim for them.</p>

### Coaching Tips

- Swimmers are only placed in events that meet their ability. Strict supervision of swimmers needs to be maintained when an event finishes, not just until swimmers are at the end of the pool.
- The most important aspects for time-trial sessions are that they be fun and promote enthusiasm. They should be as nontechnical and noncompetitive as possible.
- Use times from Time Trial 1 to seed events.
- Emphasis should be placed on self-improvement in both times and technique. Records need to be kept and a chart for each swimmer is encouraged, with a record given to each swimmer to take home.





## Training Session 9

<b>Goal</b> To introduce breaststroke skills.
<b>Warm-Ups</b>
<b>Stretches</b>
<b>Dry Land Drills</b> Beginners are given a brief introduction to the correct kicking technique. A video or demonstration may aid this. They can firstly experience the kick out of water by either lying on a bench/seat or on the side of the pool.
<b>Water Warm-Ups</b>

## Breaststroke Dry Land Drills

### Heel Touch Drill

Some athletes may be able to grasp both feet simultaneously. Others may have to grab one foot at a time.

### Teaching Points

1. Athlete lies on stomach on a bench or side of pool.
2. Bend knees, bringing heels up to buttocks, with toes turned out.
3. Swimmer reaches backward and grasps heels on each side.

### Feet Rotation Drill

If the swimmer has trouble with this drill, the coach may help by holding his/her feet and moving them around in the desired pattern. Further assistance may also be given by providing resistance with the palm of the hand on the sole of their foot for the swimmer to feel the path of the feet against the resistance of the water.

### Teaching Points

1. Swimmer lies on bench or side of pool.
2. Bring heels up toward buttocks, with toes turned out.
3. Once knees are fully flexed, rotate feet into the practiced position above; kick around and backward to come together and fully extend with toes pointed.



## Wall Drill

### Teaching Points

1. Swimmer stands with one side to wall, using the leg closest to the wall.
2. Bends knee and lifts the heel to buttocks.
3. Turn toes out and run the toes backward and down the wall.
4. Finish with the feet together.
5. Practice several times on each side.

## Breaststroke Water Drills

### Breaststroke Kicking Drill

#### Teaching Points

1. Keeping knees together, have swimmer move feet outward with heels still on wall with toes pointed upward.
2. On command, swimmer kicks - whip kicks outward to forward position.
3. Legs are together and toes remain pointed upward.
4. Swimmer brings heels back to wall.
5. Repeat drill.





#### Teaching Points

Once skilled at this, swimmers can push off the bottom and kick along the wall, using their toes on the wall for every kick. Both legs are kicking together, one on wall side. Emphasize staying beside the wall and making sure that they use the wall on every kick. Do several kicks and then turn around with other leg against wall.

1. Swimmers stand in the pool holding a kickboard out in front with the hands over the front – with one side to wall.
2. Using leg closest to the wall, bend knee and lift heel to buttocks.
3. Turn toes out and run toes backward and down the wall.
4. Finish with the feet together on the bottom of the pool.



#### Coaching Tips

- It is also important to emphasize the timing of the kick at this stage. Ensure that swimmers “kick and glide” during every kick.
- Refer to teaching drills in breaststroke for other drill options.
- Practice in water in supine position (on back), board over knees, bringing heels back to buttocks.
- Practice in supine position without board with hands by sides or in streamline position.
- Practice in prone position with board.



## Training Session 10

<p>Goal</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To assess and revise breaststroke skills from Training Session 9.</li> <li>2. To introduce the breaststroke skills below.</li> </ol>
<p>Warm-Ups</p>
<p>Stretches</p>
<p>Dry Land Drills</p>
<p>Water Warm-Ups</p>
<p>Water Practice</p> <p>See below</p>

### **Kick without a Kickboard**

Continue to use the wall if both feet are not turned out. The purpose of this drill is to develop a feeling of driving the body forward over the hands.

#### Teaching Points

1. Hold the arms in the streamline position.
2. Hands are held one on top of the other and do not move.
3. The timing of the drill is as follows:
  - ♦ Take a breath
  - ♦ Face back in the water
  - ♦ Kick and glide
  - ♦ Count “one, two”
4. Exhale before lifting head.

### **Arm Stroke Out of Water**

The initial understanding of the arm action can be described as drawing a circular pattern with the hands and arms.

#### Teaching Points

1. Athletes undertake an initial try of the arm action out of water. Assist the arms, if required, to pattern the movement.
2. Have the athletes watch the movement of their hands and arms while practicing the stroke.



### Breaststroke Arm Stroke

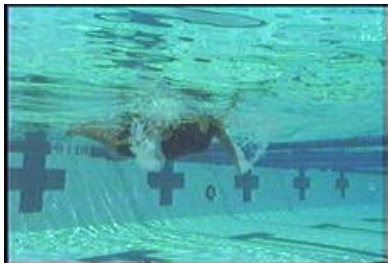
The major considerations in teaching the arm action of breaststroke is that the arms must move simultaneously, and they must not be brought back beyond the hip line, except during the first stroke after the start and at each turn.

#### Teaching Points

1. The arm action begins with the arms fully extended and the hands close together, palms turned out, and about 15 centimeters under the water surface.
2. The initial movement of the arms is a push outward until the hands are wider than the shoulders.
3. Lower arms and rotate wrists inward to initially face the feet.
4. The wrists continue to come together into a position facing each other, completing the propulsive phase of the stroke.
5. Once the pressure of the water has been released from the palm of the hands, the elbows squeeze toward each other before extending to a fully outstretched position with the palms down, back to their start position.



Assume streamline position with pull buoy between legs.



Drive arms out and down.



Pull arms through, bringing hands together.



### Arm Stroke - Standing in Water

#### Teaching Points

1. The arm stroke can also be practiced standing in the water.
2. Swimmer stands with one foot forward and one back for stability. The arms are below the water surface.
3. Athlete watches his/her hands while practicing the stroke to prevent the arms from pushing back past the shoulders.

### Complete Breaststroke - Combine Kick and Arm Stroke

Beginners feel comfortable with this sequence once it has been developed. Usually, only refinement is required for competition experiences.

#### Teaching Points

1. The ultimate sequence is – Pull – Breathe – Kick – Glide. The glide is extended for one to three seconds.
2. Following the push from the wall, complete an arm stroke. During the stroke, lift the head for a breath.
3. Kick, and then a glide with the arms extended.
4. Follow whole sequence by another Pull - Breathe – Kick - Glide.



Pull.



Breathe.



Kick - Glide.



### **Breaststroke Race Finish**

At the finish of a race, a touch must be made with both hands simultaneously. The shoulders must be at the same level.

#### Teaching Points

1. Practice swimming the last five meters into the wall, finishing on a full stroke, with hands touching wall simultaneously.
2. Get athletes to monitor each other during this drill.



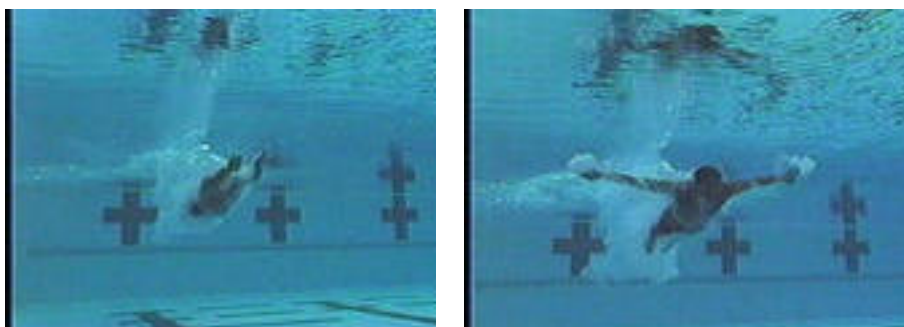


### Training Session 11

Goal 1. To assess and revise breaststroke skills from training sessions 9, 10. 2. To introduce the breaststroke starts and turns skills below.
Warm-Ups
Stretches
Dry Land Drills
Water Warm-Ups
Water Practice See below

#### Breaststroke Start – Pull-Out Stroke

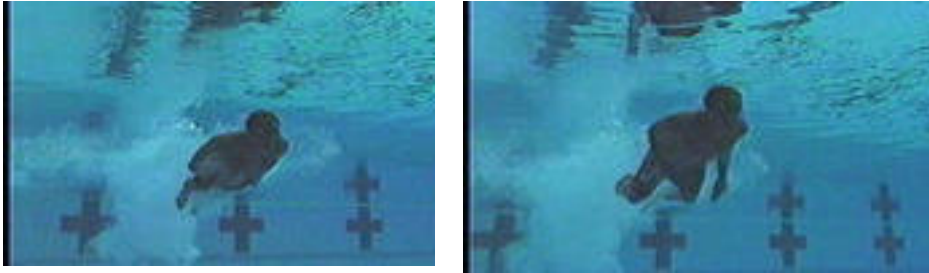
For breaststroke, the dive start is deeper than the freestyle. This enables the swimmer to complete one powerful stroke with the arms, followed by a strong leg kick, while the body is fully submerged. The timing of these actions is important since the rule requires some part of the head to be above the water surface before the second arm stroke begins.







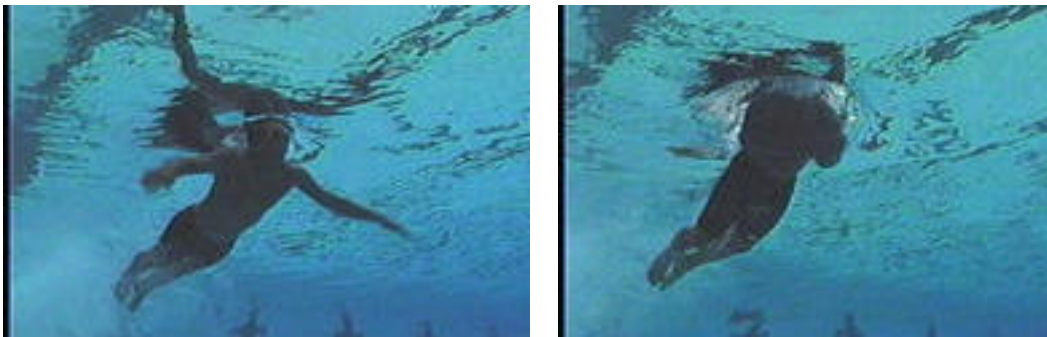
Following the dive, as forward momentum from the glide decreases, the arms start the pull in a flatter and wider pathway than normal, continuing with a backward push until they reach the thighs as shown below.



This pull-push action is made as parallel as possible to the water surface to avoid a rolling dolphin type reaction from the legs, which could be mistaken for an illegal kick. The momentum from this powerful arm action will extend the glide phase.

#### Teaching Points

1. As the speed of the forward movement begins to decrease, the arms are recovered close to the body and then pushed forward to an outstretched position.
2. At this stage, the legs have recovered with the heels close to the buttocks.
3. The swimmer then kicks, and, with a fine adjustment of the position of the head and hands, the body drives strongly to the surface.
4. When the body breaks the surface, only then is the second arm pull started.



#### Coaching Tips

The following three points are important in the underwater pull and kick and require emphasis during practice in order to attain maximum benefits from the underwater phase, following the drive.

- Fully exploit the momentum gained from the dive before starting to pull.
- Make full use of the momentum gained from the powerful arm stroke before kicking.
- Time the kick and adjustment of the head and hand positions so that the body drives powerfully to arrive at the surface to begin the first arm pull as the glide slows down to swimming speed.

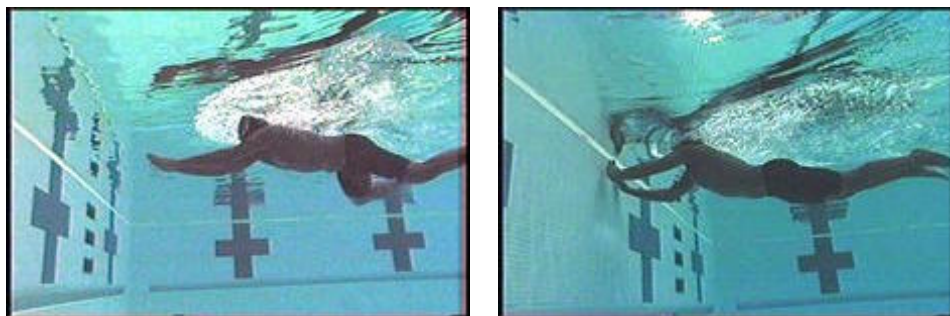


### In-Water Start - Breaststroke

If a swimmer is unable to dive due to dive restrictions, he/she begins from the in-water push off in the streamlined position at a depth as close to replicating the dive position as possible. Follow through with the dive start from this position. See Freestyle, In-Water Start Lesson.

### Breaststroke Turn

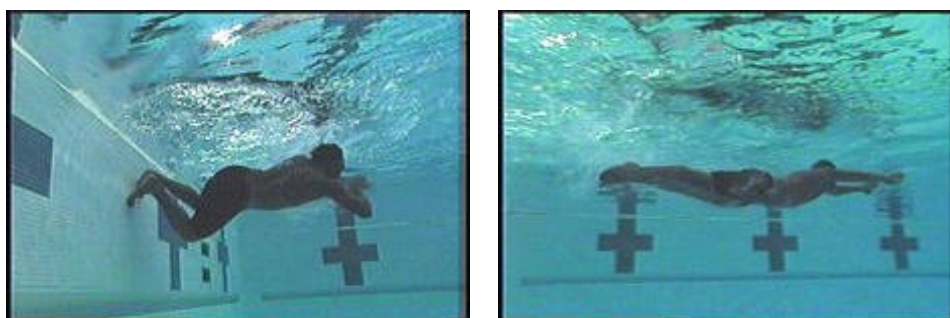
On turning and at the finish, the touch is made with hands simultaneously with the shoulders level.



Once the arms have touched the wall, the swimmer allows the elbows to bend slightly, giving the swimmer leverage to push into the turn. As the elbows bend, the legs are drawn up underneath the body to the wall and the upper body drops backwards in to the water.



The upper arm is brought over and meets with the lower arm and extends into the streamline position as the legs drive off the wall.



The pull-out stroke, as described above in breaststroke start, is then executed before resuming the breaststroke stroke.



## Training Session 12

Goal To introduce butterfly skills.
Warm-Ups
Stretches
Dry Land Drills
Water Warm-Ups

### Water Practice

The butterfly is sometimes perceived as a difficult stroke to master. This is not necessarily the case, and some athletes readily take to it. The butterfly stroke provides an achievable challenge for most swimmers. The sequence for introducing butterfly is similar to breaststroke to the extent that the kick is developed first.

The butterfly kick is usually referred to as a dolphin kick and is a powerful action. During the kicking action, the legs move up and down together simultaneously. The kick consists of an up beat and a down beat performed in a continuous manner.

Beginners learning the butterfly kick for the first time are helped by an out-of-water demonstration first, emphasizing that the kick comes from the hips.

### Teaching Points

#### Out of the water – demonstration of butterfly kick movement from the hips

1. Allow the swimmer to lie on a bench or the side of the pool and try the wave movement of hips—forward, backward, forward, backward? until the swimmer loosens up and is able to do it.

#### In Water – Man from Atlantis drill

2. Swimmers push off under water in the streamline position, bringing their arms to their sides, and dolphin kick along the shallow end of the pool for a short distance.



In Water – dolphin kick on the back

3. Swimmers lie on their backs in the back float position, with the hands trailing in the water, and practice the dolphin kick, feeling the hips bend and straighten and the water push up from the feet.



Coaching Tips

- Practice drills No. 2 and No. 3, with and without fins.
- In Water – dolphin torpedo drill.
- This is executed in the same way as the “Man from Atlantis” drill, with the arms extended out in front in the streamline position. A minimum of four kicks should be done under the surface of the water before breathing.
- Emphasize that the dolphin kick comes from the hips, and the feet are kept close together and move simultaneously.



## Training Session 13

Goal 1. To assess and revise butterfly skills from training session 12. 2. To introduce the butterfly arm stroke, kick and correct finish skills below.
Warm-Ups
Stretches
Dry Land Drills
Water Warm-Ups
Water Practice See below

### Arm Stroke – Standing in Water

#### Teaching Points

1. Swimmer stands in shoulder-deep water, starts a push and glide.
2. Hands enter the water at shoulder width, the palms outward, allowing hands to slide smoothly into the water.
3. Hands sweep outward and downward until the hands are wider than the shoulders.
4. Hands continue downward, inward and upward in a keyhole type movement until they are under the chest near the midline of the body.
5. Hands move into a backward, outward and up sweep movement until the hands come close to the surface beside the thighs ready for the release and recovery over the surface of the water.
6. The release occurs just prior to the arms fully extending and before the hands reach the surface. The arms must be extended during the exit from the water to allow a circling up, outward and forward movement to occur.
7. Hands and arms move above the water surface until the entry is made.

#### Coaching Tips

- The underwater pull is often described as a keyhole or hourglass shape.
- Ensure that the arm/hand finishes with the thumbs even with the leg line of the swimsuit.



### **Breathing**

During the butterfly stroke, swimmer looks to the front to inhale through the mouth as the arms pull.

#### Teaching Points

1. The head begins to be raised as the arms sweep outward and downward during the catch phase.
2. The face breaks the surface on the upsweep of the arms, and a breath is taken and completed during the first half of the recovery phase.
3. As the arms complete the recovery, the head drops back into the water and exhalation occurs.

#### Coaching Points

- In order to get the correct timing for butterfly, teaching beginners to breathe every second stroke is very important.
- Using the phrase “head up on one, down on one” makes it easy for the swimmer to understand.

### **Whole Stroke**

Practice four dolphin kicks, pull and breathe.

#### Teaching Points

1. Swimmers streamline off wall with the arms covering the ears and one hand on top of the other.
2. The arms stay in this position while four dolphin kicks are made with the legs. It is then time for the arms to commence a pull. At the same time, a breath is taken and finished and the head rolls back into the water before the arms finish the recovery. Remain in the streamline position for another four dolphin kicks.
3. A breath can be taken initially every stroke. However, teach every two strokes. As soon as proficiency is developed the swimmer can begin “head up on one, down on one.”

### **Butterfly - Correct Finish**

#### Teaching Points

1. At the finish of a race, the touch must be made simultaneously at, above or below the water surface.
2. As in breaststroke, the hands are at the same level.



## Training Session 14

Goal 1. To assess and revise skills from training sessions 12 and 13. 2. To introduce the butterfly starts and turns skills below.
Warm-Ups
Stretches
Dry Land Drills
Water Warm-Ups
Water Practice See below

One arm stroke, a breath and two kicks constitute one stroke for beginner butterfly. Following is the correct butterfly technique. Although the timing is not 100 percent accurate, it is technically correct and the form is good enough for swimmers to correctly be able to participate in butterfly swimming.

### Teaching Points

1. Begin in the streamline position with the arms covering the ears and one hand on top of the other. Remain there for two kicks.
2. Pull and breathe for two kicks.
3. Pull and keep the head down for two kicks.
4. Pull and breathe.

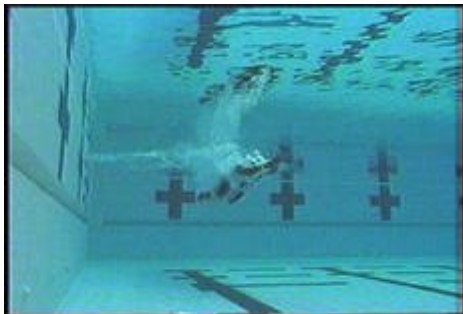


### Butterfly Dive Start

Swimmers who may not dive start, use the same in-water start as freestyle. The start for butterfly is very similar to that of freestyle.

#### Teaching Points

1. The swimmers enter the water in the streamline position, both arms extended in front, covering the ears.
2. Once the glide is beginning to decrease, the legs give two to four strong dolphin kicks to bring the body to the surface, maintaining streamline position with the arms extended.
3. Once at the surface, both arms begin the first pull backward under water.
4. The butterfly begins.







### **Butterfly Turn**

The butterfly turn is done in a similar way to the breaststroke turn.

#### Teaching Points

1. When touching the wall at a turn, as well as the finish, the touch is made with both hands simultaneously.
2. The legs are drawn up as in the breaststroke turn, and, upon leaving the wall, the legs give two to four strong dolphin kicks to bring the body to the surface.
3. The arms start the underwater pull, and the regular stroke pattern begins.



## Training Session 15

<p><b>Goal</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To revise the following skills as necessary.  <input type="checkbox"/> Freestyle, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly</li> <li>To undertake a full assessment of each swimmer.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Warm-Ups</b></p>
<p><b>Stretches</b></p>
<p><b>Dry Land Drills</b>                  Utilize land drills from program.</p>
<p><b>Water Warm-Ups</b>                  Utilize drills from program, across all strokes.</p>
<p><b>Water Practice</b>                  Revise the following skills. Go through each step in a sequential manner, spending time on those phases that require it.</p>

<b>Freestyle</b>	<b>Backstroke</b>	<b>Breaststroke</b>	<b>Butterfly</b>
Kick	Kick	Kick	Kick
Arms	Arms	Arms	Arms
Breathing		Breathing	Breathing
Whole Stroke	Whole Stroke	Whole Stroke	Whole Stroke
Starts	Starts	Starts	Starts
Turns	Turns	Turns	Turns
Finishes	Finishes		Finishes

To undertake a full assessment of each swimmer, use the assessment form to review outcomes of the programs for each swimmer. Use next training session's time trials for distance swim checks. Use this assessment to set goals for the next term for each individual.



## Training Session 16

<p><b>Goal</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To provide a fun opportunity for the swimmers to celebrate their achievements over the 16-session program.</li><li>2. To provide an opportunity for swimmers to put their training into practice.</li><li>3. To provide an opportunity to test swimmers' distance ability.</li><li>4. To gain times for future swim events.</li><li>5. To test swimmers' readiness for progression to squads.</li></ol>
<p><b>Warm-Ups</b></p>
<p><b>Stretches</b></p>
<p><b>Dry Land Drills</b></p>
<p><b>Water Warm-Ups</b></p>

### Practice Competition

Swimmers entered in 50-meter events would not be competing in 15-meter events. Use previous time trial to seed freestyle and backstroke events.

- ♦ 15-meter/25-meter/50-meter Freestyle
- ♦ 15-meter/25-meter/50-meter Backstroke
- ♦ 15-meter/25-meter Breaststroke
- ♦ 15-meter/25-meter Butterfly



Aquatics Athlete Skills Stroke Development Assessment

**Athlete Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Start Date** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Coach Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions**

- 1. Use tool at the beginning of the training/competition season to establish a basis of the athlete's starting skill level.
- 2. Have the athlete perform the skill several times.
- 3. If the athlete performs the skill correctly three out of five times, check the box next to the skill to indicate that the skill has been accomplished.
- 4. Intersperse assessment sessions into your program.
- 5. Swimmers may accomplish skills in any order. Athletes have accomplished this list when all possible items have been achieved.

**Freestyle**

- Makes an attempt to swim on front
- Performs freestyle in waist-deep water
- Performs freestyle using flutter kick for 15 meters
- Performs freestyle with periodic breathing for 15 meters
- Performs freestyle with rhythmic breathing for one pool length

**Freestyle Start**

- Makes an attempt to start from in the pool
- Performs a proper start in the pool
- Performs proper start standing on the pool edge
- Performs proper start using a starting block
- Continues to swim a proper freestyle after starting from the block

**Freestyle Turn**

- Makes an attempt to turn around without stopping
- Performs an open turn in waist-deep water
- Performs an open turn, after swimming freestyle, without stopping
- Performs a flip turn in waist-deep water
- Performs a flip turn, swimming freestyle for 15 meters
- Performs two flip turns in a row after swimming two pool lengths



### **Backstroke**

- Makes an attempt to swim on back
- Performs backstroke in waist-deep water
- Performs backstroke for 15 meters
- Performs backstroke correctly for a distance of one pool length

### **Backstroke Start**

- Makes an attempt to start on back
- Performs backstroke start, holding the side of pool with one hand
- Performs backstroke start while facing the starting end, both hands on a starting block
- Performs the correct backstroke start and swims one pool length

### **Backstroke Turn**

- Makes an attempt to turn on back
- Performs backstroke turn - assisted
- Performs backstroke turn in chest-deep water – independent
- Performs backstroke turn and continues to swim for one pool length

### **Breaststroke**

- Makes an attempt to swim breaststroke on front
- Performs breaststroke in waist-deep water
- Performs breaststroke using correct breaststroke kick for 15 meters
- Performs breaststroke with rhythmic breathing for 15 meters
- Performs breaststroke with rhythmic breathing for one pool length

### **Breaststroke Turn**

- Makes an attempt to do a breaststroke turn without stopping
- Performs breaststroke turn in waist-deep water
- Performs breaststroke turn after swimming for 15 meters
- Performs two breaststroke turns in a row after swimming two pool lengths

### **Butterfly**

- Makes an attempt to swim butterfly on front
- Performs butterfly in waist-deep water
- Performs butterfly using dolphin kick for 15 meters
- Performs butterfly with rhythmic breathing for 15 meters
- Performs butterfly with rhythmic breathing for one pool length



**Butterfly Turn**

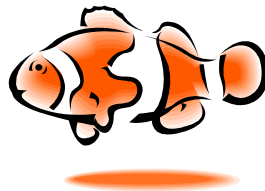
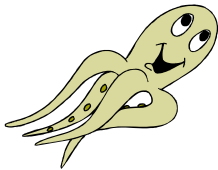
- Makes an attempt to do a butterfly turn without stopping
- Performs butterfly turn in waist-deep water.
- Performs a butterfly turn after swimming butterfly without stopping
- Performs a butterfly after swimming for 15 meters
- Performs two butterfly turns in a row after swimming two pool lengths



**Special Olympics**

# Congratulations

You have learned ALL the skills needed to be a  
**Great Swimmer.**



You are now ready to join  
Squad Training Level.  
**Well Done**

Coach \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_