



RELAY STARTS

The start of the race is a very important aspect of competitive swimming, and in accordance with World Aquatics rule 10.4.5, until an athlete touches the wall to complete their quarter of their race distance, the feet of the athlete in the same relay team who is next in order to complete must remain in contact with the starting platform/wall. Be aware of medical conditions which may restrict out of water starts, but be sure to practice the starts the athletes will be competing with.

Common Disqualifications

- DQ Code 10.11 - Relay False Start - occurs when the next swimmer's feet leave the starting platform before the incoming swimmer touches the wall.

Number of 2023 World Games Disqualifications

RELAY FALSE START - 32



STARTS

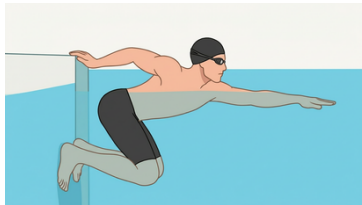
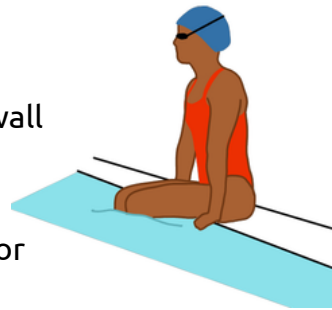
Standing Start



- Can be off the blocks or side
- Curl toes over the front edge
- On the starter's signal, push off the block/concourse
- Enter water in the streamline position
- Freestyle/Butterfly - kick to surface
- Breaststroke - swimmer may do a pull out or glide

Sitting Start

- Sit on pool concourse
- On the starter's signal, push off from the wall into the streamline body position
- Freestyle/Butterfly - kick to surface
- Breaststroke - swimmer may do a pull out or glide



In-Water Start

- Hold onto side of pool while in the water with either hand
- Place both feet on the wall, with knees slightly bent
- Extend the other hand in the water in the direction of travel or to the other end of the pool
- Look forward to the other end of the pool
- On the starter's signal, push off the side into the streamline body position
- Freestyle/Butterfly - kick to surface
- Breaststroke - swimmer may do a pull out or glide

DRILLS TO AVOID DQ Code 10.11

Progression 1: On Deck Explanation/Videos

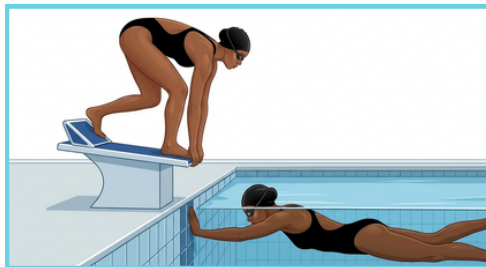
- Explain how the relay exchange works. Include visual demonstrations from videos, emphasizing the rules and need to make sure the prior athlete touches the wall before the next athlete leaves the platform/wall.

Progression 2: Demonstrate a Relay Crossover

- Determine a relay crossover for each of the legal starts.
- Emphasize the need to hold until the prior swimmer has reached the wall.

Progression 3: Practice, Practice, Practice

- Determine which start is most appropriate for each athlete. See progressions on page 2 for each start.
- Once athlete is comfortable with the starts, practice a relay crossover.
- Practice different athletes finishing and different athletes doing the crossover starts.
- When making relay entries, consider practice results to determine their starting positions. Practice how you would compete!



TIPS FROM MICHAEL & KIERA

Be a Detective

Coaches, be a detective. Watch carefully. Notice athlete patterns, their emotions, how they handle corrections. Then, work on drills, activities, and coaching sessions that build your working relationship to prevent and avoid DQ's. The more you observe, the more you can coach effectively.



Michael Phelps is the founder of the Michael Phelps Foundation, Father of 4 boys, and the most decorated Olympic Champion of all time (23 gold medals).
Kiera Byland is an athlete, leader and coach for Special Olympics Great Britain. She currently sits on the Special Olympics International Board and the Global Athlete Congress Chair.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Swimming Coaching Guide

- More specific drill progressions
- More detailed stroke work
- Additional Special Olympics Swimming Training information.



Make Every Race Count Website

- New Coaches Standards
- DQ Data
- Training Videos

