

# *Swim Study Guide*

## I. History of Swimming

Swimming for leisure has become tremendously popular since late in the last century. The first municipal pool in the United States was built in Brookline, Massachusetts, in 1887. Soon after that, New York City built public facilities they called “baths.” In the 1920s, the first boom for swimming pools occurred, with several thousand pools built in this country. The National Spa and Pool Institute reports that there are now about 6 1/2 million pools in the United States.

At the turn of the century, Commodore Wilbert E. Longfellow was one of the first to become concerned with the number of drownings in the United States. He saw the need for a nationwide program of swimming and lifesaving instruction. In 1914 Commodore Longfellow presented his plan to the American Red Cross, and the Red Cross Life Saving Corps, the forerunner of the present-day Red Cross water safety courses, came into being.

The number of facilities devoted to water related activities has increased dramatically in recent years. Boating, water skiing, snorkeling, SCUBA diving, surfing, sail boarding, fishing, sliding down water slides, and swimming in wave pools are more popular than ever. Even the more subdued activities, such as, hot tubs, jacuzzis, and whirlpools are growing in popularity.

## II. Resting Swim Strokes

### A. Elementary Backstroke

1. The heels are pulled down to the buttocks with the feet flexed.
2. Turn the feet and press outward. -
3. Squeeze the legs until they are straight and together.
4. The arms slide up the sides to above shoulder level and pull straight down to the thighs.
5. The head is back looking at the ceiling, which helps the hips come to the surface.
6. There is a long glide between strokes.

### B. Sidestroke

1. Draw the heels towards the buttocks, with the toes flexed.
2. Step out to a split position, pointing the toes in the process.
3. Squeeze your legs together.
4. The top arm slides up to the armpit while the bottom arm pulls down to the shoulder.
5. The top ant pushes down to the thigh while the bottom arm slides past the ear straight above the head.
6. Glide as long as possible between strokes.

### C. Breaststroke

1. The heels are pulled up to the buttocks with flexed feet
2. Turn the feet and press them outward.
3. Squeeze the legs until they are straight and together, point the toes in the process.

4. With the palms turned outward, press the hands down and back toward the shoulders.
5. Rotate the hands and pull them together under the chin and slide the hands straight out (like paying). **THIS IS CALLED THE ARM RECOVERY**
6. While the arms press back, lift the head to take a breath and then put it back down.
7. The kick is during the arm recovery, and after the glide.

### **III. Competitive Swim Strokes.**

#### **A. Freestyle/Front Crawl**

1. Body should be horizontal and streamlined. Streamlining decreases water resistance.
2. The kick is a steady up and down movement of the legs. The toes are pointed and slightly turned in. The only part of the foot that comes out of the water is the heel. The kick is called the flutter kick.
3. The hands are sliced into the water, in front of the same shoulder, stretching out to full extension of the arm.
4. The hand pulls slightly outward and then down the centerline of the body and then pushes out past the hips. With the arm slightly bent, and elbow the highest point, the arm recovers to start the stroke again. The fingers point down toward the bottom of the pool. Most of the power in front crawl/freestyle comes from the arms.
5. Fingers are slightly apart and hand is relaxed, not cupped.
6. As your hand pulls past the shoulder, the head rolls to the side. The exhale is just before the face comes out of the water.
7. Rotate the shoulders to get the face out of the water. (You get to pick the side you are comfortable breathing to.)

#### **B. Backstroke/Back Crawl**

1. With a straight arm, the little finger enters the water slightly above the head.
2. The hand pulls down to the shoulder and then pushes past the thigh
3. The body rolls side to side.
4. The kick is a steady up and down movement of the legs. Toes are pointed and slightly turned in. The only part of the foot that comes out of the water is the big toe.
5. The head is back looking at the ceiling, which helps the hips come to the surface.

#### **C. Tips on All Strokes**

1. The glide makes the stroke easier, because it puts the body in a streamline position.
2. The arm stroke is stronger than the kick

3. Streamlining your body creates less water resistance. (Streamlining is as flat on the surface as possible)
4. The hand position for all strokes should be fingers slightly apart and relaxed.
5. A swimmer that does not get a regular supply of oxygen will tire quickly.

#### D. Kicks and Strokes

1. Freestyle-Flutter kick
2. Backstroke-Flutter kick
3. Elementary Backstroke-Inverted Breaststroke kick/whip kick
4. Sidestroke-Scissors kick
5. Breaststroke-Breaststroke kick/Whip kick
6. Butterfly-Dolphin kick

### IV. Self Rescue Techniques

#### A. Back float-Lie on back with no movement

NOTE: Only good if you float well!

#### B. Survival float-Lie face down with no movement, except to breathe.

NOTE: It is also called Drownproofing. This is the most relaxing technique because it uses very little energy.

#### C. Treading Water-Standing in the water with your face above the surface.

NOTE: The most tiring method because you are constantly moving. This method uses more energy than any other method of self rescue.

NOTE: Factors that affect the ability to float

1. Body composition-the more body fat, the greater the ability to float
2. The amount of air in the lungs.
3. The ability to relax in the water.

#### D. Kicks Used For Treading Water

1. Flutter kick-worst kick, uses most energy because legs are constantly moving.
2. Scissors kick.
3. Bicycle kick-resembles riding a bike.
4. Frog kick-resembles the whip kick, except you get to take your legs far apart.
5. Rotary kick-resembles the frog kick only one leg kicks at a time.

#### E. Arms Used For Treading Water

1. Elementary Backstroke arms.

2. Sculling-Forward and backward movement just under the surface of the water ( a slow figure eight). NOTE: When you are fully clothed use a resting stroke to swim

## **V. Lifesaving Rules**

NOTE: Know your capabilities and your limitations. The #1 cause of drowning is overestimating you ability.

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Drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death in the United States, exceeded only by motor vehicle accidents. More than 7,000 persons drown annually, 4,700 of who did not even intend to get wet Two-thirds of those who drown do not know how to swim, while half are alone at the time of the accident. Many drownings could be avoided if someone nearby were to apply some basic rescue techniques that are within the capability of most persons to perform even if you are not a lifeguard.

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- A. Never swim alone -Always swim when a lifeguard is present
- B. If you see someone in trouble, alert a lifeguard first or call for help if no lifeguard present
- C. If there is no lifeguard present, use this simple “rule of thumb”

**REACH, THROW, ROW, THEN GO A IF YOU HAVE TO GO. GO WITH A PIECE OF EQUIPMENT!!!**

- D. Types of Nonswimming Rescues
  1. Reaching-each an object out to the victim.
  2. Throwing-throw a floatable object out to the victim.
  3. Wading-In shallow water only-reach your arm out to the victim. NOTE: Anyone can do these rescues, even a non-swimmer.