

SWIMMING DRILLS



- 1 BREATH/25** Limiting the number of breaths taken per length to enable the swimmer to view his/her underwater technique while swimming. (fr)
- 2 KICKS - 1 PULL** A breaststroke drill where an extra kick is added after each complete stroke cycle. This drill emphasizes the importance of streamlining the front end while kicking. (br)
- 2-3-2** A drill that follows the following stroke pattern:
- 2 strokes right arm only (left arm extended)
 - 3 strokes (right-left-right with good body roll)
 - 2 strokes left arm only (right arm extended)
 - 3 strokes (right-left-right with good body roll) (repeat) (fr, ba)
- 3 KICKS - 1 PULL** This fly drill is designed to make the swimmer aware of the kick by adding an extra kick after the arm recovery. Not recommended for beginners. (fl)
- 3-5-7-9** Sometimes known as "lungbuster" this odd numbered breathing pattern will promote body roll as a result of alternate side breathing. This drill is for advanced competitive swimmers only. (fr)
- 4 STROKE FLY** 4 strokes butterfly with perfect technique. The balance of each length is swum easy free or breast. This drill promotes good fly technique by limiting the distance swum. (fl)
- 6 KICK** Kick on your side with your submerged arm extended and your other arm at your side. After 6 kicks use the submerged arm to pull you over to your other side and repeat. This drill over emphasizes body roll while establishing a strong kick. (ba,fr)
- BACK KICK** Flutter kicking on the back in a streamlined position (hands over head, one on top of the other). Teaches the mechanics of good body position. (ba)
- BILATERAL BREATHING** Breath every 3rd arm stroke (alternating sides) to help balance your body roll and become more aware of relaxed breathing. (fr)
- BUOY** Flotation device which allows the isolation of the arms. (fl,ba,br,fr)
- CATCH-UP STROKE** A free or back drill where the swimmer executes one complete arm cycle at a time (right arm then left arm, etc.). The stationary arm waits in an extended position in front of your head and acts as a target for the entry of the stroking arm. This drill may be used as a back stroke drill by leaving the stationary arm at your side OR 1/3 of the way through the recovery phase. A strong kick is needed to maintain good body position. (fr,ba)

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CHICKEN HANDS WING

Progress from full chicken wing where you swim holding the arm pits with the one quarter chicken wing allows you to let go of the arm pits and move the hands out slightly. One half chicken wing allows you to move the hands out some more. Each chicken wing drill contributes to the high elbows in the recovery of the arms. (fr)

DOG PADDLE

Swim freestyle with the head out of the water and the arm recovery beneath the surface. This drill helps increase stroke length and efficiency and emphasizes a strong kick. This drill may be used as the starting point of a gradual progression to full stroke. (fr)

DOLPHIN DIVES

This drill is done by using the pool bottom to push yourself out over the surface of the water. The arms then sweep across the surface while breathing. When the arms reach the front the head is immediately ducked downward, and the hips forced up to the surface to initiate the dolphin dive back down towards the bottom of the pool. After a few underwater dolphin kicks this sequence is repeated. (fl)

DOUBLE OVER ARM BACKSTROKE

A relaxing stroke done on the back where both arms recover simultaneously over the surface of the water. Back or breast kick. Helps correct "over reaching" on your entry. Helps to narrow wide breaststroke kicks. Secret weapon used by FORD swimmers during taper. (ba,br)

DPS

Distance Per Stroke. Counting your strokes each length will let you know your stroke efficiency. The less strokes you take per length the more distance you traveled with each stroke. (fl,ba,br,fr)

FIN SWIMS

Although swimming with fins can become a "crutch" for the competitive swimmer if used too much, swimming with short cut-off fins can increase ankle flexibility, leg strength, stability and balance in the water. Fins are especially useful with fly technique. (fl,ba,fr)

FINGERTIP DRAG

A freestyle drill which requires the swimmer to drag his/her fingertips across the surface of the water during the recovery phase of the stroke. This drill will teach the swimmer to keep the elbows high and the hands low to assure a clean entry into the water. This drill may be used as the last step towards a full stroke progression from the dog paddle drill (see dog paddle). (fr)

FIST SWIM

Swimming any stroke (primarily freestyle) with a tightly closed fist. This drill forces the swimmer to "feel" the stroke with the forearms (instead of the hands) and will require that the swimmer keep the elbows up during the "catch" phase of the stroke. An added benefit will occur when the swimmer later opens up the hands and discovers he/she really does have good "feelers." (fl,ba,br,fr)



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- HEADS UP** Swim free, breast, or fly with the head out of water. This drill develops high elbows and kicking power when done as a freestyle drill. If this drill is done swimming breaststroke the swimmer will avoid pulling too far back under the body. For butterfly this drill will result in a stroke with less time and energy wasted with “up & down” movements and more forward propulsion. (fr,br,fl)
- HEAD TAP** Touch the head midway through the freestyle arm recovery, lift and enter. Discourages a wide, sweeping recovery. (fr)
- HEAL TOUCH** Breaststroke kick with arms at your side touching your heels before the propulsive phase of each kick cycle. This drill will help swimmers who tend to pull their knees up under their body too far. (br)
- MIRROR IMAGE** Practice good techniques in front of a mirror for instant feedback.
- PADDLES** For more advanced competitive swimmers the use of hand paddles can help increase sport specific strength in the upper body. For the beginning swimmer paddles can be used to enable the swimmer to “feel” the water better. (fl,ba,br,fr)
- POP-UP** While swimming breaststroke, exaggerate the upward movement of the head and shoulders and see how much of your upper body you can get out of the water. The pressing and sweeping actions of the arm pull will need to be adjusted to perform this drill and the back will need to arch. This drill may help the coach and swimmer decide which style breaststroke the swimmer is best suited for. (br)
- POWER KICK** Front flutter kick with the arms extended (no kick board) and the head up. This increases leg resistance and develops more power in the kick. Now try it with the arms at your side! Try fins too! (fr)
- QUARTER SWIMS** Balancing a quarter on your forehead while swimming backstroke. Advanced swimmers can try a cup of water! This drill promotes a steady head position but may leave the swimmer swimming flat in the water. Try rolling and balancing...that’s the key! (ba)
- SCULLING** Using the hands (and feet) as propellers by changing direction and pitch throughout the stroke. This “sweeping” motion creates a “lift” force in essentially the same way airfoils do. Treading water is one form of sculling. The sculling drill is done by treading water while on the stomach so the swimmer can feel for “lift.” (fl,ba,br,fr)
- SEAHORSE** Pull breaststroke with the legs in a vertical position (no kick). The vertical position in this drill will promote a short, quick pull and remind the swimmer of the importance of body position. (br)



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SHOULDER ROLLER

Kick on your back or on your stomach with your arms at your sides taking turns lifting One shoulder then the other up above the surface of the water. The entire torso should turn with this shoulder lift. This drill promotes good shoulder roll and body position while conditioning the legs. (ba,fr)

SINGLE ARM

A drill which involves a single arm and the kick for propulsion. In the beginners version of this drill the stationary arm is kept in front (for freestyle). In the advanced single arm drill and for backstroke the stationary arm is kept at the side. Backstrokers may also hold the stationary arm above the water at a 45 degree angle. (fl,ba,fr)

SINGLE-A-DOUBLE

A butterfly drill where you alternate a right arm pull, a double arm pull, a left arm pull, double arm pull and repeat. A breath should only be taken on the double arm pulls. This drill will permit good mechanics for extended distances. (fl)

TAP-TAP

While swimming backstroke execute two complete arm recoveries with the same arm before proceeding on to the next pull:

After completing the first recovery "tap" the surface of the water directly above the shoulder then retrace the recovery path and "tap" the surface of the water by your leg. Recover your arm again this time slicing the water with your baby finger first. Be sure to keep the recovering arm locked at the elbow through both recoveries. This drill emphasizes straight arm recoveries and the importance of a strong kick in achieving a good body position. (ba)

THUMB-PIT

During the freestyle recovery phase keep your thumb pressed against your side until it reaches your armpit. This drill will encourage high elbows and discourage wide, sweeping recoveries. (fr)

UNDERWATER KICK

Kicking any of the four competitive strokes while submerged under water will improve streamlining and kicking power. (fl,ba,br,fr)

VERTICAL KICKING (FL,BA,BR,FR)

Kicking any of the competitive kicks in a vertical position in deep water. Raising the hands and arms above the water will help develop leg speed and power.

WRIST-TWIST

After exiting the water thumb first for a backstroke arm recovery, twist your wrist so the palm faces outward then inward then outward again before entering the water baby finger first. This drill will enhance awareness of hand entry position. (ba)

