

Swimming Terms

Back Crawl Stroke – Stroke where the swimmer is on their back. The arms work alternately and the swimmer uses the flutter kick.

Back Stroke Flags – Flags that are stretched across the pool at each end of the swimming lanes to indicate the distance from the wall.

Block – The starting platform

Breast Stroke – Stroke where the swimmer first pulls, then kicks with a whip kick then glides.

Butterfly Stroke – Stroke where both arms are brought forward over the water and pulled back simultaneously. The legs kick up and down simultaneously.

Circle Swimming – Staying to the right of the black line to enable more swimmers in each lane.

Dolphin Kick - Kick used in the butterfly stroke. Similar to flutter kick only both legs kick at the same time.

DQ: Disqualified – When a swimmer breaks one or more rules they are ineligible to receive awards or use their time for the competition.

Dry land Training – Training done out of the water that aids and enhances swimming performance.

Elementary Back Stroke – Stroke where the swimmer is on their back. The whip kick is used simultaneously with the arms. The hands slide up to the armpits, and then extend out from the shoulders, and then they are pulled down to the side.

False Start – Occurs when a swimmer is moving at the start.

Fins – Used in snorkeling and scuba diving. Assist the swimmer with the flutter kick.

Flutter Kick – Legs move alternately up and down. Used in the Front Crawl and the Back Crawl.

Fulcrum – Adjustment on the diving board that makes it bouncier.

Freestyle – Usually considered another name for Front Crawl. The swimmer may use any style other than individual medley or medley relay events.

Front Crawl Stroke – Stroke where the arms work alternately and the legs work alternately utilizing a flutter kick.

Goggles – Used to assist the swimmer with the direction they are heading and help protect the eyes from the chemicals in the pool.

Gutter – The area along the edge of the pool in which water overflows during a race and is re circulated through the filtration system.

Help Position – Lifejacket skill used when a boater is stranded by himself or herself. Lay back and bring the knees up toward the chest. Grab the knees with your hands. Lay your head back and relax.

Huddle Position – Lifejacket skill used when boaters are stranded in open water with a group of other boaters. Wrap arms around another swimmer and hold on to their lifejacket. The entire group does this forming a circle.

Human Chain – Lifesaving technique where people grab each other's wrists to make a long chain that extends out to a person in trouble.

Hurdle – Step used to gain elevation when diving off the diving board.

Kick Board – Used to assist the swimmer with their body position while they practice their kicks.

IM: Individual Medley – An event where a swimmer uses all four strokes in the following order; Butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle.

1 Lap – Equals swimming from one end of the pool to the other end and back to where you started.

Lap Counter – Either a set of plastic numbers used to count the laps or a person counting for each individual racer.

1 Length – Equals swimming from one end of the pool to the other end.

Mask – Used to enable the swimmer to see clearly under water.

Medley Relay – Four separate swimmers take each of the four strokes used in the IM. Each swimmer is only allowed one length to swim

Meet – Competition designed to test what a swimmer has learned by racing against the clock or other people.

Negative Split – Swimming the second half of the race either equal to or faster than the first half.

Pace Clock – Large clock with a large second hand and a similar minute hand, used to check pace or maintain intervals in practice.

Pegs – Exercise practiced against the wall where the swimmer pulls their upper body out of the water and back down under water. Simulates the pulling action of the front crawl.

Pike Dive – Dive where the body bends at the waist and the legs remain straight.

Porpoise – Snorkeling skill where the swimmer surface dives under water then clears their snorkel when they resurface.

Pull Buoy – Device placed between the legs to assist the swimmer with practicing the arms strokes.

Relay – An even where four in which four swimmers compete together as a team to achieve one time.

Rescue Tube – Long red foam filled device with a shoulder strap. Lifeguards use them to save people in drowning situations.

Ring Buoy – Is a round foam device with a rope attached that can be thrown to swimmers in drowning situations.

Sculling And Kicking – Beginning stroke where the swimmer is floating on their back utilizing the flutter kick. The arms are at their side moving simultaneously back and forth.

Scissor Kick – Kick used on the sidestroke.

Side Stroke – Stroke where the body is on its side. The swimmer uses a scissor kick.

Shallow Water Search – Lifesaving technique used to find a person on the bottom of a lake where the water is murky and visibility is low. People hook elbows and walk across the area sweeping their feet back and forth.

Sharks and Minnows – Tag game where the shark is “it” and the minnows try not to get tagged by the shark.

Shepard’s Crook – Pole with a curved end used for assisting drowning victims to the side of the pool.

Snorkel – Breathing tube used with a mask.

Streamline – The position used to gain maximum during a start and/or push off from the wall in which the swimmers body is as tight as it can be.

Surface Dive – Dive where the swimmer uses a pike or tuck position to swim down into deep water.

Tread Water – The swimmer stays in one spot in the deep water, by kicking their legs and sculling with their arms in order to keep their head above water.

Tuck Dive – Dive off the diving board where the diver brings their knees up to their chest.

Warm up – used by a swimmer prior to a main practice, set, or race. Gets muscles loose and warm and gradually increases heart and respiration.

Warm down – Low intensity swimming used by swimmers after a race or main practice. It rids the body of excess lactic acid and to gradually reduce heart rate and respiration.

Water Baseball – Baseball game played in the shallow end in the water.

Water Polo - Game played in the deep end that is similar to soccer. The ball can be dribbled across the pool and shot into a goal.

Water Volleyball – Game played in the shallow end just like regular volleyball except in the water.

Whip Kick – Kick used for the breaststroke and the elementary backstroke.