



Having Fun in the Water

Swimming is one of the most enjoyable activities in Scouting. On a hot afternoon at summer camp, nothing beats a dip in the camp pool or lake.

But swimming is more than a fun activity and a great way to cool off in the summer. It's also an activity that can boost your fitness and that could possibly save your life. What's more, swimming opens the door to a whole bunch of other aquatic activities, including canoeing, sailing, scuba diving, stand-up paddleboarding, and more.

This month's activities offer a mix of skills training and pure fun. Whether you head to a beach or lake in the summer or an indoor pool in the dead of winter, you will have a great time while learning some important skills along the way.

Objectives

This month's activities should:

- Teach Scouts basic strokes of swimming.
- Provide a basic understanding of water safety practices.
- Demonstrate what constitutes a safe swimming area.
- Foster discussion of appropriate gear for swimming.
- Teach Scouts the buddy system.
- Build self-confidence as Scouts improve swimming skills and abilities.

RELATED ADVANCEMENT AND AWARDS

- Swimming requirements for Second Class and First Class
- Lifesaving and Swimming merit badges
- Quest: Requirement 5



Leadership Planning

As a leadership team, you may want to discuss the following items when choosing swimming as your program feature during your planning meetings.

1. What is our pool availability?
2. What is the skill level of the participants?
3. Where will we do our main event?
4. Will there be a lifeguard present and available?
5. If we are going to develop our own swim area, who will serve as lifeguards?
6. Will there be other helpers to provide support and look out for the group?
7. What swimming gear will be needed?
8. Does the weather forecast impact our event plans?
9. How do we incorporate Scouting skills and advancement into the main event?
10. What changes should we make to the sample meeting plans that would fit our needs better?

PARENTS CAN HELP WITH THE SWIMMING PROGRAM FEATURE BY:

1. Providing transportation for the main event
2. Serving as instructors or lifeguards if properly trained
3. Serving as lookouts during the swimming activities
4. Providing food for the main event
5. Providing equipment such as life jackets or game materials
6. Researching safe venues and monitoring the weather

SAFE SWIM DEFENSE IN A NUTSHELL

The BSA's Safe Swim Defense is a backbone of safe swimming during Scouting activities. These preventive measures help everyone take responsibility for their behavior and safety. For more information, see www.scouting.org/OutdoorProgram/Aquatics/safe-swim.

1. **Qualified Supervision:** Focuses on responsible and qualified adult supervision (age 21 or over) trained in BSA Safe Swim Defense.
2. **Personal Health Review:** Addresses medical complications.
3. **Safe Area:** Concerns controlled access and conditions of the venue, and having the proper equipment on hand.
4. **Response Personnel (Lifeguards):** Ensures someone is available to provide safe and effective assistance.
5. **Lookout:** Serves as the eyes and ears and is on alert for trouble.
6. **Ability Groups:** Matches activities, areas, and equipment to the swimmer's ability.
7. **Buddy System:** Provides an extra layer of protection for each participant.
8. **Discipline:** Reinforces each participant's knowledge, understanding, and respect regarding safe swimming as outlined in the Safe Swim Defense guidelines.



BUDDY SYSTEM

Every participant is paired with another. Buddies check into and out of the area together. They stay together, monitor each other, and alert the safety team if either needs assistance or is missing. Buddies are normally in the same ability group and remain in their assigned area. If they are not in the same ability group, then they swim in the area assigned to the buddy with the lesser ability.

A buddy check reminds participants of their obligation to monitor their buddies and indicates how closely the buddies are keeping track of each other. Roughly every 10 minutes, or as needed to keep the buddies together, the lookout, or another person designated by the supervisor, gives an audible signal, such as a single whistle blast, and a call for “Buddies.” Buddies are expected to raise each other’s hand before completion of a slow, audible count to 10. Buddies who take longer to find each other should be reminded of their responsibility for the other’s safety.

Once everyone has a buddy, a count is made by area and compared with the total number known to be in the water. After the count is confirmed, a signal is given to resume swimming.



Swimming Rules from the *Guide to Safe Scouting*

All participants of BSA swimming activities must follow Safe Swim Defense. Adult leaders supervising a swimming activity must have completed Safe Swim Defense training within the previous two years. Safe Swim Defense standards apply at backyard, hotel, apartment, and public pools; at established waterfront swim areas such as beaches at state parks and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lakes; and at all temporary swimming areas such as a lake, river, or ocean. Safe Swim Defense does not apply to boating or water activities such as waterskiing or swamped boat drills that are covered by Safety Afloat guidelines.

Safe Swim Defense applies to other nonswimming activities whenever participants enter water over knee deep or when submersion is likely, for example, when fording a stream, seining for bait, or constructing a bridge as a pioneering project. Snorkeling in open water requires each participant to have demonstrated knowledge and skills equivalent to those for Snorkeling BSA in addition to following Safe Swim Defense. Scuba activities must be conducted in accordance with the BSA Scuba policy found in the *Guide to Safe Scouting*. Because of concerns with hyperventilation, competitive underwater swimming events are not permitted in Scouting.

Safe Swim Defense training may be obtained from www.MyScouting.org, at council summer camps, and at other council and district training events. Confirmation of training is required on tour and activity plans for trips that involve swimming. Additional information on various swimming venues is provided in the BSA’s *Aquatics Supervision* guide, No. 34346, available from www.scoutstuff.org and at Scout shops.

BSA Aquatics Supervision Training

Aquatics Supervision: Swimming and Water Rescue training provides BSA leaders with information and skills to prevent, recognize, and respond to swimming emergencies during unit swimming activities. It expands the awareness instruction provided by Safe Swim Defense training. Those completing the training should be better able to assess their preparation to supervise unit swimming events.



The BSA recommends that at least one person with this training is present to assist with supervision whenever a unit swims at a location that does not provide lifeguards. This training is open to any registered adult leader, Scout, or Venturer who is age 15 or older. A council-approved instructor must directly supervise all training. This course takes approximately eight hours and is valid for three years.

Although the training is consistent with training provided professional lifeguards, the Swimming and Water Rescue course is not a lifeguard training course and is not a substitute for BSA Lifeguard training for summer camp aquatics staff. On the other hand, this course addresses important infor-

mation that may not be covered in generic lifeguard training programs such as: preventive measures, including the buddy system and swim classification tests; how to set up a safe swim area in diverse situations; the use of nonstandard rescue equipment; and emergency action plans in remote settings. Therefore, BSA leaders with lifeguard training from other agencies are encouraged to complete this course prior to supervising unit swim activities in remote settings. A “challenge” option is provided to foster cross-training of individuals with training from other agencies.

For more information, see *Aquatics Supervision*, No. 34346.

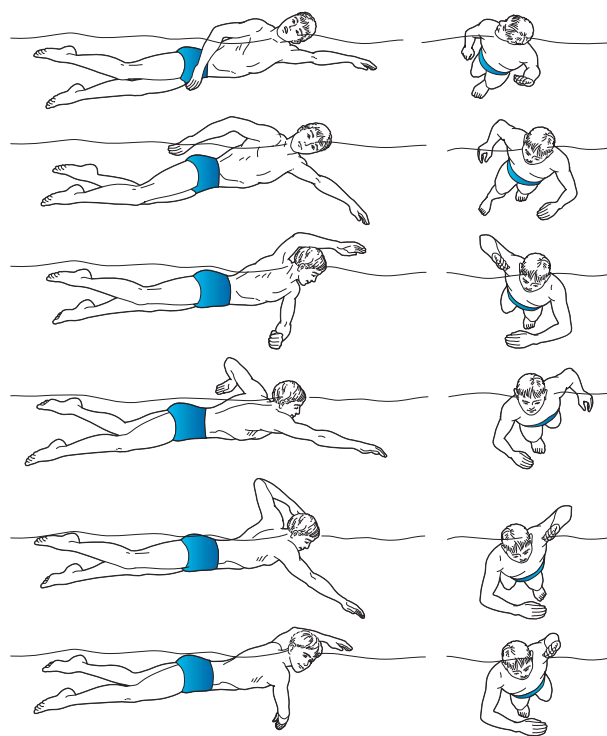
Basic Strokes of Swimming

Front Crawl

The front crawl has three parts: the flutter kick, the rotating arm stroke, and rhythmic breathing. It is the fastest swimming stroke.

Kick. The flutter kick begins at the hips and flows to the feet. As one foot moves downward, the other comes up in a fluttering rhythm. Kick from the hip and thigh, not from the knee. During the downward part of the kick, your ankle stays relaxed, toes are pointed behind you, and your knee is slightly bent. As your foot reaches the end of the kick, straighten your leg and allow your foot to snap downward. As your foot moves upward, keep that leg and knee straight. The kick should be smooth and steady, and your feet should stay just under the water with only your heels breaking the surface. Your big toes should almost touch one another as they pass. You can practice the kick by holding the edge of the pool or by supporting yourself on a kickboard.

Arm Stroke. Most of the forward motion of the front crawl comes from the arm stroke, which has three phases: catch, power, and recovery. To begin the catch, slightly bend your right wrist and elbow as you move the entire arm downward. Have your palm facing away from your body. Keep your elbow, hand, and wrist fixed in this position. Your hand should be directly in line with your shoulder.



For the power phase, straighten your wrist and bend the elbow so your forearm is about 45 degrees from the upper arm. Point your fingers down and inward. Push hard against the water, and sweep your hand and forearm down and back under your chest. Your hand will pass just a few inches from the centerline of your body. Your palm should be flat and should push backward against the water. As your hand becomes level with your shoulder, begin to straighten out your arm as it



continues to move back and out to just beside your right hip. Your upper body will roll, with your left hip turning down and toward the centerline. This turns your right hip up toward the top of the water just as your right hand reaches the end of the power phase.

As your hand exits the water, the recovery phase begins. Start by lifting your elbow up and forward. Keep your wrist and hand relaxed and trailing behind or hanging below your elbow. As your hand passes the shoulder, it reaches up and forward to enter the water again when it is at shoulder level. When your thumb is even with your eye and your arm is straightened to about three-quarters of its length, allow your fingertips to smoothly enter the water. Rotate your hand so that your thumb enters

first as your arm straightens under the water to its full length.

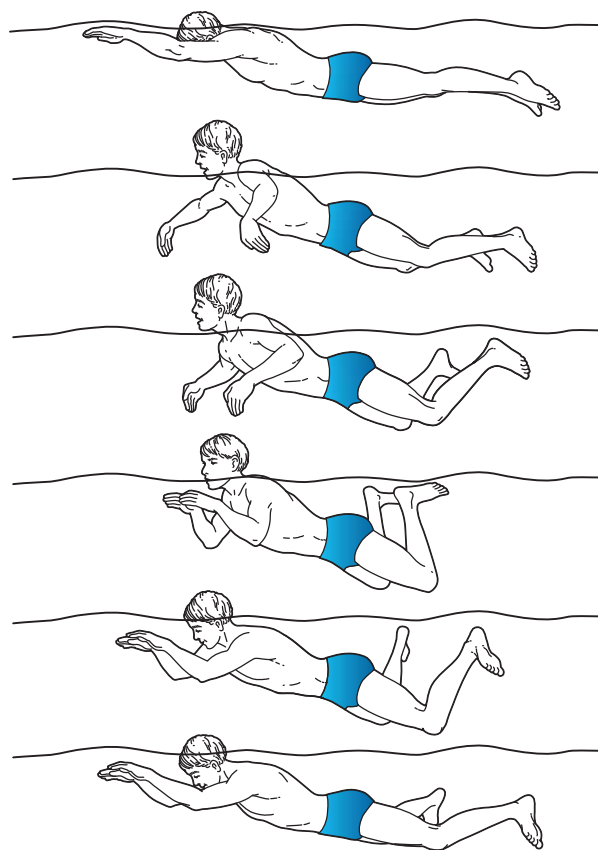
Breathing and Coordination. Swimmers doing the front crawl use a breathing rhythm of one breath for every one, two, three, or more arm cycles. Practice taking a breath for every set of arm cycles on the same side. When your face is in the water, slowly exhale through your nose and mouth. When you need to take a breath, exhale all of the remaining air into the water during the power phase of the arm stroke. As your body rotates during the middle of the power phase, start turning your head so that your mouth is out of the water just as your hand exits by your hip. At the beginning of the recovery phase, inhale quickly and return your head to its former position.

Breaststroke

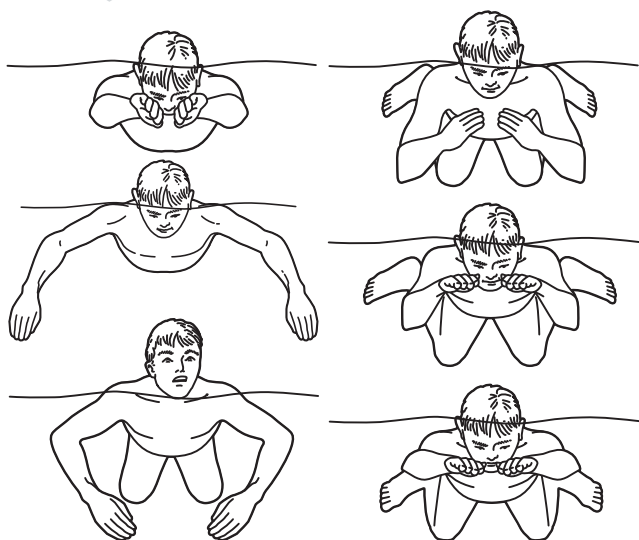
People like the breaststroke because it conserves energy, they can keep their head above water, and it can be done for longer distances. It uses a whip kick and a shallow arm pull.

Kick. The whip kick starts in the glide position. Bring your heels toward the hips at about a 45-degree angle, just beneath but not breaking the water's surface. Keeping your knees bent, spread your knees until they are no farther apart than hip width. Your feet must be farther apart than your knees. Keep your ankles fully flexed and your toes pointed outward. This is the catch position. To begin the power phase, move your feet and lower legs in a whipping motion, pushing outward and backward until your legs and feet are touching in a glide position. At the end of the power phase, your toes should be pointed back and away from your body. The speed of the whip kick should increase rapidly and continue until the end of the kick.

Arm Stroke. Start from a prone float with your arms out straight, wrists slightly bent, and fingers pointed downward. Turn your hands to a slightly palms-out position. Then bend your arms a little at the elbows as the palms and arms push out and down until your hands are farther apart than the width of your shoulders. This is the catch position. Begin the power phase by pressing your arms and palms downward until your elbows form a 90-degree angle, with your



forearms pointing toward the bottom. During the power phase, your hands and forearms should always be below the elbows and your elbows should always be below your shoulders.



The arm pull should feel as though you are grabbing the water ahead of you and pulling yourself forward until your head passes your hands. Begin the recovery phase by bringing your hands in together under the chin and your elbows to the sides of your body. Finish the recovery by pushing your hands forward just under the surface, fingers leading, until your arms are at their full length in a glide position.

For more information, see *Aquatics Supervision*, No. 34346.

Breathing and Coordination. While doing the breaststroke, you should exhale slowly in the water between breaths. Between the catch and the power phase, lift your chin out of the water, finish exhaling, and quickly take a breath. As your arms begin the recovery phase, place your chin and face back in the water. The water level should be right above the eyebrows. Avoid lifting your head and shoulders too far out of the water to prevent bobbing and losing forward momentum.

The breaststroke begins in the prone glide position with both the arms and legs straight. To coordinate the kick, the arm strokes, and the breathing, think of the phrase, “pull, breathe, kick, glide.” As your arms complete the power phase, take a breath, and then draw your feet toward the hips. When your arms are about halfway through the recovery phase, begin the whip kick. Time the arm strokes and kick so that the arms and legs are both at their full length as the kick finishes. Rest in the prone position as your body glides through the water. When the glide begins to slow down, it is time to start another stroke.

Sidestroke

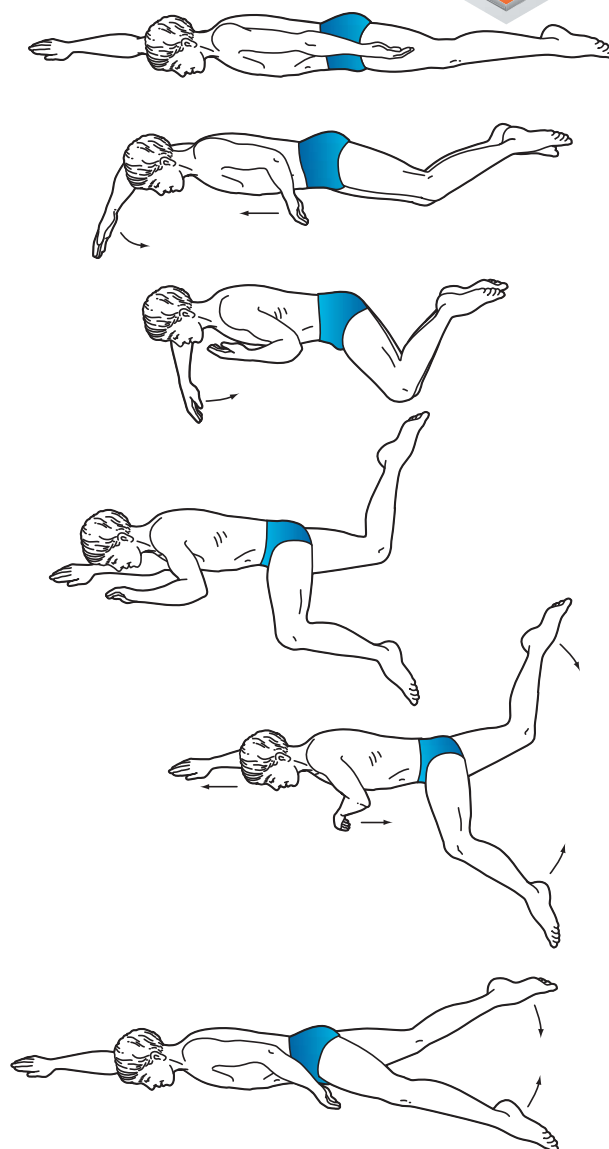
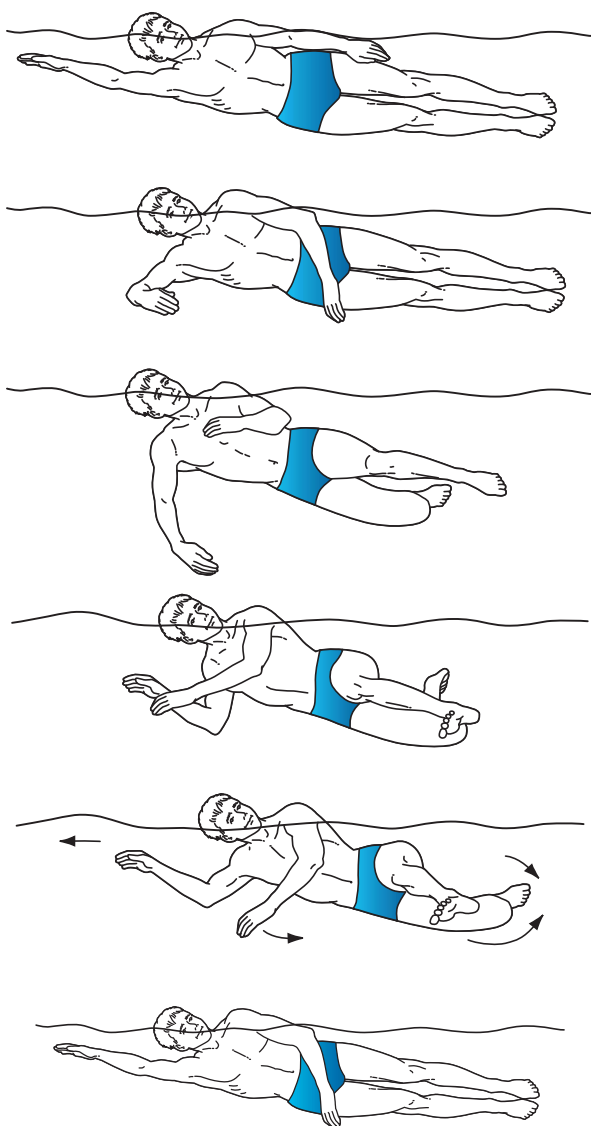
The sidestroke is a good long-distance stroke with a long, restful glide.

Kick. The scissors kick is a powerful kick that provides a resting period between arm strokes. To do the scissors kick, bring your knees together and then bend them as you bring your lower legs and heels toward the buttocks. Without pausing, move your legs into the catch position. Move your top leg forward and your bottom leg back until your legs and knees are straight. To move into the power phase, bring both legs back together with a forceful snapping motion like closing a pair of scissors. Keep your legs together during the glide position with the toes pointed back.

Arm Stroke. Start in the glide position on your side with one ear in the water and the nose, mouth, and other ear out of the water. With your body on its side, straighten the leading (bottom) arm to its full length with your ear resting on your

shoulder and your palm facedown. The trailing (top) arm should rest comfortably alongside your body with the hand above the thigh. Turn the palm of the leading arm until it is vertical with the thumb on top. Begin moving the leading arm into a catch position by moving the hand in a downward direction toward the feet.

The power phase is a pull with the hand just below the top of the water and the elbow bent. Move your leading arm until it reaches the middle of your chest, while you move your trailing arm up the side of your body. Both hands should arrive at the same time in front of the upper chest. The trailing arm begins its catch and power phases while the leading arm recovers by moving back into the glide position. Reach out straight out from your shoulder with the trailing arm. Use your hand and arm to push the water toward your feet while they move to the side of your body. Keep both arms straight during the glide, or resting phase of the stroke.



Breathing and Coordination. In the sidestroke, the arm strokes and scissors kick are combined so that the legs are drawn up as the leading and trailing arms move toward the chest. To help coordinate your arms and legs in the sidestroke, remember the phrase, “pull, kick, glide.” Start by moving your legs into the catch position. With your trailing arm straight and your legs apart for the scissors kick, the power phases for both the trailing arm and kick begin and end at the same time.

During this time the leading arm recovers to the glide position. When you have finished both the kick and trailing arm stroke, rest and relax your muscles. Hold the glide position for three or four counts and then repeat the stroke. Breathing is easy with the sidestroke since the mouth is out of the water. Breathe in during the power phase of the leading arm and breathe out during the power phase of the trailing arm.



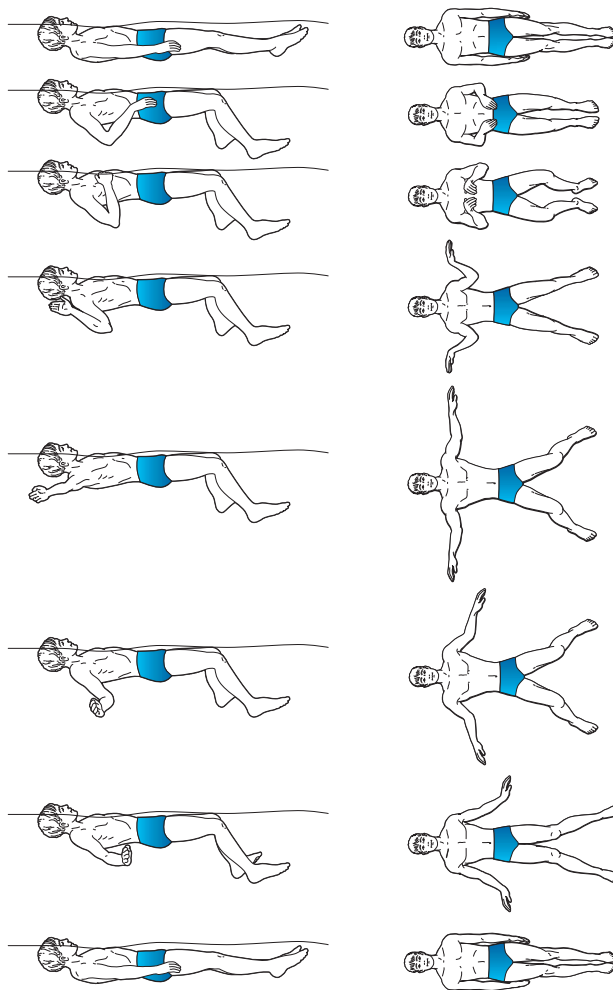
Elementary Backstroke

The elementary backstroke is another restful stroke, a good one to use when you need to swim for longer periods of time.

Kick. The elementary backstroke uses the whip kick. Floating on your back, spread your knees no farther apart than hip width. Drop your heels by bending your knees, keeping them just below the surface. Turn your feet so your toes are pointing out and your ankles are fully flexed up. This is the catch position. To begin the power phase, move your feet and lower legs in a whipping motion to trace an oval shape. Your feet must move outward wider than the position of your knees and act like paddles to push the water behind you. Then kick with your legs ending up straight with your feet touching. Your toes should be pointed and just below the water's surface. Drop your heels down to begin the recovery phase.

Arm Stroke. The arm stroke for the elementary backstroke is simple. Start on your back in the glide position. Keep your legs straight with your toes pointed and have your arms at your sides with your hands on your thighs. Slowly move your hands either up the centerline of your chest or up the sides of your body with your elbows tucked in until your hands reach the shoulders. Without pausing, straighten out your arms with your palms facing your feet. In a single motion, sweep your arms quickly toward your feet, bending your elbows and wrists throughout the stroke to push water backward. Recover the arms by bringing your hands back up toward your shoulders.

Breathing and Coordination. In the elementary backstroke, the arms and the legs provide power at the same time. The kick takes less time than the arms because the legs move a shorter distance than the arms, and they are stronger. For these reasons, you should begin the recovery of the arms before the legs. Don't begin the kick until your arms



have begun their power phase. With some practice, you should be able to time it so that you finish both the kick and arm stroke together. Strive to make your movements continuous. At the conclusion of the stroke, relax and allow your body to glide through the water for three or four counts. Don't be in a hurry. Remember, this is a resting stroke. As you finish your glide, repeat the process.

To avoid getting water in your mouth and nose, keep your forehead slightly higher than your chin as your arms push toward your feet.



SWIMMING GAMES

Name That Safe Swim Element

Equipment: Eight cards for each team listing the eight main elements of Safe Swim Defense (SSD): Qualified Supervision, Personal Health Review, Safe Area, Response Personnel (Lifeguards), Lookout, Ability Groups, Buddy System, and Discipline

Method: Give each team its set of cards. The game leader describes information contained in one of the SSD elements, and the first team to correctly guess which one earns a point. (For example, if the leader reads, “Participants should be moved from the water to a position of safety whenever lightning or thunder threatens,” the correct answer is element 3, Safe Area.

Scoring: The team with the most points wins.

Note: You can make the game harder by asking direct questions about each safety element—for example, “How long do you have to wait until after lightning or thunder occurs before you can leave shelter?” The first team to answer correctly earns a point.

Marco Polo

Equipment: Life jackets if necessary, depending on venue and ability levels

Method: One swimmer is selected to be “It” and closes his or her eyes while the others spread out. “It,” without looking, tries to find and tag the other swimmers by shouting “Marco.” They all respond by shouting “Polo,” and “It” must seek them out acoustically. If a player is tagged, that player becomes “It.”

Scoring: None—just keep track to see who becomes “It” the most and least often.

Note: You could move the game to a deeper part of the pool after a few rounds, depending on the participants’ swimming skill levels.

Soda Can Race

Equipment: Equal number of cans of regular and diet soda, at least one for each participant

Method: Put all cans in the middle of the shallow end of the pool. The diet soda will float, while the regular soda will sink. Divide the group into two teams lined up on opposite sides of the pool. When told to go, all players rush in, grab a can, and return to their team’s side. The cans are then stacked.

Scoring: The first team to stack all their cans in a freestanding arrangement wins.

Note: Repeat the race as many times as desired. Present a challenge by having one team take only diet or only regular soda, or other combinations—even mix and match brands to add complexity. You could change the depth of water, again depending on skill levels. Make sure the cans are not opened in the pool area.

T-Shirt (or Life Jacket) Relay

Equipment: One extra-large T-shirt or life jacket for each team

Method: This is a shuttle relay with the goal of putting on a T-shirt (or life jacket), then swimming across the pool. Start by forming two or more teams with equal numbers of participants. Half of each team lines up facing their teammates on the opposite side of the pool. (Teams may play in deeper or shallower areas, depending on their abilities.) The first team member puts on the shirt or life jacket, swims to the other side, takes off the shirt, and passes it to a teammate. All players must put it completely on before they can swim across.

Scoring: The first team to have all its members swim to the other side wins.

Note: Repeat as many times as desired. The choice to use T-shirts or life jackets should be based on the skill and comfort of participants. (T-shirts could make strokes more difficult.)



E.D.G.E. Ideas

Explain how it is done—Tell them.

Demonstrate the steps—Show them.

Guide learners as they practice—Watch them do it.

Enable them to succeed on their own—Have them practice/teach it.

EXPLAIN

- Explain the four basic swimming strokes.
- Present each point of Safe Swim Defense.
- Discuss what makes a place a safe area to swim.
- Explain the buddy system and why it is important.
- Discuss safety equipment such as life jackets and sunscreen and when they should be used.

DEMONSTRATE

- Tour a waterfront area and point out how Safe Swim Defense is used.
- Demonstrate the four basic swimming strokes.
- Teach how to properly fit a life jacket.
- Show videos of swimming. (Videos are available in the interactive digital *Swimming* merit badge pamphlet.)
- Show videos of swimming rescue maneuvers.

GUIDE






- Have Scouts practice each of the four basic strokes.
- Complete the BSA swim classification test to help determine the ability of each participant.
- Assist Scouts in putting on a life jacket properly.
- Plan a game where each Scout properly identifies good versus poor conditions for safe swimming.
- Practice the buddy system.

ENABLE






- Have Scouts demonstrate to each other how each swimming stroke is performed.
- Arrange for Scouts to teach water safety skills to Webelos Scouts.
- Plan a day trip to an event where they use their swimming skills.
- Plan a day trip to a place where they must determine a safe swimming area.
- Enable Scouts to enjoy a lifetime of safe swimming.

MAIN EVENT SUMMARIES



● ESSENTIAL	■ CHALLENGING	◆ ADVANCED
Day Activity	Overnight Activity	Weekend Activity
Water park or pool trip—Plan a day trip to a water park or pool. Alternate periods of free time with planned activities and games.	Overnight swimming campout—Hold a campout that features swimming instruction and activities.	Swimming Olympics weekend—Hold a campout built around a series of competitive swimming events.

	<h1>SWIMMING</h1> <h2>Meeting Plan: Safe Swim Defense</h2>		
Week 1 Date_____			
ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	Have participants form buddy pairs for the evening. To enforce the buddy system, hold buddy checks every 10 minutes or so during the entire meeting.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Scout Oath and Scout Law Uniform inspection		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 20 minutes	Review Safe Swim Defense. A good resource is the Safe Swim Defense DVD (AV-09DVD29).		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 30 minutes	 Tour the swimming area and point out how it complies with Safe Swim Defense.		7:30 p.m.
	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the above material.• Have Scouts draw the ideal swim area and label what makes it safe.		
	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the above material.• Discuss the duties of a lifeguard.• Practice reach and throw rescue skills.		
Breakout Groups 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Begin planning for participation in the main event.• Practice Scouting skills as needed.		8 p.m.
Game 10 minutes	Play Name That Safe Swim Element (described earlier).		8:15 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		






*All times are suggested.

	<h1>SWIMMING</h1> <h2>Meeting Plan: Swim Skill Test</h2>		
Week 2 Date _____			
ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	Meet at the pool. Change into appropriate swimwear. Review site-specific safety rules.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Scout Oath and Scout Law		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 20 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate each of the four basic strokes.• Describe ability groups and swim tests.		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 30 minutes	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have Scouts warm up and take the beginner test.• Explain how buddy tags and buddy checks work.		7:30 p.m.
	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have Scouts warm up and take the swimmer test.• Review how buddy tags and buddy checks work.		
	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have Scouts warm up and take the swimmer test.• Demonstrate a line rescue both as tender and as rescuer.		
Breakout Groups 10 minutes	Do group advancement work.		8 p.m.
Game 15 minutes	Play Marco Polo (described earlier).		8:10 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		



*All times are suggested.

	<h1>SWIMMING</h1> <h2>Meeting Plan: Stroke Practice</h2>		
Week 3 Date_____			
ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	Meet at the pool. Change into appropriate swimwear. Review the requirements for the Swimming merit badge.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Scout Oath and Scout Law		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 15 minutes	At poolside, review first-aid issues related to swimming, including hypothermia, dehydration, sunburn, heat exhaustion, heatstroke, muscle cramps, hyperventilation, spinal injury, stings and bites, and cuts and scrapes.		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 35 minutes	Note: This group is working toward the swimmer test. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate or show a video about proper stroke technique (elementary backstroke, sidestroke, and front crawl). Practice the strokes. (Videos are available in the interactive digital <i>Swimming</i> merit badge pamphlet.)• Give tips for floating; practice floating.		7:25 p.m.
	Note: This group is working on skills required for the Swimming merit badge. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Swim 150 yards in a strong manner.• Teach and practice headfirst dives and long shallow dives from the pool deck.		
	Teach and practice the trudgen and back crawl.		
Breakout Groups 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue group advancement work.• Continue planning for participation in the main event.		8 p.m.
Game 10 minutes	Play Soda Can Race (described earlier).		8:15 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader’s minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

*All times are suggested.

	<h1>SWIMMING</h1> <h2>Meeting Plan: Rescues</h2>		
Week 4 Date_____			
ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	Meet at the pool. Change into appropriate swimwear. Set up a display of information related to aquatics merit badges. If possible, have one or more merit badge counselors on hand to answer questions.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Scout Oath and Scout Law		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 20 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain swimming survival and basic rescue.• Explain the rescue priorities of reach, throw, row, and go.		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 30 minutes	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice line rescues.• Practice floating faceup and survival floating.		7:30 p.m.
	 Practice reach and throw rescues.		
	 Practice clothing inflation for survival.		
Breakout Groups 15 minutes	Finalize plans for participation in the main event.		8 p.m.
Game 10 minutes	Play T-Shirt (or Life Jacket) Relay (described earlier).		8:15 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

*All times are suggested.

	<h1 style="text-align: center;">SWIMMING</h1> <h2 style="text-align: center;">Main Event: Water Park or Pool Trip</h2>		
	<p style="text-align: center;">Date _____</p>		
Logistics Location: _____ _____ Departure time: _____ Return time: _____ Duration of activity: 4 hours Budget: Completed _____ Approved _____ Camping: Duty roster _____ Menu _____ Transportation: Group _____ Self _____ Tour and activity plan: Completed _____ Submitted _____		<div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="width: 20px; height: 20px; background-color: #90EE90; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 10px;"></div> <div> Essential (Tier I) Plan a day trip to a water park or pool. Alternate periods of free time with planned activities and games. </div> </div>	
Equipment List	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swimwear and towels Change of clothes Sunscreen Scout Basic Essentials (Review the list and take what you need.) Snacks 		
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research water parks and pools in the area. Select the location that best meets your needs. Make a reservation, if required. Make plans for compliance with Safe Swim Defense standards. Develop a list of games to play in the pool, either those that test skills (e.g., diving for coins) or those that are pure fun like Marco Polo. Look for opportunities to help Scouts with swimming skills and swimming-related advancement requirements. Meet and travel to the location, have a great day, and return home safely. 		
Safety	Follow Safe Swim Defense standards.		
<div style="background-color: #333; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Notes</div> <div style="height: 200px; border: 1px solid black;"></div>			



SWIMMING

Main Event: Overnight Swimming Campout



Date _____

Logistics

Location: _____

Departure time: _____

Return time: _____

Duration of activity: Overnight

Budget: Completed _____ Approved _____

Camping: Duty roster _____ Menu _____

Transportation: Group _____ Self _____

Tour and activity plan: Completed _____ Submitted _____



Challenging (Tier II)

Hold a campout that features swimming instruction and activities.

Equipment List

- Swimwear and towels
- Change of clothing
- Sunscreen
- Materials to establish safe swimming area
- Scout Basic Essentials (Review the list and take what you need.)
- Individual and group camping gear
- Food
- Water




Activity

- Research local campsites that offer swimming possibilities.
- Select the location that best meets your needs. Make a reservation, if required.
- Make plans for compliance with Safe Swim Defense standards.
- Establish a safe swimming area.
- Set up a schedule that combines free swimming, swimming instruction, and other Scouting activities.
- Look for opportunities to help Scouts with swimming skills and swimming-related advancement requirements.
- Meet and travel to the location, have a great campout, and return home safely.

Safety

Follow Safe Swim Defense standards.

Notes

	<h1 style="text-align: center;">SWIMMING</h1> <h2 style="text-align: center;">Main Event: Swimming Olympics Weekend</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Date _____</p>		
Logistics Location: _____ _____ Departure time: _____ Return time: _____ Duration of activity: Weekend Budget: Completed _____ Approved _____ Camping: Duty roster _____ Menu _____ Transportation: Group _____ Self _____ Tour and activity plan: Completed _____ Submitted _____		<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div> Advanced (Tier III) Hold a campout built around a series of competitive swimming events. </div> </div>	
Equipment List	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swimwear and towels Change of clothing Sunscreen Materials to establish safe swimming area Scout Basic Essentials (Review the list and take what you need.) Individual and group camping gear Food Water Medals or other prizes 		
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research local campsites that offer swimming possibilities. Select the location that best meets your needs. Make a reservation, if required. Make plans for compliance with Safe Swim Defense standards. Establish a safe swimming area. Develop a list of swimming competitions based on participants' ability levels. These could include races, water polo, and aquatic basketball. Create competition brackets for each event and a schedule for the day. Award prizes for the gold, silver, and bronze medalists in each event and for the overall top team. Meet and travel to the location, have a great campout, and return home safely. 		
Safety	Follow Safe Swim Defense standards.		
<div style="background-color: #333; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Notes</div> <div style="height: 100px; border: 1px solid black;"></div>			



REFERENCES

Books

Athletics, Emergency Preparedness, First Aid, Lifesaving, Personal Fitness, Scuba Diving, Sports, Swimming, and Water Sports merit badge pamphlets

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Colwin, Cecil M. *Breakthrough Swimming*. Human Kinetics, 2002.

Hines, Emmett W. *Fitness Swimming*, 2nd ed. Human Kinetics, 2008.

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Lenihan, Daniel J. *Underwater Wonders of the National Parks*. Compass America Guides, 1997.

Thomas, David G. *Swimming: Steps to Success*. Human Kinetics, 2005.

Videos

Swimming interactive digital merit badge pamphlet

Websites

American Red Cross

Website: <http://www.redcross.org>

Swim Swam

Website: <http://www.swimswam.com>

USA Swimming

Website: <http://www.usaswimming.org>

YMCA of the USA

Website: <http://www.ymca.net>

Related Program Features

Camping, Emergency Preparedness, First Aid, Fitness and Nutrition, Paddle Sports, Safety, Scuba Diving

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