Freshman Swim Study Guide

GENERAL

People love to swim. An estimated 103 million people a year swim for survival, recreation, or competition. Swimmers can be found at pools and beaches all summer or in competition throughout the year. Interest in swimming and diving continues to grow. Some people just like to swim laps or do water aerobics for their own personal fitness and recreation, while others join teams for water polo, diving, masters swimming or synchronized swimming.

STROKE DEVELOPMENT

**Front Crawl (Freestyle), is the fastest competitive stroke.**
- Stroke is asymmetrical (arms and legs alternate)
- During the arm movement, the elbow will exit the water first with the hand to follow. (body roll)
- Hand is relaxed and you should “walk fingertips” across the water and then dip and reach with the arm entering the water.
- Arm should then stay extended under the water and pull to your hip, this will give you the must pull in the water
- The Flutter Kick is used to also help propel you through the water
- Ankles should be relaxed and “floppy”
- Kicking motion starts at the hip with the thigh starting downward, while the calf and foot are still moving upward
- Knees should be flexed slightly, but not too much
- The distance the legs move up and down is not great
- The breathing is called rhythmic breathing and should be done to one side for every right or left arm stroke
- Body roll makes it much easier to breathe so the mouth can clear the water
- Opposite ear stays in the water while you breathe

**Back Crawl is the fastest competitive stroke on the back**
- Stroke is asymmetrical (arms and legs alternate)
- Like the front crawl, there is a lot of body roll associated with this stroke
- During the arm movement, the thumb exits the water first; rotate the hand so that the little finger enters
- Palm should be outward and wrist bent slightly when it enters the water (this will help with the underwater pull to propel you through the water.
- As one arm enters the water, the other should be exiting
- The Flutter Kick is used to also help propel you through the water
- Ankles should be relaxed and “floppy”
**Breaststroke is the oldest known stroke used in competition**
- Arms and legs move symmetrically (do the same thing together)
- To begin the movement from the glide/streamline position, palms are outward with arms slightly farther out than the shoulders.
- Hands then sweep downward under the elbows
- Hands then sweep inward and upward past the chest until they are below the chin facing each other
- Then extend arms immediately into the short glide
- The kick used is the whip kick and it comes at the end of the arm movement
- Bend knees, bringing the heels towards the butt, with knees hip-width apart and feet outside the knees
- Press the feet outward and backward (whipping motion) until the ankles touch
- As the arms pull down and back, the head with naturally lift for a breath
- The timing for this stroke is “Pull, breathe, Kick and glide”

**Elementary Backstroke is a resting stroke**
- Stoke uses symmetrical and simultaneous (at the same time) movements of the arms and legs
- Run the thumbs up the side of your body up to armpits (**TICKLE**) **(TICKLE)** **(TICKLE)** **(TICKLE)**
- Then extend arms out to the sides with hands no farther forward than to the top of the head (**“T”**) **(“T”)** **(“T”)** **(“T”)**
- Finally press the palms and the insides of the arms toward your feet, finishing at your sides (**TOUCH**) **(TOUCH)** **(TOUCH)** **(TOUCH)**
- The kick used is like the kick in the breaststroke (whip kick)
- Both legs bend at the knee with feet outside the knees and circle around and together
- Attempt to keep knees as wide as the hips and do not lift knees out of the water, dropping the hips
- It is very important that you hold the glide until most of the momentum is lost and then begin another stroke

**Surface Diving**
Surface diving is used to go under water when swimming on the surface. This skill is used to retrieve objects from the bottom, and to rescue a submerged victim. It can be either feet first or head first. The key to a surface dive is to raise part of the body out of the water so that the weight out of the water forces it downward.

1. **Feet-First Surface dive:** While treading water simultaneously press hands down to sides and perform the scissors or breaststroke kick. This will rise you up out of the water, take a deep breath and as you start down stay in a streamlined position. As your speed slows, turn palms outward and sweep hands upward to help propel you down (**this should occur underwater**)
2. **Tuck Surface Dive:** arms sweep back to thighs and tuck chin and knees to chest then as body rolls forward extend arms down and legs upward
3. **Pike Surface Dive:** same as the tuck except the legs stay straight in a pike position