



What To Do At A Swim Meet

Arrive at the pool at least fifteen minutes before the time the coaches have announced to be there and check in with Sunkist coaches on duty.

Locate the team area on deck and find a spot for you and your swim bag. The team area is for swimmers only, no parents, grandparents, pets, etc. Coaches will take care of your swimmer(s) throughout the meet. It is important that swimmers stay in the team area so coaches can find them.

Locate the athlete locker rooms and get ready to warm-up: team suit on, cap and goggles ready. Deck changing in any manner is not allowed, swimmers must change in the designated athlete locker rooms. Parents are not allowed in athlete locker rooms.

Each session starts with a warm-up period where the pool is open for swimmers to get warmed up and ready to race. The lanes may be designated as "open" to all or they may be assigned to each team. The coaches will direct the swimmers to the appropriate lanes for warm-ups when it is time.

Keep in mind, per USA Swimming rules only swimmers, coaches, officials and meet volunteers are allowed on the pool deck and behind the blocks. Parents should send their swimmers to the deck when they arrive and then find a place in the stands where other Sunkist parents are sitting.

For meets with an open deck, parents may sit near the team area and help get swimmers to the blocks; however, parents are not allowed to go behind the blocks and everyone needs to stay back from the pool edge to provide room for coaches and officials working the meet.

TIMERS: most meets assign lanes to each team attending to be responsible for providing two timers in each lane. Parents need to take a turn timing if Sunkist is assigned any lanes. The good news, timers get the best seat in the house right behind the blocks where all the action is! You do not have to have any experience timing, it's easy and the head timer will go over with the timers what to do.

Parents should purchase a HEAT SHEET program to find out the event, heat and lane assignments for your swimmer's races throughout the meet. It may be helpful to younger swimmers to mark the event, heat and lane for their events on their arm with a Sharpie.

Please seek out experienced Sunkist parents for any questions or help while at the meet and try not to interrupt the coaches who are busy working the meet.

Swimmers must always enter the water FEET FIRST during warm-ups. The pool will be crowded during warm-ups, swimmers need to be careful and mindful of other swimmers sharing the lanes.

Swimmers are not to leave warm-ups until the coach has spoken to the group and dismissed everyone.

After warm-ups, return to the team area to get dry and warm. Review your races for the day and determine when your first race is up.

If you are in the first couple of events you need to go to the blocks right after warm-up so you are there when the meet gets underway.

Be ready to show your team spirit, you should be spending most of your time resting in the team area or cheering for your teammates. Swimmers may visit their parents in the stands, but should first check with a coach to make sure there is enough time between races to do so.

The event numbers will be announced during each heat and will also be on the scoreboard (if there is one). Swimmers need to constantly pay attention to what event is currently up so they don't miss any races.

It is the swimmer's responsibility to report to each race on time and ready to swim fast, it is important that swimmers learn how to do this. Coaches will assist younger swimmers if needed. It is NOT OKAY to skip or miss any race. You need to report to the blocks and get behind your assigned lane a couple of events prior so you are there and ready for your race.

Before swimming every race, swimmers need to see a Sunkist coach for last minute race advice, then they go to their assigned lane to wait until their event and heat is called up.

Do not go behind the blocks to hang out. The only swimmers who should be behind the blocks are those getting ready to swim a race about to come up.

Butterflies are natural, it is okay to be nervous. Calm, steady breathing and "shaking out" the nerves will help you to stay loose and relaxed. Remember, relaxed athletes perform their best. Listening to music might also help you relax. Keeping warm will also keep you calm and your muscles warm, where your parka, warm-ups, team shirts, etc. to the blocks to keep you warm while you wait.

Be friendly to everyone behind the blocks. Wish your competitors and teammates "good luck" and try to take a moment to focus on the race at hand. This is the time to get mentally-prepared for your race. Go over in your mind everything you are going to do in the race and feel good about going for it.

FOCUS ON THE POSITIVES. Do not fill your head up with what won't happen or what you can't do, think only about what you are going to do—**PLAY OUT THE PERFECT RACE IN YOUR MIND.**

Do not worry about the outcome—**LIVE IN THE MOMENT. FEEL GOOD. SMILE. YOU ARE GOING TO SHINE!** Your event is up—get your goggles on! Take a deep breath...

The starter official will blow the whistle – this means to walk up and stand behind your starting block. There will then be a 2nd longer whistle – this means to step up onto the starting block.

Carefully and calmly, step up onto the starting block and settle your toes over the front edge so you have a good grip to push off. Shut out the world and listen only to the starter...

The starter will say "take your mark" ... come down into starting position and **HOLD STILL.** A swimmer may be disqualified for a false start if they are moving before the start, it is very important to be still and balanced...

If a swimmer is fidgeting on their block, the starter might tell the swimmers to "stand up" and then the starter will try again saying "take your mark" ... if the starter says "stand up" calmly stand up, take a deep breath and return to your ready position and listen for "take your mark" ...

"BEEP!" The race has started!! Get off the blocks as fast as possible and dive into the water already racing... give it your all and remember the tips your coach gave you!

When you come in for your finish, be sure to lunge at the wall and **HIT THE TOUCHPAD** hard so you are sure to stop the timing console. Races are won and lost at the finish! When you finish, your time and place will flash on the scoreboard (if there is one) and you hit the pad hard enough.

Always show good sportsmanship before and after your races—whether you win or lose. Do not display poor sportsmanship in any manner. Do not get upset after your race if it didn't go as planned. Do not cry. Causing a scene, throwing your cap, goggles or slapping the water in disdain is unacceptable and will result in disciplinary action from your coach.

Congratulate your competitors with “good race!” Ask your lane timers what your time was in case the scoreboard has an error, your coach may ask you what your time was so be prepared to answer.

Report right to your coach for feedback on your race. Do not go cool down or go to your parents and friends until after you have visited with your coach.

Results are not official until they have been posted by the meet officials in a designated area where everyone can view them. Results may be viewable on your phone via Meet Mobile app, just remember the results are not official on Meet Mobile until DQ slips are processed and times verified by the meet officials.

Officials monitor every race for any stroke and turn infractions. If a swimmer is observed doing something illegal an official will raise their hand and make note of the infraction on a DQ (disqualification) slip. The DQ is confirmed by the meet referee the swim is removed from the results due to a disqualification.

Keep in mind, DQs happened to swimmers of all levels, though most DQs are for newer swimmers still learning their strokes and turns. DQs are coachable moments, opportunities for swimmers to learn from their mistakes and to work on corrective measures during practice.

Do not get upset about a DQ, it happens to even the best swimmers. Best to put it behind you and move on to the next race. Coaches discuss DQs with swimmers at the appropriate time.

If you have a question about a DQ, ask the coach on duty—do not ask an official. Parents and swimmers are not allowed to talk to the officials about DQs or to interrupt them while they are on duty. Your coach will handle all inquiries and communications with the meet officials about DQs.

Cool down in the designated area if your coach directs you to do so. Then get back to the team to dry off, have a drink/snack and stay warm between races—and keep cheering for your teammates!

Drink lots of water throughout the day, sports drinks such as Gatorade are okay, but go easy on them. Please refrain from drinking sodas and other carbonated beverages. Swimmers are not allowed to drink energy “booster” drinks such as Red Bull.

Small snacks are okay – granola bar, bagel, pasta, fruit, anything not too “heavy” or greasy. If you have to swim soon then just have a small bite of something for a little energy. Most meets offer a concession stand, go easy on the candy and the junk food. Please see nutrition information posted on Sunkist site for good tips on what to eat at swim meets.

Outdoor meets: bring shade, mirrored goggles, lots of water, wear sunscreen and re-apply often.

RELAYS: coaches will pass out relay cards to swimmers selected for relays when it is time. Swimmers need to make note of the order, stroke and distance. Swimmers are not allowed to change the order of the relay.

Do not leave the meet without checking with a coach to make sure you are finished for the session.

Most importantly, be courteous and kind to all whether home or away, support your teammates and have fun!

Go Sunkist!