

GLOSSARY

A Glossary of those strange and wacky words we use in the sport of swimming. Parents! You may or may not find these words in the English Dictionary, and if you do, their definitions will probably be radically different than the ones listed in this Glossary. Relax and take your time reading. Soon you'll be understanding and maybe even speaking some "Swim Slang".

A-Meet Swim meet, which requires swimmers to have previously achieved an "A" time standard in the events, they wish to enter.

A-B Meet Swim meet that offers separate competition for both "A" swimmers and "B" swimmers, usually with medals for the "A" swimmers and ribbons for the "B" swimmers. Swimmers compete in separate brackets against other swimmers of their own ability. Usually only "A" swimmers can score individual event team points.

A-B-C Swim meets similar to the A-B meet except that there are 3 divisions. This type of meet includes every ability level of swimmer from Novice to very experienced. All swimmers "At time or faster complete in the "A" division, and all swimmers "C" and down compete in the "C" division. The "B" division is the most limited with both top (.01 slower than "A") and bottom (.01 faster than "C") limitations".

Add Up Aggregate Time – times achieved by 4 swimmers in individual events which are added together to arrive at a provable relay entry time.

Admission Certain swim meets charge for spectators to view the meets. These are usually the larger more prestigious meets. Sometimes the meet program (heat sheet) is included in the price of admission.

Age Group Division of swimmers according to age. The National Age Group divisions are: 10 – under, 11 – 12, 13 – 14, 15 – 16, 17 – 18. Some L.S.C.'s have divided the swimmers into more convenient divisions specific to their situations, i.e. 8 – under, 13 – Over, 15 – Over, Junior, Senior.

Alternate A Prelims/Finals meet; after the finalists are decided, the next two fastest swimmers (other than the finalists) are designated as alternates. The faster of the 2 being first alternate and the next being second alternate. If a finalist cannot participate, the alternates are called to take their place, often on a moments notice.

Anchor The final swimmer in a relay.

Approved Meet Swim meets conducted by organizations (other than U.S.A. Swimming member clubs of LSC's) that have applied to U.S.A. Swimming or the local LSC for approval. If approval is granted, swimmers may use times achieved as U.S.A. Swimming qualifying times. A U.S.A. Swimming official must be present at all sessions of the meet. Approval does not mean Sanctioned.

ASCA The American Swim Coaches Association. The professional organization for swim coaches throughout the nation. Certifying coaches and offering many services for coach's education and career advancement.

B-Meet Swim meet which requires swimmers to have previously achieved a "B" time standard in the events they wish to enter. Some meets have no bottom cut time allowing "C" swimmers also to compete.

B-C Meet Swim meet that offers separate competition for both "B" swimmers and "C" swimmers, usually with ribbons for the "B" swimmers and smaller ribbons for the "C" swimmers. Swimmers compete in separate brackets against other swimmers

of their own ability. Swimmers are not allowed to enter an event that they have an "A" time in.

- Backstroke** One of the 4 competitive racing strokes, basically any style of swimming on your back. Backstroke is swam as the first stroke in the Medley Relay and second stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yds/meters, 100 yds/meters and 200 yds/meters (LSC's with 8 – under divisions offer the 25 yard back).
- Banner** A team sign that is displayed at swim meets. Banners are usually made from nylon material and carry the team logo and possibly the name of a popular team sponsor. Some size restrictions are enforced at certain meets.
- Beep** The starting sound from an electronic computerized timing system.
- Blocks** The starting platforms located at the end of each lane. Some pools have blocks at the deeper end of the pool, and some pools have blocks at both ends. Blocks have a variety of designs and can be permanent or removable.
- Bonus Heat** This heat held during the finals session of a Prelims/Finals meet, and is slower than the swimmers who qualified for the Big Finals. The Bonus Heat may be in addition to Consolation Finals or may refer to Consolation Finals.
- Bottom** The floor of the pool. Bottom depths are usually marked on the walls or sides of the pool.
- Breaststroke** One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Breaststroke is swam as the second stroke in the Medley Relay and the third stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yds/meters, 100 yds/meters and 200 yds/meters. (LSC's with 8 – Under division offer the 25 yd breast).
- Bull Pen** The staging area where swimmers wait to receive their lane and heat assignments for a swimming event. Area is usually away from the pool and has rows of chairs for the swimmers to sit. The Clerk of Course is in charge of the Bull Pen.
- Butterfly** One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Butterfly (or better known by its' nickname "FLY") is swam as the third stroke in the Medley Relay and the first stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yds/meters, 100 yds/meters and 200 yds/meters. (LSC's with 8 – Under divisions offer the 25-yard fly).
- Button** The manual Timing System stopping device that records a back-up time in case the touch pad malfunctions. The button is at the end of a wire, plugged into a deck terminal box. There are usually 2 buttons per lane, sometimes 3. It is the timer's responsibility to push the button as the swimmer touches the wall in finishing their race.
- Camp** A swimming function offered by U.S.A. Swimming, your LSC or a U.S.A. Swimming coach. There are many types of camps for just about every level of swimmer. When selecting a camp, ask your coaches advice as to what will be the best for the swimmer, or call U.S.A. Swimming for details on the many camps they offer.
- Cap** The latex or lycra covering worn on the head of swimmers. The colors and team logo's adorning these caps are limitless. National Caps, State Team Caps, award caps, plain practice caps, etc.
- Car Pool**No, cars don't get their own pool to swim in. This refers to the major transportation service provided by parents of a swim club, to shuttle swimmers to and from practices and/or meets.
- Carbohydrates** The main source of food energy used by athletes. Refer to a Nutritional Manual for more information.
- Championship Meet** The meet held at the end of a season. Qualification times are usually necessary to enter meet.

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| Championship Finals | The top 6 or 8 swimmers (depending on the number of lanes in the pool) in a Prelims/Finals meet who, after the Prelims swim, qualify to return to the Finals. The fastest heats of finals when multiple heats are held. Big Finals. |
| Check-In | The procedure required before a swimmer swims an event in a deck-seeded meet. Sometimes referred to as positive check-in, the swimmer must mark their name on a list posted by the meet host or Clerk of Course. |
| Checkout | The parents job at the motel. This is listed here to remind parents to request "Late Check Out" times if offered at no charge by the motel/hotel. This makes the last day of the meet a little less hectic. |
| Chlorine | The chemical used by most pools to kill the bacteria in water and keep it clear and safe to swim in. |
| Circle Seeding | A method of seeding swimmers when they are participating in a Prelims/Finals event. The fastest 18 to 24 swimmers are seeded in the last three heats with the fastest swimmers being in the inside lane (usually lane 4). See rulebook for exact method for seeding depending on the lanes in the pool. |
| Clinic | A scheduled meeting for the purpose of instruction, i.e. Officials Clinic, Coaches Clinic. |
| Closed Competition | Swim meet, which is open to the members of an organization or group. Summer club swim meets are considered to be "Closed Competition." |
| Club | A registered swim team that is a dues paying member of U.S.A. Swimming and the local LSC. |
| Code | A set of rules that have been officially published. |
| Code of Ethics | A Code of Conduct that both swimmers and coaches are required to sign at certain U.S.A. Swimming/LSC sponsored events. The Code is not strict and involves common sense and proper behavior. |
| Colorado | A brand of automatic timing system. |
| Consolation Finals | After the fastest 6 or 8 swimmer, the next 6 or 8 swimmers (depending on the number of lanes in the pool) in a Prelims/Finals meet who, after the Prelims swim, qualify to return to the Finals. Consolations are the second fastest heat of finals when multiple heats are held and are conducted before the Championship heat. |
| Convention | United States Aquatic Sports annual, week long, meeting where all rules changes are decided and working committees are established. Representatives are sent by each LSC to make up the voting body. |
| Course | Designated distance (length of pool) for swimming competition, i.e. long course = 50 meters; short course = 25 yards or 25 meters. |
| DQ (Disqualified) | Swimmers performance is not counted because of a rules infraction. An official raising one arm with open hand above their head shows a disqualification. The official will explain to the swimmer what the infraction is, and the swimmer will then report to their coach and go over the disqualification. |
| Deadline | The date meet entries must be "postmarked" by to be accepted by the meet host. Making the meet deadline does not guarantee acceptance into a meet since many meets are "full" weeks before the entry deadline. |
| Deck | The area around the swimming pool reserved for swimmers, officials and coaches. No one but an "authorized" U.S.A. Swimming member may be on the deck during a swim competition. |
| Deck Entries | Accepting entries into swimming events on the first day or later day of a meet. |

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| Deck Seeding | Swimmers report to a bullpen or staging area and receive their lane and heat assignments for the event(s). |
| Dehydration | The abnormal depletion of body fluids (water). The most common cause of swimmer cramps and sick feelings. |
| Developmental | A classification of meet or competition that is usually held early in the season. The purpose of a developmental meet is to allow all levels of swimmers to compete in a low-pressure environment. |
| Distance | How far a swimmer swims. Distances for short course are: 25 yards (1 length), 50 yards (2 lengths or 1 lap), 100 yards (4 lengths or 2 laps), 200 yards (8 lengths or 4 laps), 400 yards (16 lengths or 8 laps), 500 yards (20 lengths or 10 laps), 1000 yards (40 lengths or 20 laps), 1650 yards (66 lengths or 33 laps). Distances for long course are: 50 meters (1 length), 100 meters (2 lengths or 1 lap), 200 meters (4 lengths or 2 laps), 400 meters (8 lengths or 4 laps), 800 meters (16 lengths or 8 laps), 1500 meters (30 lengths or 15 laps). |
| Dive | Entering the water headfirst. Diving is not allowed during warm-ups except at designated times in specific lanes that are monitored by the swimmers coach. |
| Diving Well | A separate pool or a pool set off to the side of the competition pool. This pool has deeper water and diving boards/platforms. During a meet this area may be designated as a warm-down pool with proper supervision. |
| Division I-II-III | NCAA member colleges and universities are assigned divisions to compete in, depending on the school's total enrollment. Division I being the large universities and Division III being the small colleges. |
| Double Dual | Type of swim meet where three teams compete in dual meets against each other at the same time. Separate meet scores would be kept for Team A vs. Team B, Team A vs. Team C and Team B vs. Team C. |
| Dual Meet | Type of meet where two (2) teams/clubs compete against each other. |
| Draw | Random selection by chance. |
| Dropped Time | When a swimmer goes faster than the previous performance they have "dropped their time". |
| Dryland | The exercises and various strength programs swimmers do out of the water. |
| Dry Side | That part of the Codebook (rulebook) that deals with the "Administrative" Regulations of Competition. |
| Entry | An individual, relay team or club roster's event list into a swim competition. |
| Entry Chairperson | The host clubs designated person who is responsible for receiving and making the entries have met the deadline, or return the entries if the meet is full. This person usually will find discrepancies in the meet entries and notify the entering club to correct any errors. |
| Entry Fees | The amount per event a swimmer or relay is charged. This varies depending on the LSC and type of meet. |
| Entry Limit | Each meet will usually have a limit of total swimmers they can accept, or a time limit than cannot exceed. Once an entry limit has been reached, a meet will be closed and all other entries returned. |
| Electronic Timing | Timing system operated on DC current (battery). The timing system usually has touchpads in the water, junction boxes on the deck with hook up cables, buttons |

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| | for backup timing and a computer type console that prints out the results of each race. Some systems are hook up to a scoreboard that displays swimmers time. |
| Eligible to Compete | The status of a member swimmer that means they are registered and have met all the requirements. |
| Equipment | The items necessary to operate a swim practice or conduct a swim competition. |
| Event | A race or stroke over a given distance. An event equals 1 preliminary with its final, or 1 timed final. |
| False Start | When a swimmer leaves the starting block before the horn or gun. A false start will disqualify a swimmer or a relay team, although the official will not advise the swimmer(s) of the false-start disqualification until the race is over. |
| Fastest to Slowest | A seeding method used on the longer events held at the end of a session. The fastest seeded swimmers participate in the first heats followed by the next fastest and so on. Many times these events will alternate one girl's heat and one boy's heat until all swimmers have competed. |
| Fees | Money paid by swimmers for services, i.e. practice fees, registration fee, U.S.A. Swimming membership fee, etc. |
| FINA | The international rules making organization for the sport of swimming. |
| Finals | The final race of each event. See "Consolation Finals", "Timed Finals". |
| Final Results | The printed copy of the results of each race of a swim meet. |
| Fine | The monetary penalty assessed a swimmer or club when a swimmer does not achieve the necessary time required to swim in an event, and cannot prove they have previously achieved the time. |
| Fins | Large rubber shoe type devices that fit on a swimmers feet. Used in swim practice, not competition. |
| Flags | Pennants that are suspended over the width of each end of the pool approximately 15 feet from the wall. |
| Format | The order of events and type of swim meet being conducted. |
| Fund-Raiser | A moneymaking endeavor by a swim team/club usually involving both parents and swimmers. |
| Freestyle | One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Freestyle (nicknamed Free) is swam as the fourth stroke in the Medley Relay and the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yds/meter, 100 yds/meter, 200 yds/meter, 400 meter/500 yds, 800 meter/1000 yds, 1500 meter/1650 yards. (LSC's' with 8 - Under divisions offer the 25 yd free). |
| Gallery | The viewing area for spectators during the swimming competition. |
| Goals | The short and long range targets for swimmers to aim for. |
| Goggles Glasses | type devices worn by swimmers to keep their eyes from being irritated by the chlorine in the water. |
| Gun | The blank firing pistol used by the starter to start the races. |
| Gun Lap | The part of a freestyle distance race (400 meters or longer) when the swimmer has 2 lengths plus 5 yards to go. The starter fires a gun shot over the lane of the lead swimmer when swimmer is at the backstroke flags. |

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| Handbook | A reference manual published by teams/clubs and LSC's or other swimming organizations. |
| Hats | See "caps". |
| Heats | A division of an event when there are too many swimmers to compete at the same time. The results are compiled by swimmers times after all heats of the event are completed. |
| Heat Award | A ribbon or coupon given to the winner of a single heat at an age group swim meet. |
| Heat Sheet | The pre-meet printed listings of swimmers seed times in the various events at a swim meet. These sheets vary in accuracy, since the coaches submit swimmers times many weeks before the meet. Heat sheets are sold at the admissions table and are used mainly to make sure the swimmer has been properly entered in all the events they signed up for. Parents enjoy looking at the seedings prior to the race, and they can see approx. time, heat # and lane # their swimmer is competing in. Also, swimmers can tell the order the events will be conducted, and get a rough idea how long the meet sessions will last. |
| HOD | House of Delegates. This is the ruling body of an LSC composed of the designated representative of each club plus the board of directors (BOD) of the LSC. One vote per club and board member. |
| Horn | A sounding device used in place of a gun. Used mainly with a fully automatic timing system. |
| Hospitality Room | This is a separate room at a swim meet where coaches and officials can have their pre-race meetings and take breaks to refresh themselves. |
| Illegal | Doing something against the rules that is cause for disqualification. |
| IM | Individual Medley. A swimming event using all 4 of the competitive racing strokes on consecutive lengths of the race. The order must be: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle. Equal distances must be swam of each stroke. Distances offered: 100 yds, 200 yds/meter, 400 yds/meter. |
| Insurance | U.S.A. Swimming offers "accidental insurance coverage" which is automatic when swimmer, coach, official pays their U.S.A. Swimming membership fee. Many restrictions apply, so check with your club for detailed information. |
| Interval | A specific elapsed time for swimming or rest used during swim practice. |
| Invitational | Type of meet that requires a club to request an invitation to attend the meet. |
| Jump | An illegal start done by the 2 nd , 3 rd or 4 th member of a relay team. The swimmer on the block breaks contact with the block before the swimmer in the water touches the wall. |
| Kick Board | A flotation device used by swimmers during practice. A lightweight object used with great accuracy by coaches. |
| Lane | The specific area in which a swimmer is assigned to swim, i.e. lane 1 or lane 2. As the swimmers stand behind the blocks they can see the lane number (lanes usually numbered from right, lane 1, to left, lane 6). |
| Lane Lines | Continuous floating markers attached to a cable stretched from the starting end to the turning end for the purpose of separating each lane and "quieting" the waves caused by racing swimmers. |
| Lap | One length of the course. This also means "down and back", or 2 lengths, of the pool. |

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| Lap Counter | The large numbered cards (or the person turning the cards) used during the freestyle events 500 yards or longer. Counting is done from the end opposite the star. The numbers on the cards are odd numbers, with the final lap being designated by a bright orange card. |
| Late Entries | Meet entries from a club or individual that are received by the meet hose after the entry deadline. These entries are usually not accepted and are returned to sender. |
| Leg | The part of a relay event swam by a single team member. A single stroke in the IM. |
| Length | The extent of the competitive course from end to end. See lap. |
| Long Course | A 50-meter pool. |
| LSC | Local Swim Committee. The local level administrative division of the corporation (U.S.A. Swimming) with supervisory responsibilities within certain geographic boundaries designated by the Corporation. |
| Lycra | A stretch material used to make competitive swimsuits and swim caps. |
| Malfunction | A mechanical or electronic failure – not a human failure by the swimmer. A parental state the day after a 3 or 4-day swim meet. |
| Mark | The command to take your starting position. |
| Marshall | The adult(s) official who controls the crowd and swimmer flow at a swim meet. |
| Medals | Awards given to the swimmers at meets. They vary in size and design and method of presentation. |
| Meet | A series of events held in one program. |
| Meet Director | The official in charge of the administration of the meet. The person directing the “dry side” of the meet. |
| Meters | The measurement of the length of a swimming pool that was built per specs using the metric system. Long course meters is 50 meters, short course meters is 25 meters. |
| Mile | The slang referring to the 1500 meter or the 1650 yard freestyle, both of which are slightly short of a mile. |
| NAIA | National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. |
| NAGTS | National Age Group Time Standards, the list of “C” through “AAAA” times published each year. |
| Nationals | U.S.A. Swimming Senior level meets conducted in March/April and August. See Senior Nationals. |
| Natorium | A building constructed for the purpose of housing a swimming pool and related equipment. |
| NCAA | National Collegiate Athletic Association. |
| Newsletter | A written communication published by a club or association. |
| NGB | National Governing Body |
| Non-Confirming Time | A short course time submitted to qualify for a long course meet, or vice versa. |
| Novelty Meet | A meet that does not fall into a specific category because of limited events, session or age brackets. |

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| Novice | A beginner or someone who does not have experience. |
| NTR | National Reportable Time. A time list published once a year, which if a swimmer equals or betters the time on the list they may submit their time in that event for consideration for national recognition. |
| NSSA | National Swim School Association |
| NT | No Time. The abbreviation used on a heat sheet to designate that the swimmer has not swam that event before. |
| Nutrition | The sum of the processes by which a swimmer takes in and utilizes food substances. |
| Nylon | A material used to make swim suits |
| Officials | The certified, adult volunteers who operate the many facets of a swim competition. |
| Olympic Trials | The U.S.A. Swimming sanctioned long course swim meet held the year of the Olympic Games to decide what swimmers will represent the USA on our Olympic Team. Qualification times are faster than Senior Nationals. |
| Omega | A brand of automatic timing system. |
| OT | Official Time. The swimmers event time recorded to one hundredth of a second (.01). |
| OTC | Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado. |
| OVC | Official Verification Card. A triplicate form for certifying a national qualifying time made by a swimmer and issued only by a verification official of the area in which the meet was held. |
| Open Competition | Competition which any qualified club, organization or individual may enter. |
| Parka | Large $\frac{3}{4}$ length fur lined coats worn by swimmers. Usually are in team colors with logo or team name. |
| Pace Clock | The large clocks with highly visible numbers and second hands, positioned at the ends or sides of a swimming pool so the swimmers can read their times during warm-ups or swim practice. |
| Paddle | Colored plastic devices worn on the swimmers hands during swim practice. |
| Plaque | A type of award (wall plaque) given to swimmers at a meet. |
| Pool | The facility in which swimming competition is conducted. |
| Positive Check-In | The procedure required before a swimmer competes in an event in a deck seeded or pre-seeded meet. To check-in the swimmer must mark their name on a list posted by the meet host. |
| Practice | The scheduled workouts swimmers attend with their swim team/club. |
| Prelims-Finals | Type of meet with two sessions. The preliminary heats are usually held in the morning session. The fastest 6 or 8 (see Championship Heat) swimmers, and the next 6 or 8 swimmers (see Consolation Heat) return in the evening to compete in the Finals. A swimmer who has qualified in the Consolation Finals may not place in the Championship Finals even if their final swim time would place them so. The converse also applies. |
| Pre-seeded | A meet conducted without a bullpen in which a swimmer knows what lane and heat they are in by looking at the heat sheet, or posted meet program. |

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| Proof of Time | An official meet result, OVC, or other accepted form. Swimmers/coaches must supply proof of time with some meet entries, and other meets it is not required unless a swimmer misses a cut of time at the meet. |
| Psyche Sheet | Another name for a Heat Sheet or meet program, however, whereas a heat sheet defines the heat and lane assignment of each swimmer, the psyche sheet merely lists the individual swimmers, listed in order of their swim time, for any given event. |
| Pull Buoy | A flotation device used for pulling by swimmers in practice. |
| Qualifying Times | Published times necessary to enter certain meets, or the times necessary to achieve a specific category of swimmer. |
| Race | Any single swimming competition, i.e. preliminary, final, timed final. |
| Ready Room | A room by poolside for the swimmers to relax before they compete in finals. |
| Referee | The head official at a swim meet; is in charge of all the "wet side" administration and decisions. |
| Registered | Enrolled and paid as a member of U.S.A. Swimming and the LSC. |
| Relays | A swimming event in which 4 swimmers participate as a relay team with each swimmer swimming an equal distance of the race. There are two types of relay: i) Medley relay where 1 swimmer swims backstroke, 1 swims breaststroke, 1 swims butterfly, 1 swimmer swims freestyle, in that order. Medley relays are conducted over 200 yd/meter and 400 yd/meter distances; ii) Freestyle relay: each swimmer swims freestyle. Free relays are conducted over 200 yd/meter, 400 yd/meter and 800 yd/meter distances. |
| Rest Area | A designated area (such as a gymnasium) that is set-aside for swimmers to rest during a meet. |
| Ribbons | Awards in a variety of sizes, styles and colors; given at swim meets. |
| Safety | The responsible and careful actions of those participating in a swim meet. U.S.A. Swimming and each LSC now have a "Safety Coordinator" and each meet must have Marshals in charge of safety. |
| Sanction | A permit issued by an LSC to a U.S.A. Swimming group member to conduct an event or meet. |
| Sanction Fee | The amount paid by a U.S.A. Swimming group member to an LSC for issuing a sanction. |
| Schedule | U.S.A. Swimming or LSC list of meets with dates, meet hosts, meet location, types of meet and contacts address and phone. |
| Scratch | To withdraw from an event after having declared an intention to participate. Some meets have scratch deadlines and specific scratch rules, and if not followed, swimmer can be disqualified from remaining events. |
| Seed | Assign the swimmers heats and lanes according to their submitted or preliminary times. |
| Seeding Deck | Seeding: swimmers are called to report to the Clerk of Course. After scratches are determined, the event is then seeded (heat and lane assignments given). Pre-Seeding: swimmers are arranged in heats according to submitted times, usually a day prior to the meet. Does not account of possible swimmer scratches or "no shows". |
| Senior Meet | A meet that is for senior level swimmers and is not divided into age groups. Qualification times are usually necessary and will vary depending on the level of the meet. |

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| Senior | A U.S.A. Swimming National Championship meet for swimmers of any age as long as the qualification times are met. |
| Senior Nationals | Nationals are conducted long course in the spring (usually late March) and in the summer (usually late July, early August). |
| Session | Portion of meet distinctly separated from other portions by locale, time, type of competition or age group. |
| Shave | The process of removing all arm, leg and exposed torso hair to decrease the “drag” or resistance of the body moving through the water. Used only by Seniors at Championship Meets. |
| Short Course | A 25 yard or 25 meter pool. |
| Simultaneously | A term used in the rules of butterfly and breaststroke, meaning at the same time. |
| Splash | U.S.A. Swimming newsletter that is mailed bi-monthly. |
| Split | A portion of an event, shorter than the total distance than is timed, i.e. a swimmers first 50 time is taken as the swimmer swims the 100 race. It is common to take multiple splits for the longer distances. |
| Stations | Separate portions of a dryland or weight circuit. |
| Start | The beginning of the race. The dive used to begin a race. |
| Starter | The official in charge of signaling the beginning of a race and ensuring that all swimmers have a fair takeoff. |
| Still Water | Water that has no current caused by a filter system or no waves caused by swimmers. |
| State | A meet held twice a year (short course and long course) sponsored by the LSC. It is common to hold a Championship Senior meet and Age Group meet separately. Qualification times are usually necessary. |
| State Qualifier | A swimmer who has made the necessary cut off times to enter the State meet. |
| Stand-Up | The command given by the Starter or Referee to release the swimmers from their starting position. |
| Step-Down | The command given by the Starter or Referee to have the swimmers move off the blocks. Usually this command is a good indication that things are not right for the race to start. |
| Stroke | There are 4 competitive racing strokes: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle. |
| Stroke & Turn Judge | The official positioned at the sides of the pool, walking the length of the course as the swimmers race. If the Stroke & Turn Judge sees something illegal, they report to the referee and the swimmer may be disqualified. |
| Submitted Time | Times used to enter swimmers in meets. The swimmer at a previous meet must have achieved these times. |
| Suit | The racing uniform worn by the swimmer in the water during practice and competition. The three most popular styles/types of suits worn are: nylon, lycra, polyester. |
| Swim-A-Thon | The “Fund-Raiser” copyrighted by U.S.A. Swimming for local clubs to use to make money. |

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| Swim America | The professional swim lesson program administrated by the American Swim Coaches Assoc. licensed to coaches. |
| Swim-Off | In a Prelims/Finals type competition, a race after the scheduled event to break a tie. The only circumstance that warrants a swim-off is to determine which swimmer makes finals or an alternate otherwise ties stand. |
| Swimming World | The most informational and popular of the professional magazines. All swimmers and parents who are interested in swimming should consider a subscription. Ask your coach for address. |
| Taper | The resting phase of a senior swimmer at the end of the season before the Championship meet. |
| Team | U.S.A. Swimming registered club that has the right to compete for points. |
| Team Records | The statistics a team keeps, listing the fastest swimmer in the clubs history for each age group/each event. |
| Timed Finals | Competition in which only heats are swam and final placings are determined by those times. |
| Time Standard | A time set by a meet or LSC or U.S.A. Swimming that a swimmer must achieve for qualification or recognition. |
| Timer | The volunteers sitting behind the starting blocks/finish end of pool who are responsible for getting watch times on events and activating the backup buttons for the timing system. |
| Time Trial | An event or series of events where a swimmer may achieve or better a required time standard. |
| Top 16 | A list of times compiled by the LSC or U.S.A. Swimming or Swimming World that recognizes the top number (16) of swimmers in each age group (boys and girls) in each event and distance. |
| Touch Out | To reach the touch pad and finish first in a close race. |
| Touch Pad | The removable plate on the end of pools that is connected to an automatic timing system. A swimmer must properly touch the touch pad to register an official time in a race. |
| Transfer | The act of leaving one club or LSC and going to another. Usually 120 days of unattached competition is required before swimmer can represent another U.S.A. Swimming club. |
| Travel Fund | A sum of money set-aside for a swimmer and coach to use for travel expenses and entry fees to specified meets. |
| Tri-meet | A meet with 3 teams competing for points to see who places 1 st -2 nd -3 rd . |
| Trophy | Type of award given to teams and swimmers at meets. |
| Unattached | An athlete member who competes, but does not represent a club or team (abbr. UNA). |
| Uniform | The various parts of clothing a swimmer wears at a meet. May include: parka, warm-up jacket, team duffel bag, sweat pants, suits, cap, goggles, T-shirt, etc. |
| Unofficial Time | The time displayed on a read-out board or read over the announcing system by the announcer immediately after the race. After the time has been checked and verified, it will become the official time. |
| U.S.A. Swimming | The governing body of swimming. |

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| U.S.A. Number | A 14-part number assigned to a swimmer after they have filled out the proper forms and paid their annual registration fee. The first part (comprising of 6 numbers) is the swimmers birth date; the 2 nd part (comprising of 8 letters) is a mix of the swimmer's first, middle and last name. If a swimmer has a very short first, middle or last name (not enough letters) you will see an asterik used in place of a letter. Example: John Paul Jones born on July 23, 1984 would have an athlete I.D. # of 072384JOHPJONE; Margaret Paula Lee born on October 4, 1982 would have an athlete I.D. # of 100482MARPLEE*. These I.D. numbers stay with the athlete throughout their life and never change, even if there is a marriage down the road that involves a name change. |
| USOTC | United States Olympic Training Center located in Colorado Springs, Colorado. |
| Vertical | At right angle to the normal water level. |
| Vitamins | The building blocks of the body. Vitamins do not supply energy but are necessary for proper health. |
| Warm-down | The "cooling off" phase after a swimmer has finished competing. This is only occurs if there is pool space available. Competition swimming produces a lactic acid build-up in the muscles and warming-down dissipates this build-up. If a swimmer is only competing 1 day this warming-down process is probably not necessary because over time the lactic acid will dissipate on its' own. If there are multiple races in a day, and a swimmer has 2 to 3 days of competition, then warming-down is necessary in order to have the muscles rebound as quickly as possible. |
| Warm-Up | The warming-up process in the pool that swimmers go through before a meet starts. The coach will give instructions to the swimmers as to what to swim to warm-up the muscles properly before competition. Swimmers usually get an hour to warm-up before the official starting time. |
| Watch | The hand held device used by timers and coaches for timing a swimmer's race and taking splits. |
| Water | For the purpose of filling swimming pools and swimmers drinking bottles to properly hydrate themselves. |
| Weights | The various barbells/benches/machines used by swimmers during their dryland program. |
| Whistle Start | At the commencement of each heat, the Referee shall signal to the swimmers by a short series of whistles to remove all clothing except for swimwear. This is followed by a long whistle indicating that they should take and maintain their positions on the starting blocks. In backstroke and medley relay events, at the Referee's FIRST long whistle the swimmers shall immediately enter the water and at the SECOND long whistle shall return without undue delay to the starting position. |
| Work Out | The practice sessions a swimmer attends. |
| Yards | The measurement of the length of a swimming pool that was built per spec using the American system. A short course yard pool is 25 yards (75 feet) in length. |
| Yardage | The distance a swimmer races or swims in practice. Total yardage can be calculated for each practice session. |
| Zones | The country is divided up into 4 major zones: Eastern, Southern, Central and Western. At the end of the long course season (in August) the Zone Administration sponsors a championship age group meet. |