

Time Standards

TIME STANDARDS

There are many beautiful things about the sport of swimming. One of them is the objective nature of the results. Once you touch the wall, there it is in black and white: the time it took you to cover the distance of the race!

Purpose

There are many different time standards.

Time standards are used to:

- Set goals - encourage swimmers "to step their swimming up to the next level"
- Control the size of swim meets, (as each higher or faster level in the standards has fewer swimmers - as the standards get faster, a smaller number of swimmers achieve them),
- Place swimmers into groups based on ability, gender, and age.

AGE GROUP TIME STANDARDS

Age Groups

USA Swimming recognizes the physical differences of children aged 18 and under. Therefore, USA Swimming defines Age Groups as.

- 10 & Under
- 11-12
- 13-14
- 15-16
- 17-18

Age Groups Within LSC

Each Local Swimming Committee (LSC) is the governing body to define and implement time standards for meets sanctioned by their LSC. Meaning, time standards for each age group within Southern California Swimming (SCS) is different from time standards for the respective age groups in other LSCs.

Our LSC, Southern California Swimming (SCS), defines the following age groups:

- 5-8
- 7-10
- 11-12
- 13-14
- 15-18 (still documented as 15-16 and 17-18 but the times are identical)

Time Standards

Standards

SCS further separates each age group into levels. These levels are: White, Red, Blue, WAG (Winter Age Group), JAG (June Age Group), SprJO (Spring Junior Olympics), SumJO (Summer Junior Olympics).

Time standards are then defined for each event, gender, age-group, and level. Example:

- Girls – 7-10 – 50 Free – White (no time (NT) or slower than Red)
- Girls – 7-10 – 50 Free – Red (faster than white)
- Girls – 7-10 – 50 Free – Blue (faster than red)

Swimmers who have not competed in an event can enter that event in any BRW (Blue, Red, White) or RW (Red, White) meet as White (or NT – No Time). To swim an event in a BR (Blue, Red) meet a swimmer must have achieved at least a Red time in the event. It's entirely possible to have a Blue time in one event, a Red time in another event, a White time in another event, etc.

SCS Time Standards can be found on their web page: [www.SoCalSwim.org / Time Standards](http://www.SoCalSwim.org/TimeStandards)

SCS Time Standards are for a season, September 1 thru August 31. Each season SCS ALWAYS changes the time standards for the Championship meets. The BRW times can change, but haven't changed for the last few years. New time standards usually come out around the end of September.

Qualifying for SCS Championships

To compete in one of the SCS Championship meets the swimmer must have achieved the meet qualifying time for event, gender, age-group. These meets are:

- WAG – Winter Age Group SCY: usually held in December.
- JAG – June Age Group: LCM, usually held in June
- SprJO – Spring JO: SCY, usually held in March,
- SumJO – Summer JO: LCM, usually held end of July.

SCS defines SCY SumJO times which will qualify a SCY time to swim that event in the LCM SumJO meet and vice versa. These times are part of the time standards.

SCS also allows if a swimmer qualifies an event for SprJO, they also, by default, qualify to swim that same event in the SumJO, and vice versa.

Aging Up

So, what happens when a swimmer “ages up”, in other words, goes from one age group to another? Do they have to start over? NO! Swimmers **ALWAYS KEEP** the times they earned. But the time standard changes and gets faster. So, a swimmer who had a Blue time for an event may now find they now have a Red time for that same event.

And each age group progression gets faster and harder. In other words, the time difference between 7-10 and 11-12 is a small jump, the time difference between 11-12 and 13-14 is a much bigger jump, and the time difference between 13-14 and 15-18 is a mind boggling jump.

Time Standards

Notes:

BRW is used by SCS. Other LSC's use an ABC breakdown for levels. Each LSC can define time standard levels however they chose.

USA SWIMMING MOTIVATIONAL TIME STANDARDS

USA Swimming (the Olympic Organization) has an Age Group Motivational Time Standards program that ranks EVERY swimmer nationally according to their fastest times by age, stroke and distance, much like our local Southern California Swimming (SCS) Blue, Red, White time standards.

The objective of the Motivational Time Standards is to:

- inspire swimmers to set goals and get faster, and
- to rank all swimmers nationally.

Motivational Age Groups

USA Swimming has created 2 different sets of Motivational Time Standards, (1) Age Group and (2) Single Age. The Single Age time standard does not define standards for swimmers 9 & Under so we use the Motivational Age Group standards to rank our swimmers.

The Motivational Age Groups are.

- 10 & Under
- 11-12
- 13-14
- 15-16
- 17-18

Rankings

The rankings are as follows; (Note, the SCS relationship comments are for reference only and do not necessarily apply to every level or time standard).

- 'C' Less than 'B' (like white)
- 'B' (close to red times)
- 'BB' (close to red times)
- 'A' (close to blue times)
- 'AA' (close to blue, WAG, JAG, and JO times)
- 'AAA' (close to Senior or Far Western championship times)
- 'AAAA' (close to Sectional times)

The table below shows how the levels relate to a national ranking.

Time Standards

| | | |
|------|-----|---|
| AAAA | 98% | This standard means your swimmer is ranked in the top 2% of swimmers their age-group, their same sex, in that stroke and distance. |
| AAA | 94% | This standard means your swimmer is ranked in the top 6% of swimmers their age-group, their same sex, in that stroke and distance. |
| AA | 92% | This standard means your swimmer is ranked in the top 8% of swimmers their age-group, their same sex, in that stroke and distance. |
| A | 85% | This standard means your swimmer is ranked in the top 15% of swimmers their age-group, their same sex, in that stroke and distance. |
| BB | 65% | This standard means your swimmer is ranked in the top 35% of swimmers their age-group, their same sex, in that stroke and distance. |
| B | 45% | This standard means your swimmer is ranked in the top 55% of swimmers their age-group, their same sex, in that stroke and distance. |
| C | | This standard is for all swimmers with times below the "B" standard. Everything from 0.00 up to the "B" standard is a "C" time. |

USA Swimming re-evaluates the time standards every four years. The current Motivational Times are for 2017-2020.

The Motivational Time Standards can be found on their web page:
www.usaswimming.org/Home/times/time-standards under 'Age Group Time Standards'

Patches

So, swimmers, how fast are you? How do you measure up nationally? Want to share your accomplishments with others? Want to inspire your teammates and even your competition and fierce rivals? Great! I knew that would motivate you! Start collecting the patches as a swimmers badge of honor!

Have you seen those swimmers with patches on their parkas? Our team is making those USA Swimming Motivational patches available for you to purchase at \$1.25 each but you have to earn them first. Here's how.

During or after the swim meet check your time against the USA Swimming Age Group Motivational times standards. If you made the cut for a new patch, jump up and down, scream and shout, whoop and holler, then let us know. Send an email or text (or hand a note) to your coach or directly to (Team Grandma) Sherry at iambestgma@gmail.com or 626-524-5020. Include your name, the meet, the event, and the patch you earned. If you set a new team record the team will reward you with the 'Record Holder' patch and pin and Grandma will do her 'happy dance'.

Parents... acknowledging your swimmers accomplishments openly keeps them motivated and gives them incentives to hit their target times.

Notes: Only one patch is given per level and stroke. For example, you only receive one 'B' patch for Freestyle, one 'B' for Back, and so on. This program is retroactive to the beginning of the season.

Time Standards

Patches can be sewn or glued on to parkas or attached to your back pack using a carabiner (also available for \$4.25).

Notes

These time standards are not required for any particular swim meet, however, I have seen championship meets use them as qualifying times. Example: Several years ago the Far Western Championship meet used the USA Motivational “AAA” times as qualifying times.

Have you noticed swims meeting the USA Motivational Time Standard ‘B’ and above are highlighted in the Meet Recaps?

Bottom line - Time standards are great for goal setting and should be used to motivate your swimmer, but while improvement is desired it should not be required. Be patient and let your athlete improve at their own pace. P.S. Never compare your swimmers success to another swimmer. All swimmers are individuals with unique abilities and each will develop at their own rate.

SENIORS AND ABOVE TIME STANDARDS

As swimmers develop in technique and mature physically they reach a point where they are consistently exceeding the time standards for Age Group swimming. These swimmers move into the level of “Senior” swimming.

In “Senior” swimming there are no more age groups and meets are open to all swimmers over the age of 5 as long as they meet the qualifying time. There is not one set of time standards used for all senior meets. The qualifying times depend pretty much on the meet.

Senior Level LSC Meets

Each Local Swimming Committee (LSC) can sponsor their own senior level meets. Our LSC, Southern California Swimming (SCS), sponsors several senior meets. Some of these meets are:

- SCS Senior Regional Champs (SCY & LCM)
- Senior Race Series (SCY)
- Senior Q Meet (LCM)
- Kevin Perry (SCY)
- One Day Senior Timed Final (LCM)
- Swim Meet of Champions (SCY)

SCS has defined Senior Development Time Standards that may be used for these meets. The meet sheets for each of the meets will define the “official” qualifying times.

Time Standards

Sectionals

There are 3 Sectionals meets held in different parts of the country. The time standards for each of these meets are different. SCS competes in the CA-NV (California-Nevada) Sectionals. The qualifying times for this meet are published on the meet sheet when the meet is sanctioned.

Sectional meets are the only meets with **MAXIMUM QUALIFYING TIMES**. That means, if the swimmer is faster than the maximum time they are ineligible to swim that event. The “Maximum Qualifying Times” are set by USA Swimming and posted on their web site.

National Meets

USA Swimming sanctions Futures, Jr. Nationals, Nationals, and Olympic Trials. The qualifying times for these meets are defined by USA Swimming.

Senior level championship meets are also sponsored by Speedo or TYR or Toyota (Open) and sanctioned by USA Swimming. Qualifying times and eligibility for these meets are in the meet sheets.

Time Standards

Most of the senior level meets have 2 different time cuts for each event, ‘Qualifying’ times and ‘Bonus’ times. Bonus times are slower than the qualifying time. The objective of Bonus Times is to give swimmers the opportunity to compete in multiple events. The number of Bonus events a swimmer can enter depends on how many events the swimmer qualifies for. A swimmer **MUST** have at least one “Qualifying” event. The meet sheets will define the rules for Bonus events.

For Example: If a swimmer qualifies for one event they can enter 3 bonus events, if they qualify for 2 events they can enter 3 bonus events, if they qualify for 3 events they can enter 2 bonus events, etc.

The SCS Senior Development level time standards can be found on their web page

www.SocalSwim.org / Time Standards under the Time Standards tab / **Men SCY** or **Men LCM** or **Women SCY** or **Women LCM**.

| | SCS Sr Dev | 2020 Sect | 2020 Sect Bonus | 2020 Futures | 2020 Summer 18-Un | 2020 Summer 18-Un Bonus | 2020 Summer 19-Up | 2020 Summer 19-Up Bonus |
|--------------|------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 50 SCY Free | 23.59 | 22.19 | 22.79 | 21.39 | 20.49 | 20.79 | 19.79 | 20.49 |
| 100 SCY Free | 51.29 | 48.19 | 49.49 | 46.49 | 44.39 | 45.39 | 43.09 | 44.39 |

Time Standards

SCS also posts the qualifying times for other meets. The 2020 Sect are the CA-NV Sectional Qualifying and Bonus times. The 2020 Futures are the Futures qualifying times time. The 2020 Summer Times are for the Speedo Summer Championships. The qualifying times are different for 18 and unders vs 19 and overs.

[Time Standards for many of the Senior Level meets are also posted on our web page under the 'TIMES \(STATS\) / TIME STANDARDS' tab \(as soon as I find them\).](#)

<https://www.teamunify.com/team/cachst/page/athletes/time-standards>

Time standards for the USA Swimming sanctioned meets can be found on the USA Swimming web site under Time Standards.

<https://www.usaswimming.org/Home/times/time-standards>

Notes

Attending senior meets is a totally different experience. There are up to 1,000 or more swimmers competing (And you thought our Age Group meets were crowded). Events may have hundreds of entries. One event can take more than an hour. It's usually swim for a couple of minutes and wait for a couple of hours. Also, starts are very fast. As soon as one heat is done the next heat is ready to go. Officials will give one heat, lane announcement for a missing swimmer. That swimmer has 5 seconds to get on the blocks or the heat begins without them.