

Swim Meet Basics

Listed below are some very in-depth guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. It may seem a little overwhelming, but we tried to be as specific and as detailed as we possibly could. If you have any questions, please ask your coach.

Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins. This time will be listed in the meet information handed out to all swimmers and also in the team newsletter/website.

1. Upon arrival, have your swimmer find a place to put their swim bag. The team usually sits in one place together, so look for some familiar faces.
2. Once settled you may want to have your swimmer write each event-number on a cue card (in a baggy). This helps him/her remember what events he/she is swimming and what event number to listen or watch for.
3. Activation is a very important part of getting the body ready for swimming. Our young swimmers will be lead through a group activation. Older swimmers begin to create a unique activation meet routine for themselves.
4. Your swimmer now gets his/her cap and goggles and reports to their coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. A swimmer's body is just like a car on a cold day-he/she needs to get the engine going and warmed-up before he/she can go all out.
5. After warm-up, your swimmer will go back to the area where his/her team is sitting and wait there until his first event is called. This is a good time to make sure he/she goes to the bathroom if necessary, drinks lots of water, nibbles on some healthy food, or just gets settled in.
6. The meet will usually starts immediately after warm-ups are over.
7. Psyche Sheet or Heat Sheets. A psyche sheet is usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. It lists all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time". When the team entry is sent in, each swimmer and his/her previous best time (up to the date that the entry was submitted) in that event is listed. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a "no-time" or "NT". A "no-time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event. A Heat sheet may be available close to the start of the meet that lists the actual heat and lane a swimmer will be competing in.
8. It is important for any swimmer to know what event numbers he/she is swimming (again, why the cue card is helpful). He/she may swim right away after warm-up or they may have to wait awhile. Coaches will be there to help get those younger swimmers get to the race in time.
9. Most meets are computerized. There are generally two ways a swimmer gets to his/her lane:
 - A swimmer usually reports directly to his/her lane for competition a number of heats before he/she actually swims.
 - In some novice meets, a swimmer's event number will be called, usually over the loudspeaker, and he/she will be asked to report to the "marshalling area". Swimmers should report with his/her cap and goggle. The swimmer swims his or her race.
10. After each swim:
 - The swimmer may ask the timers (people behind the blocks at each lane) his/her time and Thank the Timer!!
 - The swimmer should then go immediately to his or her coach. The coach will discuss the swim with each swimmer.
11. Generally, the coach follows these guidelines when discussing swims:
 - The swimmer will be asked what they thought went well in their race, and what could be improved.
 - Coach may then offer some positive comments or suggestions for improvement.
12. Things you, as a parent, can do after a swim:
 - Tell him how great he did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with him. You need to tell him how proud you are and what a great job he did.
13. The swimmer now waits until his next event is called and starts the procedure again. When a swimmer has completed all of her events she and her parents get to go home. Make sure, however, you, as a parent, check with the coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included on a relay.

14. Results are usually posted somewhere in the facility. Awards are often gathered for a team and given to the coach at the end of the meet. The coach will give the awards to the swimmers at a later time.

15. Things to bring to a meet:

- MJKFF T-shirt and cap
- Warm clothing for between races (preferably covering legs and arms)
- Two towels (the first one will probably get very wet)
- 2 sets of goggles (they always seem to break right before a race)
- Water, water, water!!
- Good healthy snacks.