



Timing at Meets

All families are required to time at all of the meets their swimmers attend.

What is timing?

Timers sit behind the starting side of the pool divided into usually 3 chairs per lane. Each timer has a specific assignment. All three timers press a "pickle" (a small push-button that stops the clock) when the swimmer touches the wall at the end of his/her race. It is important to look over the side of the pool to make sure that you get the exact moment the swimmer touches the wall, to get an accurate time. One of the timers also starts a stopwatch at the beginning of the race and stops it at the end. This timer should watch for the strobe light to begin the race and also watch over the side of the pool for the swimmer to touch at the end of the race. Another timer has a list of swimmers swimming in the lane and checks their names before they start racing and also writes the time from the stopwatch beside their name at the end. Timers are sitting right by the pool and really do have the best view of all the action.

How long do I need to time?

Timing slots are one hour. If needed, we will ask families with more than one swimmer to time one hour for each swimmer entered, since timing obligations are determined by the number of swimmers we have entered in the meet.

Where do I go to time?

Check in with our timing coordinator before the start of the meet. Timers for the first hour of each session of the meet are asked to find their chairs behind the blocks a few minutes before the start of the session. After this, new timers should come to replace the other Paseo Aquatics parents each hour. Ask the current timers who the Paseo Aquatics parents are that need to be replaced. The timing coordinator will confirm that everyone is showing up for their timing slot. Any questions should be directed to the timing coordinator.

Why do I need to time?

Swim meets are run by volunteers. The cost of hiring people to run the meet and do simple jobs like timing would be very expensive, and you would end up paying much more to enter a meet. So, we rely on parent volunteers to time.

How do you know how many timers we need?

The host team counts the entries from each competing team (including their own) and determines percentage of athletes from each team. The team then determines the number of timers each team must provide based on the percentage of swimmers they have entered in the meet. For example, if Paseo Aquatics swimmers equal 10% of the swimmers at the meet, Paseo Aquatics must provide 10% of timers. If a meet requires 3

timers for each of 10 lanes being swum per hour (30 timers total) then Paseo Aquatics would be asked to provide 3 timers for each hour. Numbers could change at the last minute, and we could need to ask for more timers or we would tell some timers that they are not needed.

What happens if families refuse to time?

We are fortunate to have a fantastic group of parents who realize that timing is crucial and sign up to time. However, once in a while a family may refuse to time. This creates problems because without the appropriate number of timers, the meet cannot move forward. The person who is timing does not get replaced and unfairly has to wait until someone else volunteers. While we do not anticipate to have to address this problem very often, **A fine will be imposed on families who refuse to time or don't show up for their timing obligation.**

Great! How do I sign up?

Go to the Event page. Find the meet in which your swimmer is entered. Click on "Job Signup." Find an empty slot. Check the box by the number where you wish to time, pay careful attention to the day, time, and session. Click "Signup" at the bottom of the page.

Paseo-Hosted Volunteer Opportunities

Head Timer

This position is required by USA swimming and is a back-up position to the lane timers. The Head Timer typically will start and stop 1 or 2 stop watches at the beginning of every race. These watches are a back-up to a lane timer just in case they have a stop watch malfunction.

Time Card Runner

This position is associated with the lane timers. The Card runner will pick up all the timing slips from each lane during the meet and submit them to the meet Admin.

Heat Sheet / Result Runner

This position works with the Meet Admin. This person is responsible for running the Heat sheets to the Poster board for athletes to see their Heat and lane assignment. After the event has completed the Meet Admin prints up a Result Sheet and this position will run this over to the poster board and post the results.

Deck Marshall

The deck Marshal position is a roaming position where the individual typically walks around the deck to help answer any questions. Sometimes a Deck Marshall also monitors the athlete zones. Athlete zones are typically off limits to parents. They are just meant for teams and coaches.

Announcers

This position sits and works with the Officials of the meet. They keep the meet moving forward and announce any notifications that need to go out to athletes or parents.

Check In

This position happens before each session of a meet. The Individual will typically be at a table and the athletes will come to them and check in for the meet. The individual will have a list of athletes in front of them and will highlight or check them off as being "checked into the meet."

Snack Bar Attendants

This is a vital position to the club as it is revenue generating and helps to cover the costs of Officials at the meet. The individual typically will just help sell concession items to families and athletes.

Meet set Up and Tear Down

This is a core group of individuals that help set the meet up. From Canopy set up, to PA system set up to snack bar set up. This typically happens the night before the meet. The morning of the meet and at the end of the meet. The process is pretty quick.

4 Reasons to Get More Involved with Your Kid's Swim Team

by [GRACE HOFFMANN](#)

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by Grace Hoffmann, Swimming World College Intern

"I do it because I love you and you love swimming!" were the words out of my mother's mouth every time I asked why she had to be at the pool on meet day before me. The people at the pool before the swimmers- they rock! You don't realize it as a little kid, but a meet wouldn't happen without the countless hours and planning of all the volunteers. I encourage all parents to be more involved in the sport of swimming. Start volunteering with your kid's team. Not only will your child see and appreciate the effort you are putting forth for them, but you too will learn to love and appreciate swimming as much as they do.

Become more involved on your kid's swim team so you can...

1. Learn more about the sport.



Photo Courtesy: Tanja Kirmse

Yes, you may go to all of his or her meets, however, do you really understand what is going on? Knowing how to write event/heat/lane on your child's hand doesn't even scratch the surface of all of the things you can learn at a meet! Become an official! Learn all the technicalities of the sport of swimming. Or, be a timer at a swim meet and see how close a race can be. Notice the different race strategies and see how important good flip turns or starts are. Or, take a different approach to the volunteer side of swimming and be a part of the team helping the meet coordinator, or even better, be the meet coordinator. Every little detail of the swim meet-concessions, the timeline, heat sheets, awards-need to be planned in advance! By learning the "behind-the-scenes" of swimming, you'll gain a lot of knowledge about swimming!

2. Have more conversations at home about swimming.



Photo Courtesy: Taylor Brien

Swimmer's notice when their parents are more present at meets. By volunteering, you are showing that you are invested in your child's swimming career. A kid may not verbally tell you, but they love it when you're at the meet and helping out! So be at the meet and bring the conversation back home to the dinner table. The more you volunteer and are at the pool, the more you can ask about the meet and talk swimming.

3. Be on deck.



Photo Courtesy: Mike Comer and Shanda Crowe/ProSwimVisuals.com

Whether you're a timer, official, or clerk of course helper, being on deck is FUN! You'll get to watch your child's races more closely and feel the intensity of the race. Being on deck allows you to say good luck to your swimmer and their friends before their swims. Being on deck makes the meet go by faster. Instead of just sitting up in the stands, get down on deck and be a part of the team making the meet happen.

4. Strengthen the “Swamily”



Photo Courtesy: Cindi Dayton

By having a stronger presence at meets, and volunteering, you'll get to know more of the swim parents and your son or daughter's swim friends. Being actively involved on the team or a parent board allows you to create friendships with the parents you're volunteering with! From then on you will always have someone to sit by on the bleachers, and your kid will be excited when you too want to go out to dinner with the team. Helping create a "swim family" will make swimming more fun and give you and your child long-lasting memories.

So get involved! Go on to your team's website, ask the parents around you, or simply just start asking those volunteering if they need any help. Become involved. Don't forget to say [thanks](#) to all those that volunteer too!

*USA Swimming has launched a campaign to recognize our terrific volunteers all month long! Honor all of the volunteers in your life this March by snapping their photo and posting with **#1VolunTeam** on Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram. Tag @usaswimming and @swimmingworldmag too!*