



## First Swim Meet Guide

Plan on arriving at least 15 minutes BEFORE warm up starts: to check in, find the team, to stake a claim on a piece of real estate for yourself, check the line ups and write them on your child's arm, and check out the concessions.

Your Athlete's Swim Bag should contain: (label everything: bags, goggles, towels, etc. look alike)

- **TEAM SUIT:** Bring your swimmer's competition suit and, if possible, a spare.
- **TEAM CAP:** Bring a competition swim cap plus an extra (they tear easy and are easily misplaced!)
- **GOGGLES:** Bring two pairs! Have your child "break in" a new pair of goggles in the warm-up pool prior to an event to make sure they are adjusted properly! Prior to an event, make sure the goggles fit snugly or they will end up around your swimmer's neck!
- **DECK SANDALS:** Make sure your swimmer wears deck sandals for protection.
- **TOWELS:** Bring one towel per event plus two extra (for warm-up and showers after the meet).
- **WARM CLOTHING:** Pack your swimmer's bags with at least a couple pairs of sweat pants/shirts, socks. Dress in layers.
- **SUNSCREEN:** Apply waterproof sunscreen BEFORE your child suits up. Sunscreen needs time to penetrate and get to work.
- **WATER:** Especially when the weather is hot, make sure your swimmer has plenty of water bottles and/or Gatorade. Even though they are immersed in water, swimmers dehydrate easily!
- **FOOD:** Bring plenty of nutritious snacks: Ritz bits w/ peanut butter, goldfish, fruit, jerky, power bars, cheese sticks, yogurt, dry cereal in Ziploc bags, etc.
- **MISCELLANEOUS:** A black sharpie (for marking events, heat and lane numbers on your swimmer's arm; Baby powder (for dusting swim caps); Swim shampoo/conditioner, hairbrush, comb, toiletries, deck of cards, board games, electronic games, mp3 players, etc.
- **INHALERS:** If your child is asthmatic, this is the most important thing they own. Different environments have different triggers that can set off an attack. Be sure to tell the coach(es) if your child has asthma!

### Other necessary items:

- Blankets and tarps (especially if you're setting up camp on a damp lawn)
- Tents and/or an EZ-up (during the summer, it's very important to keep swimmers out of the sun)
- Sleeping bags are a good way to keep bodies warm in-between events. Lawn chairs (parents need to be comfortable, too!)

## What to do when you arrive at the meet?

Positively check-in! Look for a few tables staffed by weary looking parents with sheets of paper taped down. These sheets are usually divided by ages and by girls and boys. Some clubs only allow the swimmer to check in not the parent. So it is a good idea to get your child in the habit of checking in by

themselves. Find your coach! As soon as your swimmer has checked in, have them find their coach to tell them they are there and ready to swim. Have your swimmer ready to go with cap, goggles and towel.

### **Your role as a parent:**

Clerk of course: Look for a table near the bullpen (rows of chairs where swimmers meet before their event). Most meets will have a clerk of course for swimmers 10 & under. Show your swimmer where the clerk of course is and remind your swimmer they will need to listen for the announcer to call their event. The announcer will make a first call for the event. That is when your swimmer will need to report to the clerk of course. From there they will be escorted to the starting block. If a swimmer is 11 or older, they will report directly to the starting block. Remind your swimmer to check in with their coach or check heat sheets that are posted on the walls to see what heat and lane they are assigned to for each of their events.

Parental Guidance: Cheer them on, congratulate, and console if necessary. Remind your child that their behavior reflects on their team: they must behave like a champion with grace and humility and a smile on their face no matter the outcome of any one race. After their event, make sure they check back in with their coach for tips to improve their next race.