



## ***Welcome to the Dover YMCA Dolphins Swim Team!*** **DYD New Families' Frequently Asked Questions**

- 1. When are practices, and is our Swimmer required to attend all of them?*

Our current practice schedule can always be found on the team *website*, as well as in our most recent *Newsletter*, which can be found both on our [DYD Pod FB page](#) and also up on our Aquatics-area bulletin boards! No, your swimmer does not have to attend every practice. **Mini-Dolphins & Bronze** swimmers should practice 2-3 times a week. **Silver** swimmers should practice 3-4 times a week. **Gold** swimmers should practice 4-5 times a week. **Platinum** should practice at least 5 times a week (out of 9 practices).
- 2. Why is the swim season so long? None of my other kids' sports have a season that runs from September through March. Help me understand.*

Traditionally, swimming in the fall and winter (September-March) is a longer season than most other sports. Practice is designed to build endurance and skill acquisition, and it takes anywhere from 4-6 weeks to get into swimming shape. Our focus is on proper technique and skill acquisition, and *then* racing skills. It takes time to learn and acquire these skills, and to get into shape.
- 3. How are fall and winter swimming different from summer swimming (longer races, different events, etc.)?*

Summer swimming is a great introduction to the sport and many successful swimmers got their start in Summer League. The season is shorter and the meets are quicker, as a fall/winter meet includes longer-distance events.
- 4. What should we expect for training this season?*

Focus for younger and newer swimmers will be skill acquisition. Swimmers who have previously been on the team will spend the first 4-6 weeks getting back into shape. As the season progresses, practices will increase in intensity and focus on racing speed and techniques.
- 5. How are the different swimming groups decided, and how will I know which one our Swimmer will be placed in?*

Swimming is unique in the fact that swimmers of all ages can be at different skill levels and speeds. There are very fast 8 year olds who have been swimming for multiple seasons and brand new 13 year olds who will find it challenging to complete an hour practice. The

groups here at Dover YMCA are skill-based, first and foremost. (You can find those prerequisites on our website, as well as on the program guide.) Swimmers will progress at their own rate and will be able to move up groups if they meet the next group's criteria. Ultimately, it is the Competitive Aquatics Director and Coaching Staff who have the final decision as to what group your swimmer will be in.

6. *What do the coaches focus on during practices?*

Each coach here at the Dover YMCA brings their own skill set and all of our coaches are focused on providing a safe and enjoyable experience for your swimmer. As your swimmer moves through the team groups, the focus of each practice will shift. **Mini-Dolphins** are learning how to swim in a lane with multiple swimmers, learning how to circle-swim to avoid crashes with their teammates, and developing skill acquisition and stroke mechanics. **Bronze Group** will focus on skill acquisition, stroke mechanics, and speed. **Silver Group** tends to have a stroke refinement and speed focus after endurance has been built. **Gold and Platinum Groups** will build a strong aerobic base and continue in stroke mechanics before transitioning into race specific training.

7. *What are the team suit & cap requirements, and how do we get those?*

At the start of the season we host a team suit fitting, advertised in our Newsletter, where you can order team suits and caps. Our team suit is solid black with 'Dover YMCA Dolphins' written on it. If your swimmer is competing in meets, we strongly recommend that they have a team suit. If you miss the suit fitting night, we have the link to *Metro Swim Shop* on our website where you can order team suits. There is also an option to order personalized silicone caps at an extra charge. Each swimmer will receive a latex team cap at the start of the season.

8. *Is there a Team Website? Do I need a login & password to access it?*

**Yes**, we have a team website: [www.cdelydolphins.org](http://www.cdelydolphins.org). This site is where we post meet information, schedule & practice changes, etc. At the start of the season you will receive an email that will give you login instructions, and if you are able to provide a cell phone # and know your service provider, you will also receive texts in case of a change in practice or meet information. We also utilize the **OnDeck app**, available for smartphones, to communicate information.

9. *Does the team have a Social Media Page we can follow?*

Yes! We have a Facebook group - [the DYD POD](#) - which you are encouraged to join follow.

10. *What is the best way to stay in communication with the Team & Coaches?*

Coaches are always happy to chat and answer questions after practice. (Please don't interrupt a coach during practice for a non-emergency!) For changes to your swimmer's events or practice/meet availability, etc., or any other questions or concerns, you are always encouraged and welcome to email me - [bsmith@ymcade.org](mailto:bsmith@ymcade.org).

## DYD New Families' Guide to General Swimming Terminology & Slang

1. **Bilateral Breathing:** Breathing on both the left and right sides during freestyle. This breathing is done after the third or fifth strokes.
2. **On the Bottom:** When the digital clock's second hand hits 30 seconds. (1:30, 2:30, etc.)
3. **On the Top:** When the digital clock's second hand hits :00. (1:00, 2:00, etc.)
4. **Split:** A certain part of a race that the coach will time. For example, in a 100-yard race, we often look at what's known as "the 50 split" (a swimmer's time at the 50-yard mark). This kind of specific evaluation helps swimmers learn and develop their racing strategy.
5. **Negative Split:** In a race over 50 yards in length, a 'negative split' indicates that the second half of the race is faster than the first. Distance swimmers (500 yards+) sometimes try to 'negative split' their race.
6. **Swimming Stroke Abbreviations:**
  - Freestyle: *Free*
  - Backstroke: *Back*
  - Butterfly: *Fly*
  - Breaststroke: *Breast*
7. **IM:** *Individual Medley*, where a swimmer completes a race comprised of *Butterfly/Backstroke/Breaststroke/Freestyle*, in that order.
8. **Kick:** Swimming done with or without a kick board, using *just your legs* - no arms - to travel through the water.
9. **Pull:** Swimming done using a pull buoy, without kicking, to travel through the water using only your arms.
10. **Drill:** Breaking down the stroke to work on a certain aspect of the stroke in order to correct or improve the stroke.
11. **Streamline:** Off of every start and wall, swimmers' hands should be stacked one on top of the other, while arms are squeezing the ears.
12. **Legal Stroke:** Executing any one of the 4 strokes correctly and without any technical errors.
13. **Disqualification (DQ):** The result of a swimmer doing any one of the four strokes incorrectly and incurring a technical error during a competitive event. When a swimmer DQ's in a meet event, they will not qualify to place in that event.
14. **Circle Swimming:** Swimming in a circular & counter-clock wise pattern during practice, similar to driving, to avoid crashing. When there are more than two swimmers in a lane, circle swimming will go into effect - everyone will swim *down* on one side of the lane, and *back* on the other.
15. **Off the Block:** During practice, any time a swimmer will "start" off the starting block at the end of the lane. A swimmer's performance "off the block" also approximates race speed.