

## 12 Parent Tips on How to Behave at Swim Practice

Courtesy of [Elizabeth Wickham](#)

I will confess. I haven't been the perfect [swim parent](#). I've learned from my own mistakes, plus from watching other parents. If you're an involved [swim parent](#), you've seen interesting days on the pool deck, with new parents and more seasoned ones.

**Here are my 12 tips on what to do — and not do — during practice:**

### DOs

1. Keep a case of water in the car. If your swimmer doesn't drink it all, you will.
2. Bring snacks for your child to refuel after practice even if it's right before dinner. A nutritionist swim mom told me for best recovery your swimmer must refuel within 20 minutes of practice. Chocolate milk is a great choice.
4. Reach out to new parents and those with younger swimmers on the team.
5. Sit away from the edge of the pool and away from the coach. A head coach told us swimmers got distracted listening to parents gossip when we sat directly behind him. Now, we're on the opposite side of the pool.
6. Take advantage of practice time. Get a group of parents walking or start a dryland group. You can always catch up on reading, too.

### DON'Ts

7. Don't talk to a swimmer or coach while they're in practice.
8. Don't interrupt the coach during practice. If there's something you need to say, catch the coach before or after practice, or send an email.
9. Don't compare your swimmer to others on the team. There's no positive outcome for anyone by doing this.
10. Please don't videotape your children during practice. They really don't want to review with you later that night what they're doing wrong.
11. Gossip is never a good idea, whether it's about another family, swimmer or team.
12. Try to avoid causing a scene on deck. Your swimmer will be mortified forever.