



SWIM MEET 101

What to Expect at Your First Swim Meet:

Swim meets are a great opportunity for the whole family to spend time together as well as with all the other families on the team. Below are guidelines and tips geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets.

WHAT TO TAKE TO A SWIM MEET

1. Black Speedo or TYDE Swimsuit, White TYDE cap, and goggles. Having an extra suit, cap, and pair of goggles packed is always a good idea. These items seem to rip and break at the most awkward times!
2. Towels – swimmers will be in and out of the water, so pack at least two (it's nice to have a dry one at the end of a meet).
3. Something comfy for your swimmer to sit on in the team area, such as a sleeping bag, old blanket, or chair.
4. Something comfy for you to sit* in. Most parents bring camping or "soccer" chairs. (*NOTE: some pools (i.e.: GAC) do not allow chairs but do provide seating – check the Meet information page to double check before carrying in chairs)
5. Changes of clothes such as sweatpants, sweatshirts, and t-shirts. Swimmers need to stay warm between events and there is nothing worse than pulling on cold, soggy sweatpants.
6. Entertainment for the whole family such as travel games, cards, coloring books, books, iPods/iPads, etc. Especially important if you are bringing youngsters who are not swimming!
7. Small cooler* of healthy snacks and drinks (if allowed at host pool). Suggestions for items to bring: Water, fruit juice, Gatorade, granola bars, fruit, yogurt, cereal, trail mix, sandwiches. (*NOTE: some pools (i.e.: GAC) do not allow outside food or beverage – except for swimmers' personal use)
8. Sharpie marker, pen, highlighter.

*Special Parent Note: A pool area can get very warm. Wear layers. Nothing is worse than being hot at a swim meet. It makes the time pass very slowly!



BEFORE THE MEET STARTS

1. **Arrive at on deck at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up** time begins. Often coaches announce or post exact warm-up times several days before a meet.

2. **Find a place to put your swimmer’s “stuff.”** The team usually sits together in a common area called the “crash area” so look for some familiar faces and then set up camp. At some meets, parents will sit in the stands and may only be on deck as meet volunteers.

3. **Help your swimmer find their assigned coach and check in.** Look for coaches on deck or sometimes in the crash area to let them know you are at the meet.

4. **Find or buy a heat sheet.** A Heat Sheet lists all swimmers in each event in order of “seed time”. This is where you will find what heat and lane your swimmer is in for each event they’ve entered. We will try to send out and/or post swimmer entries prior to each swim meet.

5. **Write on your swimmer.** Write each event number, heat, and lane on your swimmer’s arm in “permanent” (i.e., waterproof) marker, like a Sharpie. This helps your swimmer remember what events he or she is swimming, what event number to listen for, and what lane to get lined up behind. This step is sometimes saved until after the swimmers are done with warm-ups, but can also be done before going to a meet.

Abbreviations:

E=Event number, H= Heat number, L= Lane number

What=The length of the swim (in yards) and the stroke

FR, BK, BR, FL = freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly

EXAMPLE:

E	H	L	What
26	3	5	25 FR
38	1	3	25 BR
48	2	4	25 BK
58	1	6	25 FL

The event number refers to distance/stroke/age/gender for each race

The Heat number is used when there are more swimmers than can swim at once within one event

(example: 20 9-10 girls in a 6 lane pool would require 4 heats). Placement of lane numbers can vary by pool...



6. **Swimmers report to the pool and coach for warm-ups.** It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. Swimmers' bodies are just like cars on a cold day; they need to get the engine going and warmed-up before being able to go all out. This is a good time for parents to check and see if extra timers are needed while the kids are busy!

7. **Swimmers return to crash area after warm-ups.** Time to dry off, put on warm clothes, go to the bathroom, and write events on the arm if this wasn't done earlier. Swimmers should check to see if they are in a relay at the meet start and not go too far away.

8. The meet will usually start about 5-10 minutes after warm-ups are over.

THE MEET STARTS

1. **Know what events your swimmer is competing in.** It is important for swimmer to know what event numbers s/he is swimming. Again, a heat sheet and sharpie are a swim parent's best friends!

2. **Listen for event announcements.** Upcoming events are usually announced over the loudspeaker, asking swimmers to report to the starting blocks or to the clerk of course, a staging area that may be used for swimmers 8 and under. Swimmers should report with cap and goggles on ready to swim. Example: "Event #27, 10-Under Boys, 25 freestyle, report to clerk of course."

3. **Swimmers check in with the coaches.** TYDE coaches want their swimmers to check in with them before each race. This is when coaches give last minute reminders and encouragement to the swimmers about their upcoming race. Swimmers should allow enough time for this important step before lining up at the starting blocks!

4. **Report to the blocks or the clerk of course.** It is a good idea to have your swimmer check in with the lane timers, when possible, to make sure they are in the right lane and heat.

5. **Parents, find a seat.** Parents must sit in the spectator area, usually along sides and at the turn (shallow) end of the pool or in the spectator stands at larger venues.

6. **Swimmers, swim your race** then...



7. **Check in with the coaches...again!** Time to see how all that hard work in practice is going to pay off! After each race, your swimmer should go immediately to their coach. Generally, the coaches follow these guidelines after a race:

- a) Positive comments or praise
- b) Suggestions for improvement

8. **Check in with parents.** Parents should follow these guidelines after your swimmer's race:

- a) Tell your swimmer how great they did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with them. You just need to tell your swimmer how proud you are of their effort.
- b) Take your swimmer back to the crash area to relax, find something to eat, and wait for next event to be called.

9. **Repeat** above steps until all events have been completed.

10. **Final check in with the coaches before heading home.** When a swimmer has completed all of his events for the day, he is able to go home. Be sure, however, to check with the coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included on a relay at the end of a meet. It is not fair to other swimmers who may have stayed to swim on a relay where your swimmer is expected to be a member and s/he is not there.

11. **Ask for help!** If, during a meet, you feel lost or confused, be sure to ask other TYDE parents for help! We have all had our "first meets" and know it can be overwhelming. Once you have attended one or two meets, it will all become very routine and enjoyable.

MEET RESULTS

1. Usually Meet results are posted in a hallway for spectators to see race results. It takes between 15 and 30 minutes after a race is finished before they are put up.

2. If you have a question about results, or how your child swam, discuss it with your child's coach after the meet.

3. There's an App for that! Most swim meet results are posted to Meet Mobile in real time during a meet. The app is available on Google Play and in the Apple App Store.