

Have you ever been disqualified on your breaststroke start? This is a common mistake for younger swimmers. Here is what you can and can't do.

You can...

- do nothing. If you haven't perfected your pullout yet and don't want to get DQ'd, you can just dive very shallow, hold your streamline without pulling or kicking, and begin with your first stroke when you reach the surface.
- do one breaststroke pull and then one breaststroke kick under water. This pull is the only time during the lap that you can do a pullout (pull your hands all the way down), but you can also do a regular breaststroke pull instead.
- do one dolphin kick either before or during the arm pullout, but NOT BOTH. You only get one kick. (Don't try to do ANY dolphin kicks until you've learned to do a pullout without the dolphin kick.)

You cannot...

- breaststroke kick first. You must take a pull before your first breaststroke kick, or you will be disqualified.
- flutter kick. You can't flutter kick EVER during a breaststroke race!
- finish your second pull before your head breaks the surface. Even if you pop your head up to breathe afterwards, you will be DQ'd if you've already started to bring your hands together. Some piece of your head must break the surface before your hands reach the widest part of the second pull.