

## Glossary of Swim Terms

**Age Group Swimming:** The program through which USA Swim provides fair and open competition for its younger members. It is designed to encourage maximum participation, provide an educational experience, enhance physical and mental conditioning, and develop a rich base of swimming talent. Age groups are 8 and under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, and 15-18.

**Anchor:** The last swimmer in a relay.

**Approved Meet:** A swim meet conducted with enough USA Swimming officials to certify conformance to USA Swimming rules.

**Backstroke:** This is one of the four competitive racing strokes and is the 2nd step in the Individual Medley. It is any style of swimming performed while on your back.

**Block:** The starting platform.

**Breaststroke:** One of the four competitive racing strokes and is the 3rd step in the Individual Medley. It requires simultaneous movements of the arms on the same horizontal plane.

**Bulkhead:** A wall constructed to divide a pool into different courses, such as a 50 meter pool into two 25 yard courses.

**Butterfly:** One of the four competitive racing strokes and is the 1st step in the Individual Medley. The butterfly features the simultaneous overhead stroke of the arms combined with the dolphin kick.

**Button:** This is the responsibility of the timer. It is a manual time stop device which records a back-up time in case the touch pad malfunctions.

**Cap:** The latex or lycra covering worn on the head of a swimmer. The cap may contain team colors and logos.

**Carbohydrates:** The primary source of food energy used by athletes.

**Check-In:** A required procedure in which a swimmer must place their name on a list before they can swim in an event.

**Circle Swimming:** Performed by staying to the right of the black line when swimming in a lane to enable more swimmers to swim in each lane.

**Coach:** A person who trains and teaches athletes in the sport of swimming.

**Code of Conduct:** An agreement signed by a swimmer stating that the swimmer will abide by certain behavioral guidelines.

**Cut:** Slang for qualifying time, a time standard necessary to attend a particular meet or event.

**Deck:** The area around a swimming pool reserved for swimmers, officials, and coaches. Only "authorized" USA Swimming members may be on the deck during a swim competition.

**Distance:** Term used to refer to events over 400 meters/500 yards.

**DQ'ed:** Disqualified. This occurs when a swimmer has committed an infraction of some kind; e.g., freestyle kick in butterfly. A disqualified swimmer is not eligible to receive awards, nor can the time be used as an official time.

**Drill:** An exercise involving a portion or part of a stroke, used to improve technique.

**Dry Land Training:** Training done out of the water that aids and enhances swimming performance; usually includes stretching, calisthenics and/or weight training.

**Entry Fee:** The cost per event a swimmer or relay is charged. This varies depending on the LSC and type of meet.

**Event:** Any race or series of races in a given stroke or distance.

**False Start:** Occurs when a swimmer is moving at the start. In USA Swimming, one false start will result in disqualification.

**Flags:** Backstroke flags placed 5 yards or 5 meters from the end of the pool.

**Freestyle:** One of the four competitive racing strokes and is the 4th step in the Individual Medley. In the freestyle, the competitor may swim any stroke they wish. The usual stroke used is the Australian Crawl.

**Gallery:** The viewing area for spectators during the swimming competition.

**Heats:** When an event is split-up because there are too many swimmers to compete at the same time. The results are compiled by swimmer time after all heats in the event are completed.

**Heat Sheets:** The swim meet program that includes information such as the name of the events, heats, lanes, swimmers, and seed times.

**IM:** Slang for Individual Medley, an event in which the swimmer uses all four strokes in the following order: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Freestyle. Many swimmers use this saying to remember the order, "Butter your Back and your Breast will be Free".

**Lane:** The specific area in which the swimmer is assigned to swim, i.e., lane 1, lane 2, etc.

**Lap Counter:** A set of plastic display numbers used to keep track of laps during a distance race. (Also, the person who counts for the swimmer, stationed at the opposite end of from the start.)

**LC:** Long Course

**LCM:** Long Course Meters, 50 meters.

**Leg:** The part of a relay event that is swum by a single team member.

**Long Course:** A 50-meter pool. USA Swim conducts most of its summer competitions in long course pools.

**Medley Relay:** A group of four swimmers each swimming different strokes in an event, the order of the strokes are as follows: Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, and Freestyle.

**Meet:** Competition designed to be a learning experience. By implementing what has been learned in practice, the swimmer tests himself against the clock to see how he is improving.

**No Time (NT):** Seed time is entered as "No Time" if a swimmer has never swum an event before.

**Official:** A judge on the deck of the pool at a sanctioned competition who enforces USA Swimming rules. There are stroke and turn judges, administrative officials, starters, and referees.

**Pace Clock:** A highly visible clock positioned around the sides of a swimming pool so that swimmers can read their times while swimming.

**Pentathlon:** A meet in which each swimmer participates in 5 events, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, Freestyle, and Individual Medley.

**Relay:** An event in which four swimmers compete together as a team to achieve one time.

**Sanctioned Meet:** A meet that is approved by CT Swim which it is held and is conducted according to USA Swimming rules.

**SC:** Short Course

**SCM:** Short Course Meters, 25 meters.

**SCY:** Short Course Yards, 25 yards.

**Seeding:** Swimmers are arranged in heats in events according to submitted times and heat sheets are prepared prior to the day of competition.

**Short Course:** A 25 yard or 25 meter pool. USA Swim conducts most of its winter competitions in short course pools.

**Sprint:** In training, to swim as fast as possible for a short distance.

**Starting Blocks:** Platforms from which the swimmer enters the water at the beginning of an event.

**Streamline:** The position used to gain maximum distance during a start and/or push off from the wall in which the swimmer's body is as tight as it can be.

**SWIMS:** The USA Swimming SWIMS Database is the primary database used to determine if a swimmer meets the Time Standard eligibility requirements to participate in a meet.

**Timers:** Volunteers who time swimmers in a specific lane during a swim meet.

**Touch Pad:** A large sensitive board at the end of each lane where a swimmer's touch is registered and sent electronically to the timing system.

**Unattached:** An athlete who competes but does not represent a club.

**Unofficial Time:** The time displayed on a read out board or read over the intercom before it has been validated to be official.

**Warm down:** Low-intensity swimming used by a swimmer after a race or main practice set to rid the body of excess lactic acid, and to gradually reduce heart rate and respiration.

**Warm-up:** Low intensity swimming used by swimmers prior to a main practice set or race to get muscles loose and warm and gradually increase heart rate and respiration.

**Q-Time:** Qualifying time necessary to compete in a particular event and/or competition. A "cut".