



Swim Meet Guide

What to Bring

- A minimum of 2 towels per day
- Team or other approved suit, team cap, team t-shirt, goggles
- Cash to buy heat sheets, snacks, water bottles, replace broken goggles, etc.
- Water bottles and nutritious snacks
- Sunscreen and shading devices (hats, umbrellas, tents) if it's an outdoor meet

Warm clothing for the swimmer, even during the summer, usually sweatshirts and pants, sometimes long-sleeved T-shirts, flannel pajamas, special swim parkas, socks and shoes. You will learn what your swimmer prefers over time, but warm clothes for both top and bottom are essential. Your child will also need socks and waterproof shoes. Label everything—kids lose things!

Optional items: Sleeping bags/blankets, tents, stadium chairs or foldout chairs, portable stereos (ONLY if they come with headphones), games, and books. Stadium chairs/cushions for parents are very helpful as bleachers become quite uncomfortable after a few hours. (As an alternative to sitting for hours, volunteer to time or officiate!)

Parents and other non-swimmers should dress lightly. It's hot and humid at pools. T-shirts and shorts are appropriate even at winter meets—layering is key to being comfortable both outdoors and inside the meet. Wear shoes that can get wet.

Usually by the same week as a meet, a meet information form will be posted on the PAC website. It lists warm-up times for each day, and gives brief directions to the pool. Be on the lookout at the PAC website—it is the team's effort to help you get to the right place at the right time!

Swimmers are responsible for their own transportation to and from most meets. Watch for e-mails from other parents who would like to carpool to away meets.

Time it so that you arrive 15 minutes before warm-ups begin so that you have time to check the heat sheet and check with the coach about relays and warm-up procedures.

If your swimmer is unable to attend a meet at the last minute due to illness or emergency, notify the coaches immediately. If you have some advance notice, e-mail or cell phones are good avenues. If you have little advance notice, tell another parent who is attending the meet, and ask them to convey the message to the coach as soon as they arrive. Realize that the team is still responsible for meet expenses with a late cancelation, so you will be billed as though your swimmer had participated in the meet.

Once You Arrive

Check-in with coaches, warm-up. Warm-ups occur before all meets and last 30-60 minutes. There is a 5-30 minute break between warm-up time and the time the meet begins. Please note that the time consumed by warm-ups and the break is added to the time consumed by the meet itself. In other words, if it's a 4-hour meet, you'll be at the pool for at least 5 hours.

Locate and purchase a heat sheet. Upon arrival at the meet, swimmers should locate and check the heat sheet. All meets post heat sheets on the walls. Find the posting. At some meets, heat sheets are given away, but in limited quantities. At most meets, heat sheets are sold, for prices ranging from \$5-10. You will refer to it repeatedly, especially if your swimmer has siblings or friends and you are tracking multiple swimmers. Some families share heat sheets and mark different swimmer's events in different colored highlighters. If there are discrepancies between what a swimmer expects to swim and what appears on the heat sheet, contact the coach immediately.

Many young swimmers write their meet information on their hands, listing the event number, heat, lane and stroke abbreviation in a table with headings listed E, H, L, and S and each event taking up a row in this little table. Writing it on the hand ensures that your swimmer will not lose the information. If this isn't clear to you, look for some experienced swimmers at the meet who can provide an example for you, or even do it for you the first time.

Check with the coach about relays. Posted relay information may not be complete—e.g. it may say PAC A team, but may not tell which 4 swimmers are on the PAC A relay team for today. The meet coach will have that information.

Your coach may not be at the meet. Especially for dual meets, only 1-2 coaches may attend. Please treat the coach at the meet as YOUR coach. The swimmer should check in with a coach before warm-ups and before and after each swim. The meet coach will be studying your swimmer during the swim and will have some tips for improvement.

Swimmers are divided into age and gender groups: Boys and Girls for each age category 8 & under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14 and 15 & over. Swimmers typically compete only against others in their age and gender groupings, but for some meets or events, age groups and genders are combined. Events at a meet are typically organized such that all age/gender groups swimming a particular stroke and distance combination swim it consecutively. So, if the first event is 50 freestyle, the event order will typically be Event 1: 8 & Under girls 50 free, Event 2: 8 & Under boys 50 free, Event 3: 9-10 girls 50 free, Event 4: 9-10 boys 50 free, etc.

The swimmer is responsible to listen to the announcer for upcoming events and to report to the correct lane in time for each event. A young swimmer should plan to check in with the coach 1-2 events prior to theirs for some last-minute tips, and should get behind the blocks at least 1-2 heats before theirs. 8 & Under swimmers generally report to a Bull Pen after checking in with the coach, and an adult will guide them to the proper lane.

After the event is swum, the swimmer should ask the lane timer for his or her time. The swimmer should then report to the coach for feedback about the swim.

DO NOT LEAVE THE MEET until you have checked in with the coach. Sometimes last minute changes are made in relay team composition and the coach may need you!!

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

Relay Team Selection

Final selection of relay team members is the responsibility of the coaches attending the meet. Coaches will select relays using the swimmers listed on the PAC master entry sheet. If a swimmer enters a meet late, their name will not appear on the master entry sheet and they may not be considered for a relay. Relays are typically the four fastest swimmers, but can be based on best times, swimmer performance and coach's discretion.

Preliminaries and Finals

Championship meets sometimes have 2 rounds of competition. In the morning, all swimmers compete in the Preliminary Session. The top swimmers from each event are invited to swim the same events again, in Finals, either later the same day or the next day, depending on the structure of the meet. The number of swimmers invited to participate in finals depends on the number of lanes in the pool, and on whether a consolation heat is swum. A consolation heat includes the second fastest group of swimmers in each event. Team points are only earned in the championship finals for these meets. Each swimmer who qualifies for finals must either swim, scratch, or risk disqualification from the meet. The coach will assume you are swimming unless you scratch within 30 minutes after the results are posted. There is usually a person assigned to sit at a table to record scratches (the clerk of course). If you do not scratch, and you do not swim, you may be disqualified from the remainder of the meet. If you do not know how to scratch, contact your coach. If you are in doubt whether you qualified for finals, check in with the coach. Check in with your coach before leaving.

Check-in Events and Deck Seeded Meets

Usually, 400 IM's and distances over 500 yards (400 meters) are check-in events. These events require check-in because they consume a lot of time, and it is desirable to avoid empty lanes (and perhaps extra heats) by only swimming the number of heats necessary to accommodate the swimmers who actually appear at the meet. At some sessions for 13 & Over swimmers all events require a check-in. Swimmers are ultimately responsible for the check-in process, though coaches will sometimes help. Swimmers and coaches are notified in advance regarding check-in deadlines. A swimmer who checks in and misses the event may automatically be scratched from the next individual event.

Meet Awards

Swim meets are scored for both individuals and teams. At most dual meets no awards are given. However, dual meets offer the opportunity to earn qualifying times for championship meets. Invitational meets generally award ribbons or medals to individuals and relay teams, and

trophies to the top teams. Meets vary regarding how many individual and relay awards they provide, ranging from the top 3 to the top 16.

Receiving Awards

When awards are presented at a meet, it is customary for swimmers to be prompt and act with dignity and respect at the presentation. Team attire should be worn at the presentation. PAC warm-up Jacket is ideal; a team t-shirt is also appropriate. Swimmers should be polite and modestly thankful for awards they receive. It is appropriate to congratulate other swimmers and to receive congratulations with poise and a “thank you”. Good sportsmanship is essential. If photos are being taken, swimmers should remain until the photography is complete.

PAC Team Swimwear Policy

All team members should wear a PAC team suit or other coach-approved suit, at all swim meets. The team suit is a solid Navy or Black Arena suit. Boys may elect either a “jammer” or brief. For practices, swimmers can wear any color competition-style swimsuit.

