

## **Backstroke Rules:**

Backstroke, as implied by the name, is swum on the back and uses the arms and kick for propulsion.

Backstroke is the only stroke that requires swimmers line up in the water facing the start end of a lane, with both hands on the gutter or the starting grips of a backstroke ledge. Swimmers' toes may not be in, on, above, or bent over the lip of the gutter.

Any type of stroke may be used, as long as the swimmer is on the back. Most of the time, swimmers use an alternating arm stroke.

Any type of kick may be used; however, most swimmers use an alternating kick.

After the start and after each turn, the swimmer may be completely submerged, but the head must break the surface of the water no further than 15 meters from the wall. Once the swimmer breaks the surface, they may not be completely submerged until the next turn or the finish.

Swimmers are required to be on their back during the entire swim, unless they are turning. During turns, they may turn onto the breast/stomach to execute the turn. (Note: Turns this way are not required. Beginner swimmers may choose to remain on their back all the way until they touch the wall and then turn around). If making turns over onto the breast/stomach, the turning motion must be immediate, continuous, and without delay. This may be initiated by an immediate single arm stroke or a stroke using both arms simultaneously, followed by an immediate turning action.

Either way the turn is done, some part of the body must touch the wall, **BEFORE** the swimmer changes direction, and the swimmer must be on their back immediately after leaving the wall. Any delay in the turning results in a disqualification (DQ). Therefore, practicing turns are crucial.