

ORCA Swim Team Questions & Answer for New Families

General:

Q: Do I have to be a member of the pool?

A: Yes, you must be a member of the pool and can do this one of two ways: become a member with a bond or by buying a trial membership, called Test the Waters which can be done only 1 year.

Q: What swim experience do they need? Do they need to know all the strokes?

A: Some swim experience is ideal. Most new swim team members have taken swimming lessons. They should know how to do either freestyle or backstroke across the length of the pool (25 yds).

Q: What if our kids are not sure about swim team? Can they try it?

A: We encourage kids to try swim team and if they feel it's not right for them, you can get your money back. Rule of thumb is they should make this decision before the first swim meet.

Q: What and when is the banquet?

A: The banquet is our swim team awards night. The kids receive their trophies and ribbons from their conference meet as well as other various awards and recognitions. There is a cost for the banquet dinner. It is always held the night of the Gold Conference meet at the Oaks Recreational Club.

Q: What and when is the potluck/sign making?

A: The potluck has become a tradition where Orca families bring food to share and make posters to cheer on the swimmers at the conference meets. This fun event is held the night before the Silver Conference meet at the pool.

Q: What should we bring to meets?

A: Sweats, as it gets cold at night early in the season, at least 2 towels, chairs, sharpie markers to write the swimmers' events, entertainment for kids while not swimming, & snacks.

Gear:

Q: Do we have to buy the team swimsuit?

A: Swimmers do NOT need to buy the official Orca team suit. Suits that are Orca colors, black and/or green, are acceptable for swim meets.

Q: Do they have to wear a swim cap?

A: Caps are not required although recommended since it makes it easier to spot Orca swimmers. Orca swim caps are always for sale at the concession stand!

Practice:

Q: How do we know which practice our 8 & under kids should go to?

A: Sign up for which practice you think your child should be at and adjustments will be made by the head coach as needed. First time swimmers who are 8 & under typically attend the 8 & Under Beginner practice time.

Q: Do parents need to stay for practices?

A: Parents/Guardians are not allowed on deck for practice. We will schedule some time for parents to talk to coaches.

Q: What happens if it's storming during practice? How will we know if it's cancelled?

A: If it's bad weather practice may be canceled. If it's cancelled an email and/or text will go out letting parents know.

Q: What is dryland practice?

A: Any activity not performed in the pool, with the purpose of improving swim performance is a form of dry-land swim training. This can include stretches or running as well as team development games.

Q: What and when is dive practice?

A: Dive practice are optional practices that allow 10 and under swimmers to work on their starts. This takes place on select Fridays and is announced via email. Normally this happens after Thursday home meets because the starting blocks can then be left up for this purpose.

Swim meets:

Q: How do we notify you if our kids can't be at a swim meet? By when do we need to notify the coach if our swimmer can no longer attend a meet?

A: All swimmers need to declare if they will attend or decline a swim meet 2 days before the swim meet. This can be done on the TeamUnify site.

Q: How late do meets go? Do we have to stay until the end?

A: Normal dual (two team) meets last from 6:30 – 9 pm. You should stay until your child has completed all their events, but do not need to stay to the end of the meet.

Q: Can they swim at a meet if they missed practice that morning?

A: Yes, they can swim at a meet even if they miss practice. Summer is a busy time with vacations, camps, and other activities but they are always welcome to swim at a meet if they are available.

Q: How far are the away meets?

A: Two are very close; just up Eola and two are Downers Grove/Darien and 1 is in Lisle.

Q: How many events will my child swim?

A: We try to get them in as many as possible but this depends on the pool size (4 lane vs. 6 lane) and the size the ORCA team as well as their swimming ability.

Q: How do I know what my kids are swimming at the meet?

A: This is posted on the website before the meet and also posted near the team area (on the widow at the Oaks) at the meets.

Q: How many meets do I have to volunteer for? Is it per kid or family? How many home vs away?

A: The volunteer requirement is per family not per kid. You have to volunteer for 4 job volunteer spots (3 home and 1 away).

Q: What does it mean if my swimmer gets DQed?

A: DQed is an abbreviation for disqualified. It means the swimmer did not swim the stroke legally. If you have questions about why your child got disqualified or how to correct their stroke, you should reach out to the head coach or swimmer's coach. There is a [stroke briefing](#) which describes what stroke and turn officials are looking for when they observe a swimmer.

Q: What is an Intrasquad meet?

A: This is a meet that has ORCA swimmers only. Ribbons are not awarded but times count for the conference meet and the meet counts as a home meet for conference. This meet requires many more ORCA volunteers since we do not have another team to help.

Q: How many meets does my kid need to swim at to be able to swim at a conference meet?

A: They need to swim at 3 meets (Intrasquad meets count but time trials do NOT). One of the meets must be an away meet.

Q: What is the difference between the Silver and Gold Conference meets?

A: Gold Conference meet is the meet where the fastest swimmers for each event attend. Silver is the other conference meet that swimmers not swimming in Gold are invited to attend. All 13 and up swimmers will attend Gold Conference.

Q: When will I know which conference meet my kid will be swimming at?

A: Normally this is decided the week before the conference meets. All 13 and up swimmers will attend Gold Conference.

Q: Do I have to volunteer at the conference meets in addition to the dual meets?

A: Everyone who has a child swimming at a conference meet must also volunteer at a conference meet. This is **completely separate** from the normal meet volunteering. Some parents choose to volunteer at the opposite meet from where their child is swimming so they don't have to divide their attention. This is completely up to the family.