

## Reasons Your Swimmer May Have Been Disqualified

**FREESTYLE** - This is the hardest stroke to be disqualified in because there are no real stroke rules. Still, it happens.

1. Failing to touch the wall on the turn in a multi-lap race.
2. Pulling the lane line to gain advantage.
3. Swimming underwater after having surfaced from the start. Very small kids do this sometimes because it is easier for them to swim underwater and pop up to breathe than it is to swim on the surface the whole way. --\_---\_----\_---
4. Standing on the bottom and pushing off the bottom to continue swimming. (Standing is legal, but pushing off isn't - to avoid a DQ, a swimmer who has stood on the bottom would have to FLOAT back to the surface and start swimming without pushing forward off the bottom.)

**BACKSTROKE** - Similar to the rules for freestyle, except athletes have to stay on their backs (with the exception of turns in multi-lap races.)

1. Rolling onto the stomach before completing a one-lap race, or on the finish of a multi-lap race, is a DQ. (This is defined as turning past the vertical-if you are flat on your back, you can't roll more than 90 degrees, or you are more on your stomach than on your back.)
2. THE TURN—This is tricky, but the rule is that as long as they are past the flags, swimmers can roll to their stomachs, take one stroke (either with one arm pull down or both arms together) and, do a flip turn and then push off the wall on their back. They must be on their back by the time their feet leave the wall.
3. On the start, the swimmer must surface no more than 15 yards from the starting wall (for older swimmers who do lots of underwater butterfly kicking at the start of a race.)
4. At the finish, the swimmer cannot be completely submerged.

## BUTTERFLY

1. One big problem for most young swimmers is the touch on turns and on the finish—both hands must touch simultaneously, although they do NOT have to be on the same plane. On turns, swimmers can dip a shoulder as long as their hands touch together. Then, they can drop one hand to do the turn. On the finish, shoulders must be on the plane of the water, but hands can simultaneously touch at different depths.
2. The feet have to kick together. They can be separated slightly, but they have to stay that way. If the feet start crossing, it's no longer a dolphin kick, it's a flutter kick—and it's a DQ.
3. Swimmers can start a race with a series of dolphin kicks under or above the water.

4. Some young swimmers get DQ'd for an underwater recovery—you can't pull down and then recover your arms for the next stroke under the water. If you do, you're essentially doing breaststroke, not butterfly.
5. Swimmers that do not have both arms in unison are in danger of DQ.

**BREASTSTROKE** - This can be the most challenging stroke to get right.

1. The biggest problem for young swimmers is the kick—both feet have to be turned OUT in a whip-kick style. Lots of young swimmers turn out one foot, but not the other.
2. The second big problem for young swimmers is the touch on turns and on the finish—both hands must touch simultaneously. Swimmers can dip a shoulder on a turn like in the butterfly (not past vertical), but their shoulders have to be on the plane of the water for the finish (no shoulder dipping). Both arms must be in unison.
3. The third big problem—only one pull-down stroke and one kick allowed on the start. Multiple underwater strokes result in a DQ, because the swimmer's head must be above the surface of the water at some point during each stroke cycle. (In other words, swimmers can't go underwater for two or more strokes at a time, during the start sequence or during the race).
4. Except on the start pull-down, swimmers cannot pull beyond the waistline or hips.
5. A stroke cycle has to be completed. If a swimmer is close to the wall, takes an arms-only quick stroke but doesn't kick, that's a DQ. (Advice—swimmers should GLIDE to the finish instead of trying to sneak in a quick stroke right at the wall).

## INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY

1. All the stroke rules apply during that segment of the race.
2. The order of strokes has to be butterfly, back, breast, free.
3. On turns, swimmers must complete each stroke the way they would complete a race doing that stroke. In other words, the butterfly to backstroke turn must incorporate a butterfly FINISH, and then a transition to backstroke that puts the swimmer on his back before the feet leave the wall.

## RELAYS

1. All relevant stroke rules apply while swimmers are in the water.
2. In a medley relay the swimmers have to complete the strokes in the correct order (Back, breast, butterfly, free)
3. Early takeoffs are not allowed. The judges will be looking for the outgoing swimmers feet to leave the wall, if they look down and see that the incoming swimmer has not yet touched then and early takeoff will be recorded. Two judges have to see and record this before it becomes an official DQ.