

Relays are a fun and exciting event for swimmers of all ages, since teammates get the opportunity to race with each other as opposed to against each other. On our team, we take extra time to ensure that we provide a fair system to determine which swimmers will give each relay the best chance to succeed. This is done by a simple method of using swimmer's best times to determine relay order and grouping (A, B, C...). To illustrate this, we will use the 200 Freestyle relay and the 200 Medley Relay.

For the purpose of this illustration, we will assume that we have entered 2 relays for the 200 Freestyle relay and there are 10 swimmers in attendance for the appropriate age group. Below you will see the swimmers best 50 Freestyle times.

Swimmer 1: 31.82	Swimmer 6: 30.98
Swimmer 2: 29.01	Swimmer 7: 29.65
Swimmer 3: 27.90	Swimmer 8: 30.73
Swimmer 4: 30.73	Swimmer 9: 27.67
Swimmer 5: 32.16	Swimmer 10: 32.03

In order to form the fastest relay possible, the first 4 fastest times would determine the swimmers used on the "A Relay", and the second 4 fastest times would determine the swimmers on the "B Relay". Therefore the "A Relay" would consist of Swimmers 9, 3, 2, and 7. The "B Relay" would consist of Swimmers 8, 4, 6, and 1. Since there are only enough swimmers to make 2 relays, swimmers 5 and 10 are encouraged to cheer for their teammates and continue to strive to improve at practice.

The 200 Medley Relay gets a little more complicated, as we must evaluate the best times in each stroke for each swimmer and combine them to create the fastest relay possible. Often times, creating the fastest relay possible may not mean that a swimmer performs his or her "best" stroke.

For this illustration we will look at 4 swimmers times across 50s of each stroke to determine the best relay possible.

Swimmer	50 Butterfly	50 Backstroke	50 Breaststroke	50 Freestyle
Swimmer 1	33.31	36.28	36.84	29.01
Swimmer 2	31.15	33.81	38.06	29.76
Swimmer 3	31.12	30.46	38.75	30.73
Swimmer 4	33.15	34.75	35.31	27.90

Based on these times, the fastest relay possible would be:

Backstroke: Swimmer 3      Breaststroke: Swimmer 4      Butterfly: Swimmer 2  
 Freestyle: Swimmer 1      Relay Time: 2:05.93

This relays shows that even though Swimmer 1 considers Breaststroke his or her "best" stroke, and Swimmer 4 considers Freestyle his or her "best" stroke, the fastest relay actually has them swimming other strokes. Here is what it would look like if each swimmer swam their "best" stroke:

Backstroke: Swimmer 3      Breaststroke: Swimmer 1      Butterfly: Swimmer 2  
 Freestyle: Swimmer 4      Relay Time: 2:06.35

Occasionally there are instances where the coaching staff may deviate from this system. These instances include: illness, injury, event order, etc. Regardless, please know that the coaching staff takes great care to ensure the fair success of every swimmer on the team.