

Hello 757swim Family,

I hope everyone's been doing well. Today I'd like to talk about and share some videos on underwater dolphin kicking. If your child swam in one of my groups back in the fall, this was the topic of one of our weekly articles. Not everyone was in one of my groups at the time though, and since underwater dolphin kicking is the absolute, most important skill in swimming, I thought it wouldn't hurt to talk about it again.

First, here's the video that I shared in the fall: <https://youtu.be/Vox9KOxC1ZA>
In this race, Hill Taylor knowingly disqualifies to prove a point. By just kicking underwater he crushed his competition and shattered the world record at the time. It's a great visual on the importance of underwater dolphin kicking.

Our next video from Olympian, Chole Sutton, is a great overview of how to improve your underwater dolphin kick. She starts with the importance of a tight streamline and adds layers on top of that. Depending on your child's practice group they will have seen most of her progression at some point, but she does a great job of putting everything together with the underwater dolphin kick focus (Turn your volume down before clicking. The audio of this video is loud): https://youtu.be/bu1SVg2zW_k

During Chloe's lesson she mentioned distance per kick. How I explain dolphin kicking is that it is a combination of two 'R's, Range and Rate. Chloe started out by focusing on the range of her kick with the fish kick drill. She continues to focus on her range with what she calls caterpillar drill (we call that tipping). Misty Hyman who was at one point one of the best underwater dolphin kickers in the world does an exceptional job of demonstrating an impressive range fish kicking here during one of her clinics: <https://youtu.be/-fJ2Wcj5P0c>

The fish kicking drill is a teaching tool to help swimmers develop their range. However, actual underwater dolphin kicking should not start from your fingertips, but rather your chest. You will see that in our next video with Michael Phelps and his coach, Bob Bowman: <https://youtu.be/Bepnpr5bD0M>

Bowman mentions how athletes will vary with how they do their underwater dolphin kicks which brings me to my 2nd 'R', Rate. Rate is the tempo at which a swimmer performs their kicks with a faster rate being better. ...so we want to have great range and great tempo with our dolphin kicks. The problem is that these two things fight against each other. It is relatively easy to have a big range of kick at a slow tempo, and it is easy to have a fast rate of kick with a small range. Increasing one R causes the other to diminish. Both need to be practiced and improved upon, but as Bowman said, every individual athlete will have their own sweet spot for range and rate to give them their optimal dolphin kick.

My last video is geared more towards older swimmers and does a great job in going into the science of everything: <https://youtu.be/vY6GxQqAkuQ>

I highly recommend it to at least our Gold and Silver practice groups.

Thanks for taking the time to read and watch. I hope everyone has a great rest of the week, and as always, please let me know if you have any questions!

-Mike

P.S. Yesterday was so much fun. We loved getting to see you all again!