

Competitive Swim Events

Freestyle – Swimmer may swim any stroke desired however, the usual stroke is the front crawl. This stroke is characterized by alternating overhead motion by the arms and an alternating “flutter” kick while on the stomach. This is the fastest stroke in all of swimming.

Backstroke – Swimmer must stay on the back during the entire race. The stroke is signified by an alternating overhead motion by the arms and flutter kick performed face up. Swimmers must surface within 15 yards of the start or after a turn in the race.

Breaststroke – Considered one of the most difficult strokes to execute and master. This stroke requires symmetrical and simultaneous movement of the arms on the same horizontal plane. Hands are pushed forward together from the chest under the surface of the water, then separate to pull back to the starting point. Hands may not pass the hip. The whip kick consists of bent legs “whipping” around separately in a circle to touch feet together. At each turn, a swimmer must touch the wall with both hands at the same time.

Butterfly – The most physically demanding stroke. Executed by symmetrical overhead stroke combined with a “dolphin” kick in which legs stay together moving from the hip. Hands must touch the wall simultaneously at turns and finish.

Individual Medley – Commonly referred to as the “IM” and features one swimmer completing all four competitive strokes in designated order: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle (anything not already swum, usually is Front crawl).

Medley Relay – Four different swimmers performing all four competitive strokes in designated order: Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, Freestyle (usually Front crawl). No swimmer may swim more than one leg of the relay. Each swimmer must time water entry such that it does not occur before the previous swimmer touches the wall.

Freestyle Relay – Four swimmers swim any stroke, generally the fastest stroke, the Front Crawl. Swimmers are generally placed in order with the fastest athlete swimming the last leg. Each swimmer may not touch the water until the previous swimmer touches the wall.