

Great Breaststroke Timing

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by Russell Mark 3/12/2012)

Video of the best breaststrokers breaks down like this:

- The legs remain extended back, and the feet don't start to come up to set up the kick until the arms are turning the corner to start the recovery.
- The feet push back on the water at the end of the recovery when the arms are extended in front and the head is in line.

Their **arms pull while their legs are streamlined**, and the legs kick while their upper body is streamlined. Now THAT makes sense! You'll get the most benefit from the arms and legs since they won't be working against each other.

Obviously all of this happens seamlessly in quick succession. Two things are necessary to do this well:

1. **Fast heel speed.** The feet need to come up very fast since the legs remain extended until mid-way through the arm pull. One US Olympic medalist talks about really feeling it in their hamstrings because of how much he emphasizes bringing the feet up fast.
2. **Press your upper body forward during the recovery.** Video shows that kick timing is determined by the upper body getting in line, not the arms extended forward. The legs won't start pushing back until the upper body is in line, so when people think that the kick happens late, it's really that the upper body is late. Press the upper body forward to have the best overall stroke and timing.

The pictures below are of some of the best American breaststrokers of all-time. On the left, notice where the hands are when the knees start to bend and the feet start to come up. On the right, notice where the arms and upper body/head are when the feet start to push back.

