

Learn to Swim Program

Levels of Instruction The Mendon Town Beach Learn-to-Swim program is divided into six course levels. The list below outlines skills that participants must successfully demonstrate in order to complete each level and move to the next.

Level I: Water Exploration

Purpose: Orient to aquatic environment; create a sound foundation for aquatic and safety skills.

- Understand the basic water safety rules
- Know the fundamentals of using a life jacket
- Know how to handle a cramp
- Know how to get help
- Perform reaching assists without equipment
- Enter and exit water independently
- Fully submerge face for 3 seconds
- Blow bubbles
- Bounce in chest-deep water (bob) to chin level 10 times
- Walk 5 yards in chest-deep water, maintaining balance
- Float, while supported, on front & back
- Kick, while supported, on front & back
- Practice basic alternating arm action

Level II: Primary Skills

Purpose: Expand on fundamental aquatic locomotion and safety skills.

- Perform reaching & extension assist from deck
- Assist nonswimmer to feet
- Be familiar with rescue breathing
- Move from standing to horizontal position
- Hold breath and fully submerge head for 3 seconds
- Float or glide on front, unsupported, for 5 seconds
- Float or glide on back, unsupported, for 5 seconds
- Submerge to retrieve object in chest-deep water
- Explore deep water, with floatation support
- Enter pool into chest-deep water and stand
- Perform flutter kick on front & back (support optional)
- Turn over from front to back and back to front
- Float on back while finning with hands
- Practice back crawl arm action
- Perform combined (kick & arms) stroke front, 5 yards
- Perform combined (kick & arms) stroke back, 5 yards)

Level III: Stroke Readiness

Purpose: Increase swimming skill competency; practice safety and non-swimming rescue skills.

- Understand safe diving rules
- Bob in water slightly over head to travel to safe area
- Jump into deep water with life jacket on
- Jump into deep water from side of pool
- Demonstrate the Heat Escape Lessening Posture for 1 minute
- Perform "huddle" position with other participants for 1 minute
- Know how to open airway for rescue breathing
- Retrieve an object from the bottom in chest-deep water
- Perform 15 bobs in chest-deep water
- Do back crawl, 10 yards
- Do elementary backstroke kick, 10 yards
- Dive from the side of pool from kneeling and compact positions
- Tread water
- Reverse direction while swimming on back
- Coordinate arm stroke for front crawl while breathing to the front or side, 10 yards
- Perform front glide with push-off, 2 body lengths
- Perform back glide with push-off, 2 body lengths
- Reverse direction while swimming on front

Level IV: Stroke Development

Purpose: Develop confidence and competency in strokes and safety skills beyond preceding levels; introduce breaststroke and sidestroke.

- Become familiar with CPR
- Demonstrate Rescue Breathing (without mouth-to-mouth contact)
- Perform rotary breathing
- Practice deep water bobbing
- Experiment with buoyancy and floating position
- Demonstrate diving from pool side, from both stride and standing positions
- Practice treading water with a modified scissors, modified breaststroke and/or rotary kicks (2 minutes)
- Demonstrate turning at the wall
- Perform the following:
 - Front crawl, 25 yards with rotary breathing
 - Back crawl, 25 yards
 - Elementary backstroke, 10 yards
 - Scissor kick, 10 yards
 - Sculling on back 5 yards or 15 seconds
 - Breaststroke kick, 10 yards

Level V: Stroke Refinement

Purpose: Continue stroke refinement; introduce butterfly, surface dives and springboard diving.

- Understand rules for safe diving from board
- Know how to recognize spinal injury
- Know hip/shoulder support for spinal injury
- Continue refinement of front crawl, back crawl, elementary backstroke, breaststroke and sidestroke
- Demonstrate alternate breathing
- Swim under water 3 body lengths
- Tread water 2 minutes with 2 different kicks
- Demonstrate basic dives:
 - Standing front dive from diving board
 - Long, shallow dive
- Perform the following:
 - Feet-first surface dive
 - Breaststroke, 10 yards
 - Sidestroke, 10 yards
 - Elementary backstroke, 25 yards
 - Dolphin kick, 10 yards
 - Front crawl, 50 yards
 - Back crawl, 50 yards
 - Stride jump entry
 - Open turn on front and back

Level VI: Stroke Proficiency

Purpose: Develop maximum efficiency and endurance for strokes; introduce flip turns.

- Demonstrate throwing assists
- Know how to roll a spinal injury victim face up
- Perform turns:
 - Speed turn and pull-out for breaststroke
 - Sidestroke turn
 - Breaststroke turn
 - Flip turn for front crawl
- Tread water for 3 minutes, 1 minute without hands, 2 minutes with hands
- Demonstrate jump tuck from diving board
- Perform an approach and hurdle on diving board
- Perform pike surface dive & tuck surface dive
- Perform the following:
 - Front & back crawls, 100 yards each, with turns
 - Breaststroke & sidestroke, 25 yards each
 - Butterfly, 10 yards
 - Breaststroke & sidestroke turns