

COMPETITIVE SWIMMING PROGRAM OVERVIEW

GROUP DESCRIPTIONS

The following outlines the general descriptions and criteria used for placing swimmers into training groups. Group assignments are typically made at the conclusion of each season to ensure optimal placement for the upcoming season. However, swimmers may transition between groups during the season based on the criteria below and in consultation with their coach.

At the start of the season, swimmers will begin in their assigned groups. Over the first 6–8 weeks, coaches will evaluate individual swimmer needs and make adjustments as necessary to ensure appropriate group placement. Additional opportunities for group movement may occur at the end of December, March, and during the summer.

FOUR PILLARS OF GROUP PLACEMENT

PERFORMANCE	ATTITUDE & CHARACTER	SKILLS & TRAINING	COMMITMENT
As swimmers advance through the program, their performance outcomes play a significant role in shaping the structure and focus of their training plans. This is largely determined by the specific competitions they participate in. In the early stages of the sport, the primary objective is for swimmers to train for and compete in a variety of events, fostering versatility across different race formats. As swimmers mature, the focus of their competitive calendar shifts to key events within each training cycle, with these competitions taking place at various times and locations. It is essential to group swimmers who follow similar training plans and preparation timelines, as this approach enhances the likelihood of achieving optimal performance outcomes for each athlete.	A key factor that supports both training and performance throughout a swimmer's career is their ability to adapt to change. This includes evolving technical skills, managing stress and challenges, collaborating with coaches, and thriving within a team environment. Swimmers must recognize the importance of consistent, daily training and remain fully committed to giving their best effort at all times. Maturity in these areas develops at different rates for each individual, which is why we take a tailored approach to accommodate these variations.	At WS, we firmly believe that swimmers should prioritize the development of technical skills, particularly before the age of 13. Our Development and Youth programs are designed to progressively build on one another, enhancing technical proficiency at each stage. Once swimmers transition into the 13-and-over age groups (Junior & Senior), they face increased physical demands while maintaining a strong focus on technical excellence. Throughout a swimmer's career, training should follow a cyclical pattern of "Stimulation and Adaptation." This approach ensures that swimmers are initially challenged by new training streams, then given ample time to master the skills within those streams before advancing further.	At WS, we acknowledge that a swimming career can span over a decade or more. We believe that young swimmers should have the time and energy to explore other activities outside of the sport. However, as swimmers progress, the need for a more focused commitment to training and competition becomes essential for the continued development of their technical, tactical, physical, and mental skills. Thus, the ability to transition their lifestyle toward a more dedicated approach to swimming will be crucial for long-term success. This shift typically begins in the early teenage years and continues to evolve throughout adulthood.

COMPETITIVE SWIMMING PROGRAM OVERVIEW

GROUPS STRUCTURE OVERVIEW

PRE-COMP		COMPETITIVE STREAM						
12 & UNDER		10 & UNDER			11-12	13-15	15 & OVER	
Competitive Development	WS Pre-Comp 2X Swim / Week	Dev AOP 3-4X Swim / Week	Dev TPASC 3-4X Swim / Week	Dev WSC 3-4X Swim / Week	Youth Performance 6X Swim / Week * Consideration Times	Junior Performance 7-9X Swim / Week * Consideration Times	Senior Performance 7-9X Swim / Week * Consideration Times	Performance Pathway
					Youth 6X Swim / Week	Junior 6-7X Swim / Week	Senior 6-7X Swim / Week	Competitive Regional
					Youth Development 5X Swim / Week	Junior Lite 5X Swim / Week	Senior Lite 5X Swim / Week	Local FitSwim

* Consideration Times will be published at the conclusion of each season. They will be based on provincial ranking and in line with the Performance Pathway from Swimming Canada's Appropriate Athlete Development.

** Age will be calculated as of December 31 of the ongoing season.

COMPETITIVE SWIMMING PROGRAM OVERVIEW

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

SWIMMERS AGED 10 & UNDER

DEVELOPMENT	PERFORMANCE	ATTITUDE & CHARACTER	SKILLS & TRAINING	COMMITMENT
	Goal of competitions is to enjoy challenging themselves, seeking improvement and developing all four strokes.	Swimmers should learn to accept and understand technical feedback and practice implementing change often. Swimmers at this stage will begin to identify themselves as “swimmers” and should have a healthy enjoyment of their sport.	Primary focus for these swimmers will be improving technical competencies on all four strokes and skills.	Swimmers are encouraged to continue with other activities and communicate with coaches on conflicts that may arise from multi sport activity. Swimmers will begin to understand that improvements in technique require ongoing reliable commitment.



COMPETITIVE SWIMMING PROGRAM OVERVIEW

YOUTH PROGRAM SWIMMERS AGED 11-12

YOUTH	PERFORMANCE	ATTITUDE & CHARACTER	SKILLS & TRAINING	COMMITMENT
Youth Development	Goal of competitions is to enjoy challenging themselves, seeking improvement and developing all four strokes.	Swimmers should learn to accept and understand technical feedback and practice implementing change often. Swimmers at this stage will begin to identify themselves as "swimmers" and should have a healthy enjoyment of their sport.	Primary focus for these swimmers will be improving technical competencies on all four strokes and skills.	Swimmers are encouraged to continue with other activities and communicate with coaches on conflicts that may arise from multi sport activity. Swimmers will begin to understand that improvements in technique require ongoing reliable commitment.
Youth	Through this stream swimmers will strive to improve from Local to Regional Championships level performances and competitions.	Swimmers should enjoy being challenged in training and learn to embrace technical feedback as a means to improve in the sport. Developing strong bonds with teammates and coaches is an important part of long term success in swimming.	Primary focus for these swimmers will be improving technical competencies on all four strokes and skills. Increased training duration will have a positive effect on endurance. However specific endurance training is not the overriding outcome goal at the Youth level.	
Youth Performance	Through this stream swimmers will strive to improve from Regional to Provincial Championships level performances and competitions. * Consideration Time			At this stage swimmers should learn to balance school, other activities and swimming commitments. Long term improvement will come with understanding an increased level of commitment will be required at each successive stage.



COMPETITIVE SWIMMING PROGRAM OVERVIEW

JUNIOR PROGRAM

SWIMMERS AGED 13-15

JUNIOR	PERFORMANCE	ATTITUDE & CHARACTER	SKILLS & TRAINING	COMMITMENT
Junior Lite	Performing at Ontario Provincial and Regional Invitationals	Swimmers have shown a consistent desire to seek improvement and a willingness to develop new skills for adapting to training.	Working to develop technique at various training loads.	Swimmers are able to maintain commitment to both training and competing throughout an entire swimming season with a reduced training frequency.
Junior	Performing at Ontario Provincial and Regional Invitationals and at Regional Championships.			Swimmers continue to develop strategies to improve overall commitment to both training and competing throughout an entire swimming season.
Junior Performance	Performing at Swim Ontario Spring and Summer Championships. * Consideration Time	Swimmers who have shown an ability to develop skills such as 'embracing challenges' and intrinsic motivation. A willingness to work well with coaches and teammates.	Swimmers who have shown strong competencies in training and technique across multi strokes and various modes of training. Continuing to develop both endurance and speed in training.	Swimmers have shown a reliable level of commitment to training, dryland and competitions scheduled within each season.

Swimmers who are unable to consistently meet the expectations of their assigned training group may be asked to transition to a group better suited to their current abilities.



COMPETITIVE SWIMMING PROGRAM OVERVIEW

SENIOR PROGRAM

SWIMMERS AGED 15 & OVER

SENIOR	PERFORMANCE	ATTITUDE & CHARACTER	SKILLS & TRAINING	COMMITMENT
Senior Lite	Performing at Ontario Provincial and Regional Invitationals	Swimmers have shown a consistent desire to seek improvement and a willingness to develop new skills for adapting to training.	Working to develop technique at various training loads.	Swimmers are able to maintain commitment to both training and competing throughout an entire swimming season with a reduced training frequency.
Senior	Performing at Ontario Provincial and Regional Invitationals and at Regional Championships.			Swimmers continue to develop strategies to improve overall commitment to both training and competing throughout an entire swimming season.
Senior Performance	Performing at Swim Ontario Spring and Summer Championships and at National Championships. * Consideration Time	Swimmers who have shown in past seasons their ability to adapt to difficult situations, work enthusiastically with their coaches and teammates and have a willingness to embrace challenges.	Swimmers who have shown excellent training competencies, multi stroke technique, kicking, pulling. Both endurance and speed work have been well developed.	All swimmers in this stream have shown a year over year high level of attendance at training, dryland competitions and camps.

Swimmers who are unable to consistently meet the expectations of their assigned training group may be asked to transition to a group better suited to their current abilities.