



VICTORY AQUATICS

Setting Goals

Setting Goals With Your Swimmers

*Give a man a bow and arrow and tell him to, “**SHOOT!**” and his first response would be, “At what?” When there is no target there is no purpose for shooting. He could shoot the arrow anywhere and wherever the arrow ended up would be where the arrow ended up. Not much to it.*

On the other hand, if you gave the archer a target and challenged him to hit the bullseye – everything changes. You now gave him something to aim at, something to challenge his skills against, something to measure his progress with, and something that gives all of his effort – purpose. All by adding in a simple target.

*That’s what a goal does to a person’s life – **It changes everything.***

Why do you drag your swimmer to practice 5 days a week? Month in and month out? What are they training for? How do you measure your child’s progress? How does the swimmer know if they’ve achieved anything? Are they just training for **no purpose**? Or are they training to **hit the bullseye**?

So, how do they know if they’ve hit the bullseye? They go to swim meets! They achieve new times. They challenge themselves to reach new goals.

If you give the swimmer a time standard and challenge them to hit the goal – everything changes. You now give them something to aim at, something to challenge their skills against, something to measure their progress with, and something that gives all of their training – purpose. All by attending a swim meet!

*That’s what a swim meet does to a swimmer’s life – **It changes everything.***

Time Standards

The first step in setting goals is understanding the time standards.

Southern California Swimming (SCS) uses the USA Swimming Motivational Time Standards for regular Age Group meets and, each season, creates the SCS Time Standards for the invite and championship meets: WAG, SprAG, JAG, Elite, and SumAG. The time standards for SCS senior meets are set by the Senior committee or the meet.

Time standard sheets are available on our web page under the ‘Events’ tab. Laminated SCS meet time standards for WAG, SprAG, JAG, Elite, and SumAG will be available towards the end of September, beginning of October, after SCS sets the new standards for 2026 . The date on the bottom will identify the most current time standards.

Age Group Events for Times

The events that qualify for times vary with the age group. If your swimmer is entered in an event outside their age group the times don’t qualify.

Note: When a swimmer ages up to 13 and over the 50 Back, 50 Breast, 50 Fly, and 100 IM no longer qualify. 25 yard events do not qualify for Motivational times.



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A note about the USA Motivational Time Standards. USA Swimming issues the motivational time standards every four years. The current time standards, 2025-2028, expire at the end of 2028. Change in times could impact the swimmers qualifying category.

Creating a Goal Sheet

The next step in setting goals is to create a goal sheet. Coach Loren has goal sheets for both Senior Development and Age Group swimmers.

Here is an example of the goals sheet I created for my grandboys. I keep it updated with their goal times and their PB times. When a meet is posted we check out which events he qualifies for, which new events he needs, and which events he wants to go for a goal time.

For the meet I move their entered events to the top of the spreadsheet and put the events in order by the event #. The boys are always checking the sheet to keep track of the events they are swimming and the times they are trying for. After they swim they get their time and check to see if they reached their goals or how much more time they need to drop to get the time.

The columns are the times for the various time standards and championship level. The white line is the time standard. The blue line is Q when they qualify the time. The negative number is how much they need to drop to get the time.

Personal best times can be found on the member record under the Best Times tab or on USA Swimming / Individual Time Search.

	Event #	Personal Best time	Team Records	B	BB	A	AA	WAG
				Q	Q	Q	-0.75	-0.14
50 Free	# 4	25.34		29.89	27.79	25.69	24.59	25.20
				Q	Q	Q	-2.06	Q
100 Back	# 10	1:00.75	1:00.75	1:11.49	1:06.39	1:01.29	58.69	1:04.40

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It's OK to set end of season goals, but it's better to be SMART when setting goals/

SMART Goal Setting

S – Specific: Be clear and unambiguous when setting goals. Don't leave room for guessing.

M – Measurable: Set a goal that allows for measurement toward your swimmer's goals progress.

A – Attainable: Ask, "Is this realistic and attainable?" If not, back to the drawing board.

R – Relevant: Create a goal with importance and meaning. Make sure the effort is worth it to your swimmer.

T – Time-bound: Commit to short term, intermediate deadlines. Open-ended goals tend to go forgotten. Swim meet progress is a good, realistic deadline.

Current Swimmer Performance Spreadsheets

On the web site there is a lot of performance data under the performance tab. These spreadsheets contain the personal best times for each swimmer event. They are organized by roster group. NOTE: These times are personal best times. In order to qualify for the swim meet the time has to be achieved after a



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specified date. This date is defined in the meet sheet and, for the age group meets, is usually Sept 1 of the prior season, i.e. times for meets during the Sept 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026 season much have been achieved AFTER Sept 1, 2024. When setting goals it's always a good idea to make sure to keep event times current.

Wrap Up

“My grandsons always get excited when they get a new time cut or qualify for a championship or senior meet. Feelings of pride in their accomplishment radiate from their faces! I will never get tired of screaming my head off when they get those oh-so hard to get times. Even if they add time I will never get tired of cheering them on and giving them a high-five for trying their best. It's the best bonding experience in the world.”

GO THUNDERBOLTS!

