

Your First Swim Meet

Meet survival guide

We hope the following tips will help prepare you and your child for a more enjoyable meet experience. Meets are the first official recording of swim times. It is through the competition of a swim meet that many learn the value of sportsmanship. Swimmers will be applying techniques learned in practice to a competition with other swimmers of similar skill and ability. When competing for the first time, the swimmers need to focus on completing their races, completing them legally, and doing things right. It is Fusion's philosophy that each athlete competes against the clock as much as they compete with the others swimmers, developing a love for the sport and the pride that comes from self improvement.

When should I arrive?

The coach will give the swimmers instruction on arrival time before the day of the meet. Please make sure you know what time the coaches expect the swimmers to be ready for warm-ups. The warm up time is usually an hour prior to the beginning of the meet. By arriving early, you'll be able to find a good parking spot, and a good seat for the meet. Plus the swimmers will need time to change and get their gear together.

What do I do at the away meet?

At away meets we like parents and swimmers to sit together as a group. This will give families a perfect opportunity to get to know each other. The swimmers will have the opportunity to build camaraderie. If you participate in a portable hobby, bring it along. There will be quite a lot of "down" time between events. Reading, knitting, water-proof games (several companies now sell water-proof playing cards), etc are all great suggestions for keeping occupied. Occasionally, other teams may ask for help to run the meet.

What should my swimmer do when they are not swimming?

While swimmers are not swimming, they should rest and sit with their team. It's important that they are not wandering the facility, as they risk missing their swimming event. The events will proceed whether the swimmer is present or not and the swimmer is charged, whether they compete or not. It's important for them to be nearby and ready when their event time arrives. Parents will need to keep track of the events and make sure their child is ready at the right time. The team will have swimmers competing in practically every event, therefore the coaches remain on the side of the pool during the meet to support and encourage those swimmers in the water. The coaches cannot track down swimmers. There is usually a concession stand with snacks for the swimmers. Eating light is recommended and sticking with healthy snacks will help the swimmers perform at their best. Some families will pack their own water and snacks. Swimmers can pass the time with MP3 players, games, homework, reading, etc. Resting in

between events is strongly recommended. Please do not leave any valuables unattended, as it is possible that they might be lost, stolen, or damaged.

I want to be a supportive swim parent. How do I talk to my swimmer at a meet if they don't swim well?

Encourage your swimmer by letting them know they did their best, and that you are proud of them regardless of a win or a loss. Also, other swimmers will often support each other, sharing stories of their worst swim. Inevitably there are new swimmers who DQ (disqualify) in every event! It happens. Don't criticize their performance, since everyone has a bad day. Never yell or humiliate your swimmer. Give them a hug and let them know they will do better next time.

What else do I need to know?

Dress cool! Yes, even in the winter. Indoor pools are often kept warm, and will be even warmer with the presence of more people.

Bring a highlighter. You'll be able to buy a program which shows all the events for the meet. In the program, there will be a listing of the swimmer, which heat they are in, and what lane they are swimming in. Having a highlighter helps to distinguish which events your swimmer is competing in.

Make sure your swimmer brings extra clothes and towels. Extra towels are a must. After every event your swimmer will be wet and need to dry off. Generally, it's a good idea to have a least one towel for every 2 events. Having sweats or similar clothing to wear over the swimsuit is also helpful.