








Timer Briefing/Instructions

February 2026








In accordance with the US Centers for Safe Sport, phones and cameras are not allowed on deck.







Prior to meet start:

-  Ensure there are two timers, two watches, and one clipboard (with heat sheets) in each lane.
 -  One timer will have one watch and a clipboard and the other timer will have one watch and a wired button/plunger that is connected to the touchpad in the pool.
-  Know who the backup timer is in case your watch malfunctions.
-  Familiarize yourself with how the watch functions. Test your watch to ensure that it starts, stops, and clears.
-  Find out if backstroke ledges will be used and what type (retractable or manual).





Prior to each heat/race:

-  Clear your watch. Confirm that it reads all zeros.
-  Confirm the swimmer name (or names for a relay), event, and heat.
 -  If a swimmer presents that is not on the sheet, clarify the event and heat and write down their name and team. Do not prevent the swimmer from swimming.
 -  If more than one swimmer presents, please clarify with a meet official.
 -  If no swimmer presents, please write “no show” on the sheet.

At the start of each heat/race:

-  Upon hearing the series of short whistles, stand behind the blocks, ensuring that you have a clear view of the strobe light on top of the starting device.
-  When the starting device is sounded, start your watch when the strobe light flashes.
 -  Start your watch even if there is not a swimmer in your lane, in case another timer’s watch malfunctions and they need to trade watches.
 -  Check to ensure your watch is running. If your watch is not running or if it was started early or late, signal to the backup timer and exchange watches.
 -  If you are unable to get a replacement watch, write “watch error” on your sheet. Do not make up a time or write down the time on the scoreboard.
 -  BACKSTROKE EVENT (Using Manual ledges) – Remove ledge from the pool and place under starting block.

At the end of each heat/race:

-  At the end of the prescribed distance, stop your watch and press the pad button/plunger when any part of the swimmer touches the wall.
 -  It is critical that you stand at the very edge of the pool and look straight down to accurately see when any part of the swimmer touches the pool wall.
-  As soon as your swimmer has finished, write down the times from both watches on the sheet. Do not round any numbers. Please write the numbers legibly and clearly.
-  Clear your watch after the time has been correctly recorded on the sheet.

Thank you for your help!

This meet is conducted according to current USA Swimming rules, including the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy. Cameras (including cell phones) are not allowed behind the blocks or in locker rooms. Make sure all interactions with athletes are observable and interruptible. Deck changing is prohibited. Report instances of deck changing to the meet referee/meet director. If there is only one locker room/restroom, you must make sure you are not alone with an athlete in the locker room/restroom. Be proactive and tell the meet director immediately if this happens, even when it occurred through no fault of your own. If there is a separate locker room/restroom for athletes and all other adults, make sure that you are only using the facility marked for the non-athletes.