

Equipment Guide

Swim Cap Guide

Purpose:

- Protects your hair from the chlorine in swimming pools
- Keeps long hair out of the face
- Keeps your head warm when swimming in cold or open water
- Mandatory in many swimming pools to avoid that the water filters become clogged with hair
- Allows you to swim a bit faster, which is important in competitions. There are even competitive swimmers who wear two swim caps one on top of the other: one swim cap to cover the hair, then another one above the strap of the swim goggles to keep them in place and to further reduce drag.

Swim Caps	Latex	Silicone
Description	Made of latex rubber. They are very durable and are still the preferred kind of competitive swimmers	The most popular. They were developed as an alternative to people that are allergic to latex swim caps.
Advantages	Inexpensive and protects hair, tight fit for less drag, more comfortable to wear, you can write on them with marker.	Last longer than latex, thicker texture means keeping head warm in cold water. They protect the hair well against the water and are still flexible enough to be put on and removed with ease.
Disadvantages	Allergic to latex, difficult to put on, shortest life span of all the caps by tearing or chlorine damage. Does not keep warmth.	More expensive, it is thicker and less comfortable to latex, and slips a little more than latex.

Sizes and Shapes

- Swim caps for children that are smaller than the regular ones
- Swim caps of regular size for adults with short hair. They fit most head types as the swim caps can easily stretch to adapt to the individual head shape and size
- Swim caps for adults with long hair. They are usually an inch or two longer so that long hair is better trapped inside the swim cap. They tended to slip and let the hair out.
- The so-called bubble swim caps. These have a more helmet-like shape and their surface is covered with small bubbles. They cover long hair well. The look of those caps may not suit everyone's taste however.

Swim Cap Care

- Swim Caps do not need much care. After use, rinse them well under fresh water, then let them air dry, hanging for example on a washing line.
- The walls of latex swim caps have a tendency to stick together. To prevent this, after drying, coat the inside with some talcum powder before putting them into your swim bag.

Nose Clips Guide

Purpose: Swimming nose clips (also called nose plugs) are those little pieces of bent wire padded with rubber that you can stick on your nose and that are designed to keep the water out by squeezing the nostrils together. Nose clips are a great training tool.

Advantages:

- Prevents water going up the nose causing an uncomfortable weird feeling, thus healthful in introducing new techniques maneuvers/equipment causing a relaxed environment.
- If your nose is allergic to pool chemicals (e.g. chlorine), a clip might be the solution to keep those chemicals out

Disadvantages:

- Water might become trapped in the nose and can't evacuate.
- The oils on your nose can cause the nose clip to slip. (Can buy with a strap)
- Not everyone's nose structure can pinch correctly and slide off.

Types:

- Synchro Nose Clip: a metal clip with a rubber end. Super adjustable.
- Standard Nose Clip: made of metal and rubber with a headband attached to not lose it.
- Silicone Nose Clip: Anatomic design fits profile of the nose. Features soft, hypoallergenic silicone nose pads to offer maximum comfort.

Tip: Get a colorful one so if you lose it in the water you can easily find it. Buy multiple in case you lose it.



Synchro



Standard



Silicone

Goggles Guide

Purpose: If you are serious about learning how to swim, swimming goggles are also mandatory as they will allow you to put your head under water without getting water in the eyes. This will permit more relaxed and streamlined swimming.

3 Quick Tests to Assess the Goggles' Quality

- Are the lenses comfortable? Leave the straps off, and push the lenses against your eye sockets. This will give you a quick idea on if the lenses will be comfortable enough for you to be worn for an hour or two at the pool. The lenses will be more comfortable if they are padded with gaskets made of foam rubber or silicone. Also check that the nose bridge doesn't cut your nose and hurt
- Now push the lenses some more against the eye sockets, then release them. The goggles should stick on your face a few seconds thanks to the suction, even if the straps are off. If this isn't the case and the swim goggles fall off, they will leak water and be useless
- If the goggles pass the first two tests, put the straps on and see if the goggles are still comfortable. Check if the lenses don't suck too much on the eyes or that the straps must not be tightened too fast

Other Tips:

- Check if the straps can be easily adjusted and do not detach themselves too easily. Otherwise, you will quickly become frustrated when you try to adjust them at the pool.
- Are the lenses dark or light? If you swim outside or in bright environments dark lenses can be preferable
- Swim goggles come in a lot of sizes and shapes. Choosing the right ones is mostly a matter of personal preferences. However if you need to dive from starting blocks or do quick flip turns, be aware that larger goggles will slide more easily than smaller ones. Also avoid the bulk diving goggles
- Finally, make sure you feel good wearing those goggles.
- Keep extra nose pieces to replace. This lets you chose the nose piece that best suits your nose type, so this is definitely an advantage for this type of swim goggle
- Head Strap: You can buy separate straps and keep the lens to let your goggles last longer. There are budge or silicone.

Paddles Guide

Purpose: Hand paddles are often described as the swimmer's equivalent of the weight lifters dumbbells. The idea is that using them regularly will make your shoulders stronger and allow you to swim faster. They are also referred to as the "Fins" for your hands. They come in all different hand sizes.

Types:

- Flat Swim Paddles: come in many shapes and sizes; from triangular, to rectangular, to roughly hand-shaped. Some come with holes that allow water to flow through the blade, while others are solid.
- Ergonomic Paddles: reflect advances in design and comfort. With curves that mimic the natural shape of your hand when pulling underwater, and silhouettes that closely mirror the outline of your hands, these paddles allow swimmers to get the benefit of resistance training without disrupting technique.
- Specific-Use Paddles: Specific-use paddles are designed for use only during a single stroke or technique. There are several freestyle-only paddles. These usually feature a triangular design or fingertips only. Parents seem to buy these on accident a lot!



Flat Swim Paddles: Speedo I.M. Tech Paddle

For Our Purposes you want



Ergonomic Paddles: Finis Agility Hand Paddles

Pull Buoy Guide

Purpose: These are floatation devices designed to keep your legs up.

Types:

- One Piece: The more comfortable design is the "hour glass" shape
- Two Pieces: Two Styrofoam cylinders attached by a rope.

Other Tips: You do not want to purchase one too big. Then the swimmer will over float



For Our Purposes you want a One Piece Buoy: Speedo Team Pull Buoy

Fins Guide

Purpose: Fins are designed to help refine arm technique and body floatation

Types of Fins:

- Diving fins used by scuba divers, too long to be useful for regular swimming and can cause damage.
- Long blade swimming fins have been available for decades, and are still commonly used by swimmers. They are shorter than diving fins but still a bit too long for swimming
- Short blade creates resistance in the water while forcing the swimmer to use a faster kick. Short fins also help swimmers develop proper kicking tempo and technique. Most lap swimmers or swimmers on swim teams use these short "Zoomer" style fins.
- Mono fins and breaststroke fins are rarely used. Mono fins force swimmers to keep their feet together as they kick, enforcing correct butterfly/dolphin kick movements. Breaststroke fins are curved and allow swimmers to execute a correct breaststroke kick (impossible with traditional straight fins) while increasing resistance.

Tip: While choosing your fins in a shop make sure they have a tight fit (without hurting), as swimming fins are always more slippery and loose once you wear them in the water. DO NOT get fins with adjustable heel straps.

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Long Blade: RISE Elite Training Fin



Short Blade: Zoomers Gold Training Fins

Kick Board Guide

Purpose: can be useful when you are learning a new swimming stroke or want to improve your swimming technique.

Types:

- Traditional Adult: generally thick, highly buoyant, and rigid. Traditional kickboards are rectangular, with a slightly rounded front and concave bottom, and can be used by adult swimmers of all abilities. However, because of their buoyancy some swimmers complain of shoulder pain after long periods of use.
- Ergonomic & Streamlined Kickboards: perform the same function as traditional kickboards, but put less strain on the shoulders. Made with lighter foam and a more triangular (and therefore hydrodynamic) shape, ergonomic kickboards move through the water with less resistance and put less pressure on shoulders.
- Children: are lighter and smaller than adult kickboards. They are designed to be easy to grip.

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Alignment: FINIS Alignment Kickboard



Short: Speedo Junior Team Kickboard

Snorkel Guide

Purpose: A Snorkel's design to make it usable for high speed swimming in a hydrodynamic manner and focuses in swimming alignment while Swimmers can use snorkels for hypoxic training, stroke technique work, and overall aerobic training.

Key features:

- Spout size: Snorkels with a larger spout are great for beginners or open water swimmers who want more oxygen flow. There is no “right” size.
- Head piece + strap construction: Some snorkels, like the Speedo Bullet, have additional padding on the head piece. This extra cushion is great for younger swimmers, long distance athletes, and anyone looking for more comfort. Be sure to pay attention to the strap construction, since the athletes head size and personal preferences determine which strap style is most comfortable.
- Snorkel tube length + shape: The length and shape of the snorkel tube is important because it can create a better snorkel experience when practicing different strokes. Open water swimmers typically benefit from snorkels with longer tubes as they are better at preventing rough water from entering, helping them to break through heavy chop and high swells. Snorkels with shorter tubes are useful for younger or beginning swimmers as these types of snorkels are easier to control. Curved snorkel tubes that fit the shape of a swimmers head, like the Finis Freestyle Snorkel, are ideal for specific stroke technique work and long distance swimmers. The curved tube shape creates less interference on flip turns, which is excellent for distance freestylers and breaststrokers. The curved design reduces water entry so the swimmer can work on their technique without the worry of swallowing water while diving forward on the glide portion of each stroke.

Tip: For beginners use a nose clip until comfortable without.

For Our Purposes you want



Speedo Bullet Head Snorkel

ONE LAST AND FINAL THING:

Please make sure that once a season you take your equipment home and run it through the dishwasher and/or soak in vinegar/bleach.

Sources:

www.enjoy-swimming.com

www.swimoutlet.com

www.theswimteamstore.com