

Time Standards for Swim Meets

Many parents have approached me with the question of “What is a BB time?” or “What does B/C or A/BB mean when it is in the title of a meet?” so I want to provide a little crash course for those joining the swim family!

It is important to understand these time standards as they are used to qualify for different meets and especially useful if your swimmer is considering attending a Championship Meet towards the end of the season.

To begin with, all of these letters have a corresponding time according to our national organization, USA Swimming. Looking at the [pdf that outlines the 2021-2024 National Age Group Motivational Times](#). Within this document, you will find that the times standards are organized by gender, age group, and pool format. Pages 1-2 apply to Long Course Meters, Pages 3-4 are Short Course Meters, and pages 5-6 are Short Course Yards. Your swimmers will mostly be competing in the Short Course Yards format with an occasional summer meet taking place in the Long Course Meters format so please reference [pages 5 and 6](#) of the document.

When looking at the times in the chart, your swimmer will need to have a time that is equal to or faster than the time listed in order to have that qualifying time. For example, if my swimmer was an 11-year old boy, he would need to have a time of 32.59 or faster in the 50 Freestyle in order to have the ‘B’ time standard. However, as soon as he achieves a 30.29 or faster, he would have a ‘BB’ time standard. Therefore, in order to attain a certain time standard, you would need to have the minimum time listed or a faster time for that specific event.

In regards to swim meets, you may notice certain meets being listed as a B/C meet or A/BB meet. The first letter indicates the fastest time that you may have in order to compete at the meet while the second letter indicates the minimum time or slowest time that your swimmer needs in order to qualify. These are strictly the boundaries for the meet. Using the upcoming RSD All Ages A/BB Meet, in order for a swimmer to attend this meet, he/she must have at least a ‘BB’ time in the event while also not yet having a ‘AA’ time. They must have a ‘BB’ or ‘A’ time in the event that they wish to swim. Although this is just one example, every meet that is not ‘NTS (No Time Standard)’, will have time boundaries in order to qualify for the meet.

I hope this provides a greater understanding of the time standards discussed at practice and within meets as it is unique to our sport!