# **Invisible Swimming Training**

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***Swimmers need to receive the correct levels of nutrition and hydration, in combination with rest, recovery, relaxation and sleep.***

In this article, we’ll provide advice, hacks and tips on the importance of invisible swimming training.

Competitive swimmers train and compete at a consistently high intensity.

* During this, they burn a lot of calories and break down a large amount of muscle tissue.
* For a swimmer wishing to continue swimming at their optimum, this needs to be replenished.

## **What is invisible swimming training?**

Invisible swimming training is a series of disciplines to help ensure that swimmers perform at their optimum.

* This focuses on ensuring they receive the correct levels of nutrition and hydration
* In combination with rest, recovery, relaxation and sleep.

## **Fatigue**

Many competitive swimmers have active lives away from the pool including,

* School/work activities
* Other sports
* Social activities

Therefore, it’s important that swimmers ensure that they understand the importance of invisible training and are alert to the dangers of fatigue.

* The symptoms of fatigue can vary from person to person and the severity of such symptoms can vary from day to day.

Parents also need to monitor their child for signs of fatigue, which can have a range of physical, mental and emotional symptoms including,

* Feeling very tired
* Problems sleeping
* Headaches or dizziness
* Joint or muscle pain
* Muscles feeling weak
* Slow reflexes, responses and coordination.
* Impaired decision-making and judgement
* Moody and irritable
* Loss of appetite
* Problems with thinking, concentration and short-term memory
* Low motivation

## **Nutrition**

***Proper swimming nutrition helps to maintain and repair the swimmer’s muscles.***

Proper swimming nutrition is essential for optimum swimming performance.

* It provides the swimmer with the energy they require to cope with the rigours of training and competition.
* Proper swimming nutrition also helps to create new muscles and helps maintain and repair existing muscles.
* As a part of their invisible swimming training routine, swimmers should use rest days to ensure they top up with good swimming nutrition.

## **Hydration**

***Dehydration is one of the most common causes of poor performance.***

A fit and healthy body should be well-hydrated to perform at its optimum.

* Although most of a swimmers’ training is conducted in the water, they still lose a great deal of body fluid through physical exertion.
* It’s important that this lost fluid is replaced, as dehydration is one of the most common causes of poor performance.
* As a part of their invisible swimming training routine, swimmers should use rest days to ensure they are fully hydrated.

#### **Related articles on swimming nutrition and swimming hydration**

We have produced related articles, on swimming nutrition and swimming hydration. You can view it by clicking these links: [swimming nutrition](https://eatsleepswimcoach.com/swimming-nutrition/) | [swimming hydration](https://eatsleepswimcoach.com/swimming-hydration/).

## **Recovery**

### **Introduction:**

The ability to recover between training and/or competition is a key invisible swimming training skill and needs to be mastered to ensure swimmers can continue to swim at their optimum level.

### **Cool Downs:**

***The recovery process often starts with a swim-down after training or competition.***

Swimmers should start their recovery at the end of each training or competitive session by way of a proper cool/swim down.

* This consists of an easy swim-down, some flexibility stretching exercises and a warm shower.
* This can help repair the swimmer’s nervous system and help facilitate a quicker recovery.

### **Active Rests:**

Swimmers should undertake light and gentle invisible swimming training exercises between pool sessions and on rest days, such as walking, cycling and stretching/mobility exercises.

* This will help to repair the swimmer’s nervous system, help to facilitate a quicker recovery, while at the same time maintaining the swimmer’s flexibility.

***Competitive swimmers may need more sleep to help them fully recover from the rigours of training and competition.***

## **Rest and Relaxation**

***Relaxation techniques can aid in a better night’s sleep and help a swimmer to rest and recover***

### **Introduction:**

Competitive swimmers may need more sleep to help them fully recover from the rigours of training and competition.

* Relaxation skills can help swimmers reduce any self-doubts, worries and physical anxieties while increasing concentration and performance.
* Relaxation techniques can also be used to aid in a better night’s sleep and to help a swimmer to rest and recover, after training or during competition.

### **Breathing exercises**

#### **Introduction:**

Breathing in a controlled manner is a simple and effective way to relax, it increases oxygen in the blood, reduces anxiety and reduces muscle tension.

#### **Breathing exercise example:**

Find a quiet place where the swimmer can either lie down or sit for 20 minutes, without being disturbed.

* The swimmer should close their eyes and focus on the rise and fall of their chest whilst breathing in a calm and steady manner for 2-3 minutes.
* Next, the swimmer should focus on the sound of their breathing whilst breathing in a calm and steady manner for a further 2-3 minutes.
* As they become more relaxed their breathing should get louder.
* Next, the swimmer should focus on relaxing their chest muscles as they exhale whilst breathing in a calm and steady manner for a further 3-4 minutes.
* Ensure that their chest muscles rise higher and fall deeper with each exhalation.
* The swimmer should repeat these exercises for the next 10 minutes.

### **Muscle relaxation exercises**

#### **Introduction:**

Repeatedly tensing and relaxing sets of muscles is a great relaxation exercise.

#### **Muscle relaxation exercise example:**

Find a quiet place where the swimmer can either lie down or sit for 5-10 minutes, without being disturbed.

* The swimmer should close their eyes and focus on a particular muscle group in turn.
* They should tense/tighten a group of muscles for five seconds and then relax them for five seconds, and repeat five times
* Slowly work all the muscle groups in the body
* Starting with the feet, then the calves and the thighs.
* Then the buttocks, then the trunk and the chest
* Finally the arms (by clenching and unclenching their fists)
* Now slowly work your way back down the body, in reverse order.

#### **Listening to music:**

Listening to relaxing music with a slower tempo can be a great way to relax.

* However, what some people might find relaxing music can be irritating to others.
* Therefore ensure the music the swimmer wishes to relax to, has been chosen by them.

#### **Reading a book:**

Reading a book is one of the best and quickest ways to relax.

* It helps to clear the mind, slowing down the heart rate and easing tension in the muscles.

#### **Visualisation and meditation:**

Many swimmers use visualisation and meditation techniques to help them with their invisible training.

#### **Related article on relaxation techniques**

We have produced a related article, on relaxation techniques. You can view it by clicking this link: [Swimming relaxation techniques](https://eatsleepswimcoach.com/swimming-relaxation/)

## **Sleep**

***Competitive swimmers may need more sleep to help them fully recover from the rigours of training and competition.***

Most children require about 7 to 9 hours of sleep a night. Competitive swimmers may need more sleep to help them fully recover from the rigours of training and competition.

* A lack of sleep can have a negative effect on the swimmer’s performance. It often impacts on their physical ability, swimming technique (cognitive function) and reactions.
* Therefore, it’s important that swimmers make quality sleep as much of a priority as they do for training and nutrition. ​

#### **The key to a good night’s sleep is to establish a bedtime routine.**

For example:

* Go to bed at the same time every day.
* Don’t use phones, computers or watch TV within half an hour of going to bed
* This tends to excite and stimulate the mind which is not conducive to a good night’s sleep.
* Have a hot shower, before going to bed, which is a natural sedative
* A shower can also reduce stress and ease anxiety.
* Get your kit reading for training/competition for the next day
* Prepare your kit for school the next day (including homework, uniform, gym kit etc.)
* Prepare any morning training breakfasts and/or school pack lunches.
* Set an alarm
* Read a relaxing book for 30 minutes, as reading is one of the best and fastest ways to relax.

#### **Related article on the secrets of a good night’s sleep for swimmers**

We have produced a related article on the secrets of a good night’s sleep for swimmers. You can view it by clicking this link: [The secrets of a good night’s sleep for swimmers](http://www.eatsleepswimcoach.com/the-secrets-of-a-good-nights-sleep-for-swimmers/)

## **Takeaways**

Competitive swimmers train and compete at a consistently high intensity.

* During this, they burn a lot of calories and break down a large amount of muscle tissue.
* For a swimmer to continue swimming at their optimum, this needs to be replenished.

Invisible swimming training is a series of disciplines to help ensure that swimmers perform at their optimum.

* This focuses on ensuring they receive the correct levels of nutrition and hydration
* In combination with rest, recovery, relaxation and sleep.

#### **Swimming resource library**

We have produced a **swimming resource library**.

* This contains links to our ever-expanding portfolio of blog posts.
* These are subdivided by swimming category

Categories include: Swimmer Development | Swimmers Health | Swimming Coaching | Swimming Competition | Swimming Drills | Swimming Dryland/Land Training | Swimming Equipment | Swimming Psychology | Swimming Training

* To access our library simply click on the attached page link: [Swimming resource library](https://eatsleepswimcoach.com/resource-library/)

#### **The Competitive Swimming Exchange – Facebook Group**

The Competitive Swimming Exchange is a Facebook group to help exchange ideas and information to collectively improve the sport we love.

* It’s an international group for all swimmers, coaches, teachers, masters, triathletes and swimming parents.
* In fact, it’s for all those who are interested in competitive swimming, either in the pool or in open water.

For more information about joining this group please use the following link: [The Competitive Swimming Exchange](https://www.facebook.com/groups/thecompetitiveswimmingexchange/)

#### **Swimming Publications**

We produce a growing range of publications on a wide range of swimming subjects.

* These include competitive swimming drill publications for Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly and Freestyle.
* For information regarding our portfolio please follow our link: [Swimming publications](https://eatsleepswimcoach.com/publications/)