

Why have a Skill Development System?

Leads to Success In:



Member
Retention

Club Finances

Member
Experience

Club
Performance

Team Staffing

Club
Consistency

Our **skill development system** provides the best opportunity for every swimmer to develop the skills and the fitness they need to have a great swimming experience.

It shapes everything we do during each practice - **every week - every month - all season long.**

Retention

Goal number one is **getting swimmers to want to come to practice and getting them to come to practice consistently.**

Retention is necessary for:

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graph TD; Retention[Retention] --- P[Providing an Awesome Experience]; Retention --- P2[Producing Fast, High Performing Swimmers]; Retention --- P3[Running a Successful, Viable Business];
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Providing an Awesome Experience

Producing Fast, High Performing Swimmers

Running a Successful, Viable Business

Financial

Customers must be attracted and retained.

Ad Astra is a business that needs customers & swimmers to be financially stable.

Financial viability takes into consideration our day-to-day operation costs.

Pool Rent

Coaches
Salaries

Office
Utility,
web and
business
expenses

Social
Activities

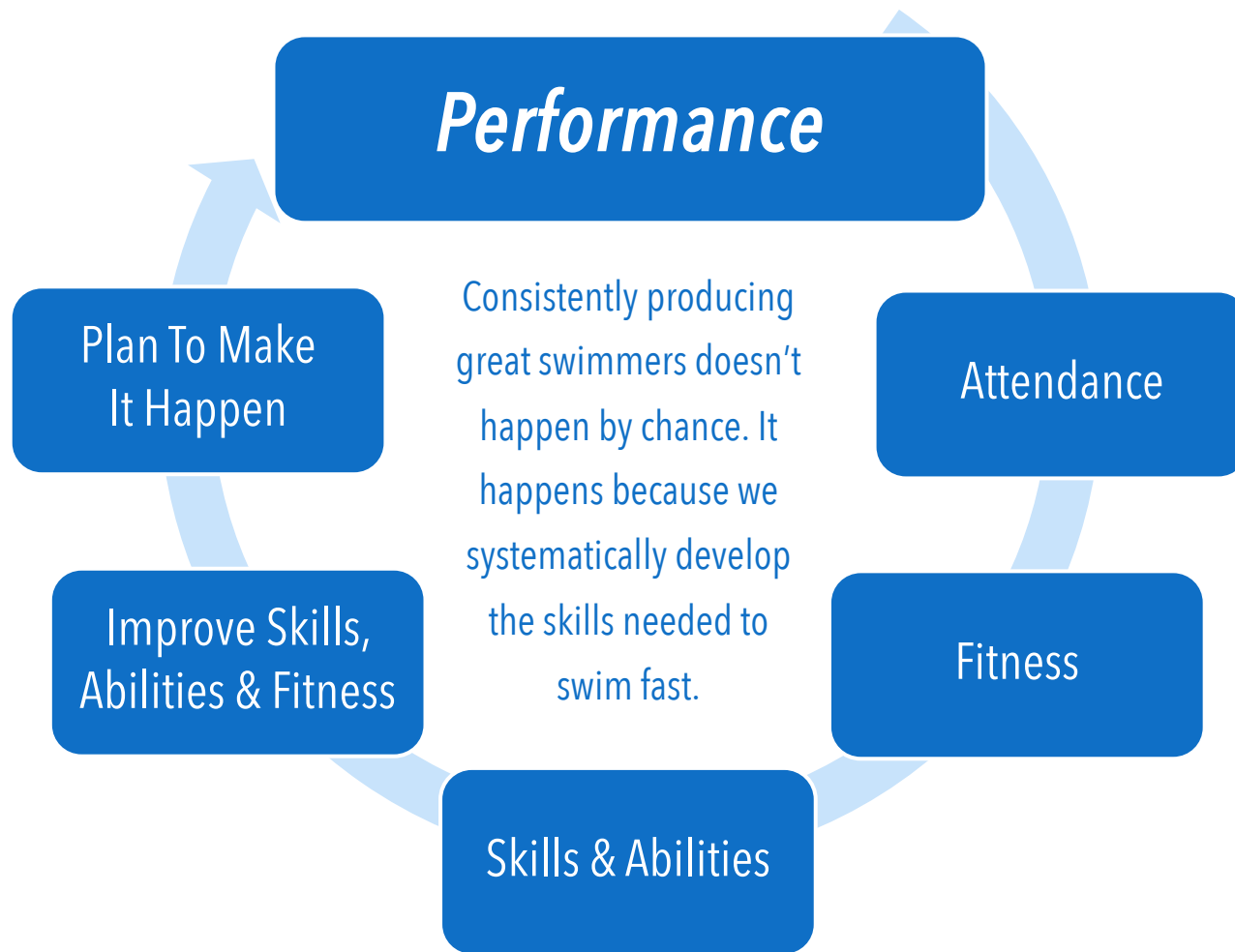
Program
Enhancements

Coaches
Travel

Pool
Supplies



Being part of a **supportive group** at Ad Astra working towards a **common goal** makes people **feel good** about themselves.



The number one rule of development is that swimmers must come to practice to get better. If swimmers aren't showing up, **achieving performance goals is impossible.**

Once swimmers show up, having a system for developing their **skills and fitness** is critical.



Ad Astra can offer a **consistent, unified and proven coaching environment** for all swimmers from day one. With clear team goals, it's much easier for Ad Astra coaches to work together towards these goals.



Occasional success happens by chance, but consistent success happens by design.

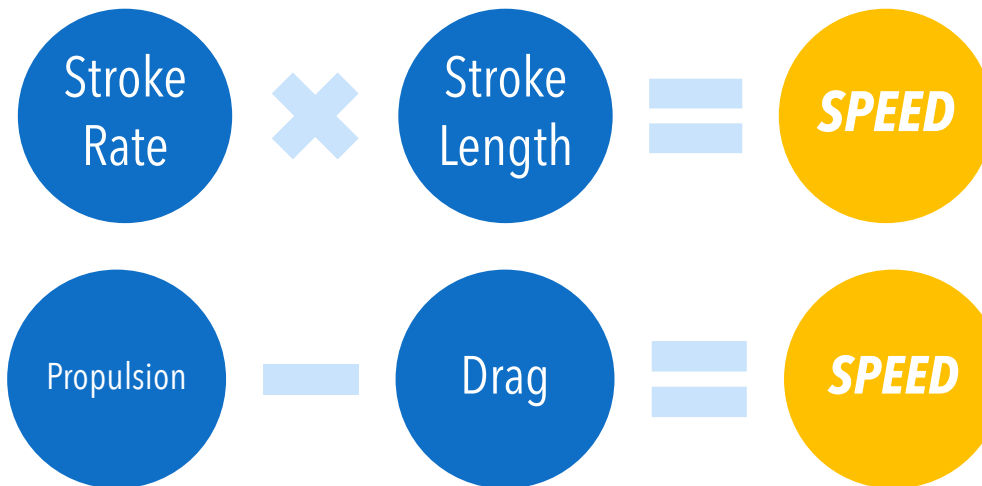
The goal isn't to have a great season. It's to make every season great.

The Ad Astra Skill Development System

- 1 The Fundamentals of Speed
- 2 The Finished Ad Astra Swimmer
- 3 Group Skill Goals
- 4 Group Training Goals
- 5 Skill Development Strategies
- 6 Progression Strategies
- 7 Benchmarks
- 8 Weekly Targets
- 9 Documentation
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- 11 Iteration

The playbook on how we want to develop all Ad Astra swimmers.
The system that creates the **MAGIC**.

The Fundamentals of *SPEED*



General Ways to Generate *Speed*

There are specific skills that create speed, as much propulsion, great rhythm/timing and as little drag as possible in each stroke.

Proper Propulsion

Pull & Kick



Proper Alignment

Body, Head, Arm Recoveries
& Breathing



Proper Timing

Breath, Recovery &
Rotation

⚡ ENERGY must be created to execute skills.

Short Term Energy

Quickly / Short Amount of Time



Long Term Energy

Slower and Sustained Longer

Both energy sources must be developed for swimmers to perform across all distances. The relative importance of each source will differ as a reflection of the racing distance and a swimmer specialties.

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The Finished **Ad Astra Swimmer**

We aim to develop an “Finished Product” Ad Astra swimmer who is aerobically fit and versatile enough to train, improve and compete in all strokes/disciplines while also working with coaches to focus on their natural strengths, events and disciplines (specialty events/strokes).

We believe more aerobically fit swimmers are typically faster swimmers.

Fitness Levels

In terms of improving fitness, the most important factor is **consistency**. Developing fitness is a multi-year process. The type of consistency your swimmer needs is defined by what their end goal is (a time standard, end of season goal, post high school swim goal.)

Produce Swimmers Who:

- ✓ Are supportive, positive teammates
- ✓ Work with coaches on feedback
- ✓ Can train IM at practice
- ✓ Strive to always improve in each stroke/discipline/race from season to season.
- ✓ Race at the appropriate number of swim meets (when ready) and in a variety of strokes/disciplines at each meet
- ✓ Race and train with enthusiasm and grit
- ✓ Are fit enough to compete for the duration of all attended meets and for all sessions of those meets without issue
- ✓ Work with coaches on how to capitalize on individual strengths in strokes, races and fitness levels (swimmer specialties)
- ✓ Swim relay legs with enthusiasm and effort

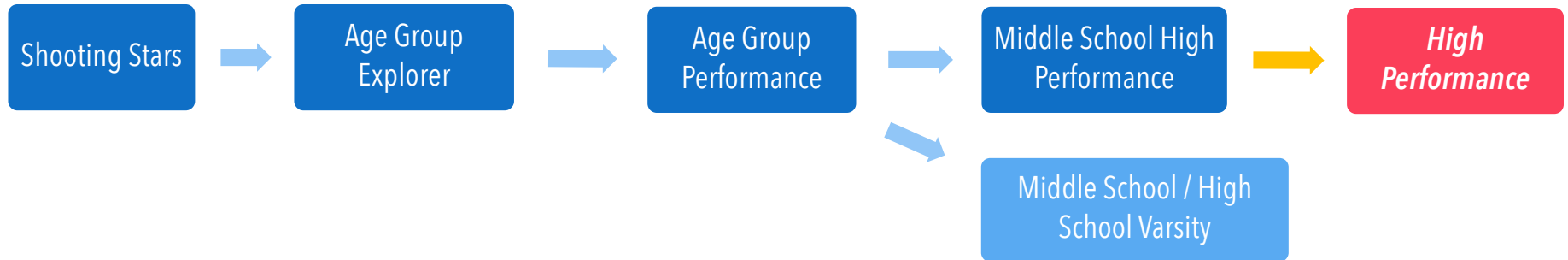
Ad Astra Swimmers Excel In:

- ✓ Individualized stroke and event strengths – the swimmer’s specialties
- ✓ 100/200/400 IM
- ✓ Relay performances
- ✓ IMX / IMR event improvements season to season
- ✓ Events other teams’ swimmers may not be willing to do

Ad Astra Swimmers Fitness Levels Will:

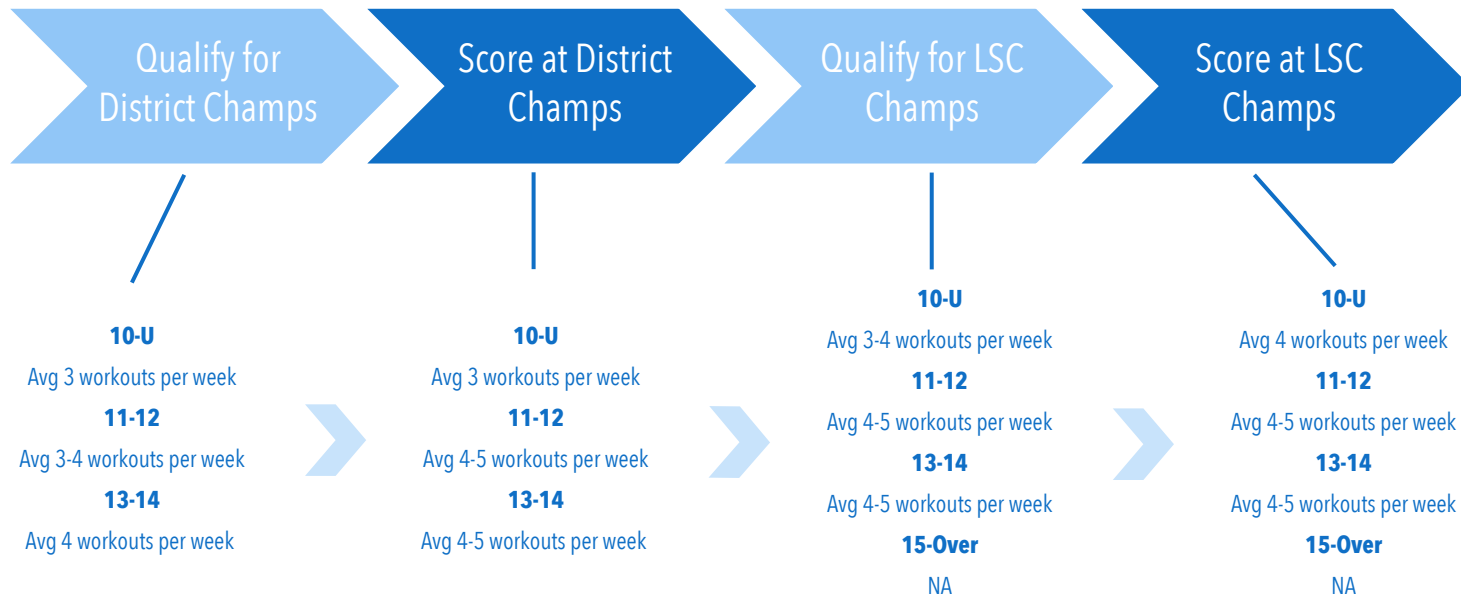
- ✓ Align with the meets they attend
- ✓ Align with the events they participate in
- ✓ Align with the group they are in
- ✓ Always be improving throughout the season
- ✓ Always be improving throughout their careers
- ✓ Allow swimmers to complete workouts without stopping in the groups they are in

Ad Astra Group Progression



Swim Meet Progression (*Local*)

Your consistency, fitness level and skills must align with your competition goals.

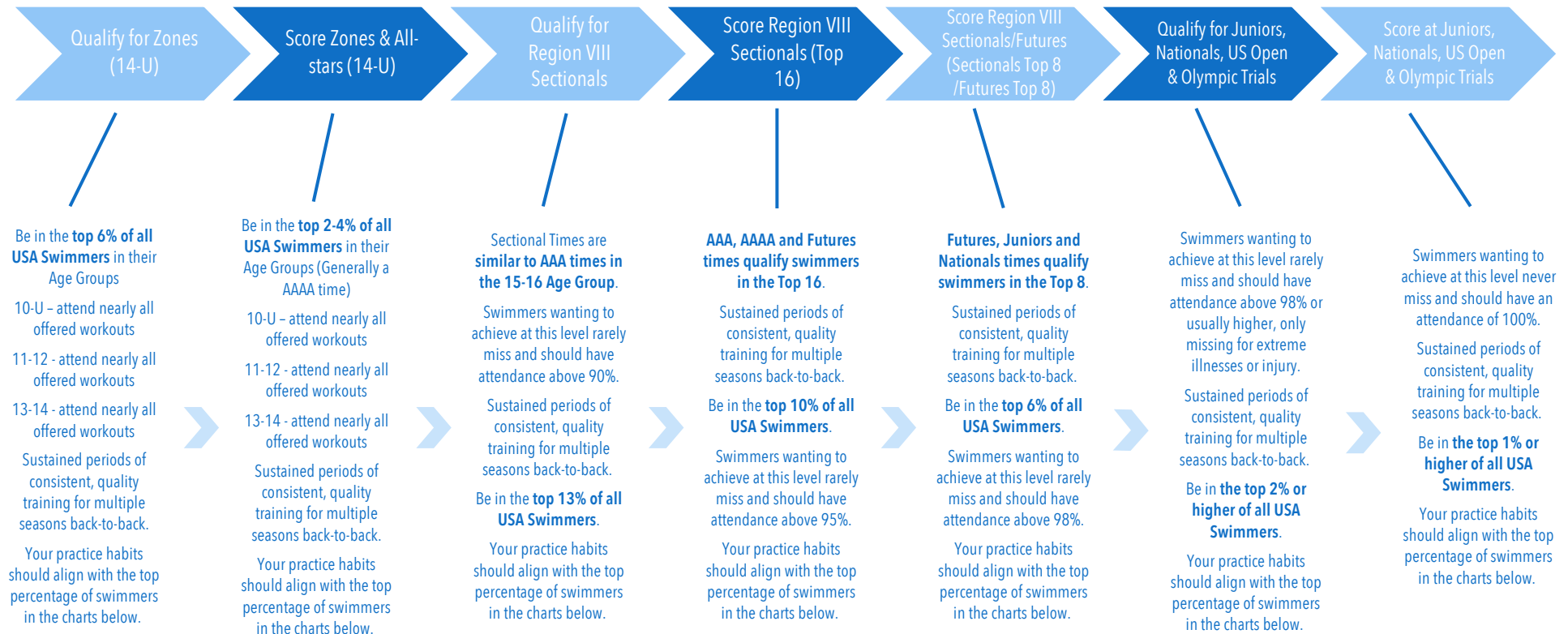


The National Level **Ad Astra Swimmer**

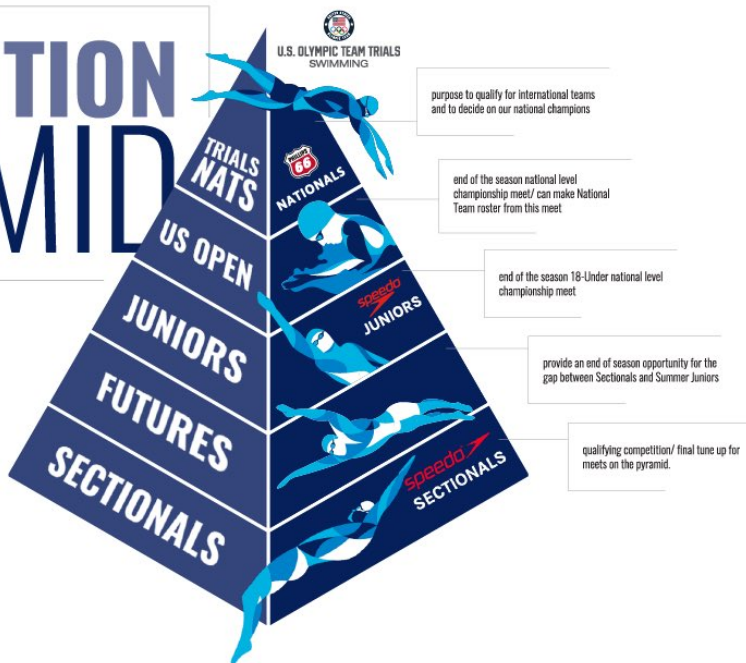
Ad Astra swimmers need certain things to compete at the National level. By working to a higher standard, a higher number of Ad Astra swimmers are going to improve, even if they don't get there. A realistic **goal for Ad Astra is to have regular scoring swims and representation at the Region VIII Sectional Meet along with producing qualifiers for national level meets, including USA Swimming Futures, Junior Nationals, Nationals and Olympic Trials.**

Swim Meet Progression (*National*)

Ad Astra swimmers need these things to compete at the National level.



USA SWIMMING COMPETITION PYRAMID



Nationals	1.09%
US Open or Faster	1.24%
Juniors or Faster	2.14%
AAAA or Faster	5.71%
AAA or Faster	13.36%
AA or Faster	21.55%
A or Faster	29.00%
BB or Faster	46.58%
B or Faster	52.44%

Time Standards by Percentile

AAAA	98%	This standard means your swimmer is ranked in the top 2% of swimmers their age-group, their same sex, in that stroke and distance.
AAA	94%	This standard means your swimmer is ranked in the top 6% of swimmers their age-group, their same sex, in that stroke and distance.
AA	92%	This standard means your swimmer is ranked in the top 8% of swimmers their age-group, their same sex, in that stroke and distance.
A	85%	This standard means your swimmer is ranked in the top 15% of swimmers their age-group, their same sex, in that stroke and distance.
BB	65%	This standard means your swimmer is ranked in the top 35% of swimmers their age-group, their same sex, in that stroke and distance.
B	45%	This standard means your swimmer is ranked in the top 55% of swimmers their age-group, their same sex, in that stroke and distance.
C		This standard is for all swimmers with times below the "B" standard. Everything from 0.00 up to the "B" standard is a "C" time.
Notes		It is very normal for your swimmer to have different time standards for different strokes. They may even have different standards for the same stroke but different distances. As your swimmer matures their best stroke and distances may change. A swimmer should not specialize until they have completed physical maturation. Swimming all the strokes and all the distances will only improve your swimmers physical and mental development throughout their career.

Bottom line - Time standards are great for goal setting and should be used to motivate your swimmer, but while improvement is desired it should not be required. Be patient and let your athlete improve at their own pace. P.S. Never compare your swimmers success to another swimmer. All swimmers are individuals with unique abilities and each will develop at their own rate.

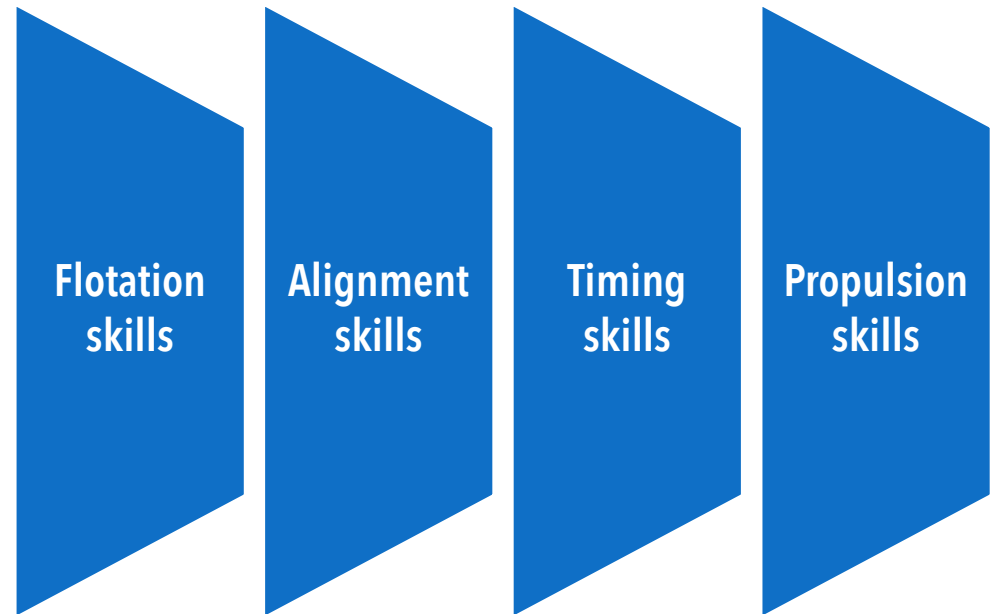
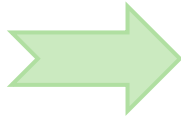
National Standards

The following offers a look at the percentage of swimmers who hit National time standards. Naturally, the higher your goals of achieving a certain time standard are, the more dedication it usually takes to achieve the time standard.

3 Group Skill Goals

Swimmers must be able to do it 'right' before they can do it fast, and they must be able to do it fast before they can do it fast AND tired. On Ad Astra, skills are going to be emphasized in each training group and ensure that those skills are being addressed progressively.

Developing the skills that create speed is a progressive process as swimmers move from training group to training group. Certain skills are learned in a certain order. **Here is a broad framework of foundational skills:**



4 Group Training Goals

Developing high-level fitness is a long-term process that must be delivered progressively. Swimmers need the fitness to execute skills at speed, delay fatigue, and maintain skills when fatigue occurs. The "Finished Ad Astra" swimmer goal will be progressively developed from group to group over time.

By creating concrete training goals, it's also possible to create a clear progression pathway from the initial groups to the final groups. This allows for patient progress, always moving forward with intent and without rushing. That leads to better training outcomes, more consistently.

Specific Group Skill Goals and Training Goals are on our [Skills and Ability Goal Sheets](#).

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Skill and Development Strategies

On Ad Astra, we want strategies that improve each skill as quickly, effectively, and easily as possible.

Here is a broad framework of our strategy:



Swimmers must be ready to do strategies well

Strategies are part of a progressive plan, so swimmers are challenged over time

Avoid trying to do too much at one time with one skill

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Progression Strategies

Ad Astra swimmers must be challenged to improve over time. The more the progression of the challenge is planned flexibly, the more likely it is that swimmers will be challenged appropriately and improve accordingly.

Specific Group Skill Development Strategies and progressions are on our [Skills and Ability Goal Sheets](#).

You can also see our [Skill & Ability pdf](#) and our [Drills, Technique and Priorities in Strokes pdf](#).

Skills challenged over time:

- Adding speed
- Using stroke counts
- Using stroke rates
- Using different training aids
- Changing hand postures
- Adding resistance
- Adding fatigue
- Implementing variability

Challenging training and fitness over time:

- Increasing volume
- Increasing intensity
- Changing the rest intervals
- Increasing frequency
- Increasing density
- Adding stroke counts
- Adding stroke rates
- Adding dolphin kick counts
- Adding resistance
- Longer practices
- More practices

7

Benchmarks

Each Ad Astra group has specific performance benchmarks to ensure swimmers can perform desired skills. A benchmark is a specific set that swimmers should be able to complete.

By the time swimmers have finished working in the group, they should be able to perform the set.

Benchmarks are progressive and changing over the course of the season and over the course of a swimmer's career.

8

Weekly Targets

For Ad Astra swimmers to improve, skills, abilities and fitness must be worked on consistently.

If it's addressed **twice per week**, it's very likely to improve.

If it's not addressed **at least every other week**, it's going to get worse.

Specific Group Benchmarks and Targets are on our [Skills and Ability Goal Sheets](#).

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Documentation

Clarity means action - action means results.

What skills are the Ad Astra Groups Working on?

How will Ad Astra swimmers train in each group?

How will Ad Astra perform Skill Development Strategies for each group?

What are the Ad Astra Progression Strategies for each group?

What are the Ad Astra Benchmarks for each group?

What are the Weekly Targets for each Ad Astra group?

Ad Astra Group PDFs:

[Shooting Stars](#)

[Age Group Explorer](#)

[Age Group Performance](#)

[Middle School High Performance](#)

[High Performance \(13-Over\)](#)

[Varsity](#)

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Tracking

On Ad Astra we track what gets measured and what gets managed.

Coaches keep track of their weekly plans, workouts and test sets.

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Iteration

On Ad Astra, we aim to constantly make the system better. No matter how well it's done, it can always be done better.

Our system is flexible enough to absorb better ways of coaching – when we discover better ways to help swimmers go fast.