



## **Is MASTERS for YOU?**

### **Does the word "Masters" sound intimidating?**

Masters simply means 18 years old and older.

### **What is U.S. Masters Swimming?**

U.S. Masters Swimming (USMS) is a national membership-operated nonprofit organization that provides membership benefits to nearly 60,000 Masters swimmers across the country. These benefits include insurance, SWIMMER magazine, sanctioned events and product discounts. USMS and its 52 Local Masters Swimming Committees (LMSCs) provide direct support to more than 1,500 Masters Swimming clubs and workout groups. Structure and organization of USMS programs vary and are driven by factors such as pool availability, instructor or coach availability, community support and finances. Coaches write workouts and provide feedback and instruction.

### **Do I have to join USMS to swim in a Masters practice?**

Yes. USMS provides insurance coverage for all individual USMS members and liability insurance for clubs and workout groups. For the insurance to be in effect, all participants within the activity, such as an organized practice or competition, must be registered with USMS.

### **Do I have to compete to be a Masters swimmer?**

**No.** When organized adult swimming started to become popular in the 1960s and 70s—the early years of USMS—the intent was that adults would swim to stay in shape. But early organizers knew that some adults would want to compete, so it is offered. About 25 percent of our nearly 60,000 members enter pool or open water competitions. The greater percentage of USMS members does not compete.

### **What if I'm not fast enough (or in shape enough) to be a Masters swimmer?**

This is something a lot of Masters coaches hear. However, we don't care how fast you are. In our program, there are others of similar ability, or those who started where you are and have improved. Don't let your perceived ability, or lack thereof, hold you back. Although it's important to have a physical examination before starting any exercise routine, you don't need to be in shape to start Masters swimming. Masters swimming will help you get there.

***"Start Where You Are. Use What You Have. Do What You Can."***

### **I'm a triathlete. Why should I join USMS?**

Many triathletes, including world-class triathletes Jarrod Shoemaker, Gwen Jorgensen, and Sara McLarty, join USMS programs because training with swimmers is the best way to improve the swim portion of the tri. Masters coaches provide technique instruction and interval training with a group. USMS membership also grants access to the triathlete-specific workouts posted regularly in the members-only Forums at [usms.org](http://usms.org). In addition, SWIMMER magazine and STREAMLINES e-newsletters have technique and training tips in each issue.

### **What can I expect when I attend a USMS practice?**

Camaraderie and new friends are two of the best benefits of swimming regularly with a group. A coached workout and guidance from a Certified USMS Coach are truly important to get the best out of your training. And don't be shy; ask for help. RSA Masters swimmers and coaches welcome new members and are happy to answer your questions and help in any way they can.

Try to swim in a lane that fits your ability and don't get discouraged! Swimming is different than running, cycling, and other endurance activities. Regardless of your fitness level, it can take months to get into good swimming shape.

### **Does USMS offer learn-to-swim classes or swim lessons?**

**YES!** Because Masters Swimming wants to encourage adults to swim, the Swimming Saves Lives Foundation, our charitable arm, awards grants to USMS programs that offer learn-to-swim programs for adults.

### **Am I too old for Masters Swimming?**

Study after study has proven that regular exercise can significantly contribute to good physical and mental health. Swimming has continually been identified as one of the best ways to exercise. Stress reduction, weight control, cardiovascular fitness, reduced cholesterol, increased muscle tone, and endurance are all benefits of swimming regularly. The social benefits are equally important; the camaraderie found in most USMS programs helps to keep people in the pool well into their golden years.

***"The Water Doesn't Know Your Age." -Dara Torres***

### **I'm convinced! What do I do now?**

Join Us for a Complimentary Trial Swim! With signed USMS and Sonner Aquatic Facility waivers, you are **welcome to dive into any *one* practice.**

- **Join MRSA:** Join Masters of Raleigh Swimming Association through RSA's website (choose the Masters tab) and select the red Register Now button at the bottom of the page.
- **Join USMS:** Once you've joined our program, or if you swim on your own, dive right in through our online registration system—it only takes a few

minutes. The USMS National Office can answer any questions you may have about Masters.

- **Note we are a part of the North Carolina Masters Swimming Club. Our workout group is MRSA; please be sure to align with us when you register with USMS.**

**All Signed Up... Now What?**

**Come to Practice!**

Bring a Great Attitude and...

Bring yourself, a bathing suit, goggles, swim fins and a towel. Sonner has kick boards and pull buoys you may borrow during practice.

**MRSA will give you a USMS Cap, USMS Sticker and one of our AWESOME Masters T-Shirts!**

***"Motivation is What Gets You Started. Habit is What Keeps You Going."***

**Who are the Coaches? How do I contact them?**

**Monica Nichols**

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**And Coaches John Calvert, Amy McKeown and more ...**

**Join today.**