

# Blue Group Handbook



## Welcome, Blue Group Swimmers!

We're excited to kick off another great year of learning, fun, and swimming! Whether you're new to the team or returning for another season, we're so glad to have you with us.

This handbook will guide you through what the Blue Group is all about—our goals, expectations, and key information for both swimmers and parents.

If you ever have questions, don't hesitate to reach out to **Coach Daniel Choy**—he's here to support you on your swimming journey!

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## Contact Information:

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## What You Need to Know to Join the Blue Group

Before you dive in with the Blue Group, there are a few skills you'll need to master. These will help make sure you're ready to swim your best:

- **Freestyle:** Swim 50 yards in under 50 seconds, using great body balance and side breathing. You should also know how to do flip turns and dolphin kicks.
- **Backstroke:** Swim 50 yards in under 1 minute, with strong body balance, shoulder rotation, and straight-leg kicking. You should also be able to do a proper backstroke turn with streamline and dolphin kicks.
- **Breaststroke:** Swim 50 yards with the correct kick and timing between your arms and legs. You'll need to know how to do a legal turn and a breaststroke pulldown.
- **Butterfly:** Swim 25 yards with proper form and finish your race with a strong turn and dolphin kicks.
- **Other Skills:** Be able to swim a 100-yard individual medley (IM) with legal turns and finishes. You should also be able to kick 50s in practice under 1 minute. Regular swim meet participation is important too!

## What You'll Achieve in Blue Group

As you improve, here are some exciting goals to work toward:

- **Freestyle:** Swim 50 yards in under 40 seconds, 100 yards in under 1:25, and 200 yards in under 3 minutes. Flip turns should be used in all freestyle races.
- **Backstroke:** Swim 100 yards in under 1:35.
- **Breaststroke:** Swim 100 yards in under 1:50.
- **Butterfly:** Swim 50 yards in under 40 seconds.
- **Individual Medley:** Swim a 100-yard IM in under 1:45.

You'll also learn to be great at all IM transition turns, practice a strong start (including dives, underwater, and breakouts), and understand how stroke counts can help you in training. You'll be working towards achieving 5 events with USA Swimming "B" times and completing 5 x 100 freestyle with a send-off interval of 1:45. By the end, you'll even know how to plan your races like a pro!

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## What is Blue Group?

The Blue Group is designed for swimmers aged 11 and younger who are still working on mastering the competitive strokes. In this group, you'll learn how to train like a competitive swimmer while having fun setting goals and working hard to reach them. You'll see how great it feels to push yourself, improve your skills, and become a stronger swimmer!

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## Practice Expectations

To make the most out of your swimming experience, you are expected to attend all four available practices each week. However, we understand life can get busy, so the minimum attendance is 3 out of 4 practices per week. If you know you're going to miss more than one practice, please let the coaching staff know. Remember, consistency is key to growing stronger in the pool!

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## What to Bring to Practice

Every day, make sure you bring these items to practice:

- **Fins**
- **Kickboard**

Don't forget to bring your energy, focus, and excitement to practice, too!



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## Swim Meet Participation

Swim meets are a great way to show off everything you've been working on! Blue Group swimmers are required to attend all practice meets and are highly encouraged to compete in official meets as well.

When you sign up for events, your coaches will guide you on which ones to focus on. Usually, we pick one "focus event" per day, and then you can choose a few other events. We recommend swimming in 3-4 events per meet day. Remember, meets can fill up fast, so it's best to register as soon as they open!

- Be sure to purchase a **team suit**! We'd like all swimmers in a **team suit** for all Armada swim meets.

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## Following the Rules

All swimmers and parents need to follow the **AAA Code of Conduct** (for swimmers and parents). It's super important to keep our practices safe, positive, and fun for everyone! Breaking the rules could lead to suspension or even dismissal from the team—but we know you'll do your best to be awesome teammates and role models.

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## Blue Group Glossary

Here are some swimming terms you'll hear in practice:

- **Catch:** The pull, or the part of the stroke where you push against the water.
- **Championship Finish:** A strong, four-step finish:
  1. No breathing from the flags into the wall.
  2. Finish with your hand 6-8 inches below the water's surface.
  3. Finish on your side at the wall.
  4. Kick hard from the flags.
- **Drill:** A way to change up a stroke to help you practice one part of it.
- **Ready Position:** The position you take to push off the wall—one hand on the wall, feet on the T, and your other hand pointed where you're going!
- **Streamline:** The position you should be in every time you leave the wall or start a dive. Your hands are overlapped, your arms squeezed by your ears, and your head tucked in for the fastest position possible.
- **Splits:** The time it takes to complete a part of your race, such as a 50 or 100.



## Drills Index:

### Freestyle

- **Inline Kick:** One arm by your cheek, the other by your side, belly button facing the side of the pool, and eyes on the bottom.
- **Side 11 Freestyle:** Begin in the 11 position, kick three times, take one arm stroke, then recover the arm back to the 11 position and switch sides.

### Backstroke

- **Inline Kick:** One arm behind your neck, the other by your side, belly button facing the side of the pool, and eyes on the sky.
- **6-Kick Switch:** Begin in the inline position, add 3 kicks, then switch sides.

### Breaststroke

- **Kick:** Heels up to your suit, draw a circle with your heels, and then squeeze your legs together.
- **Separation Breaststroke:** Start in a floating position, pull, breathe, get back to the starting position, then kick and glide.

### Butterfly

- **Body Roll Kick:** Keep your body at the surface with arms by your sides, pressing your chest and hips to help your body move in a wave.
- **Underwater Recovery:** Begin in a Y-position, pull, breathe, then recover your arms underwater.

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## Expectations Agreement

### For Coaches:

We promise to come to practice ready, excited, and with a great workout prepared just for you. We will be here to support you, help you improve, and make practice fun and engaging for everyone!

### For Swimmers:

You will come to practice prepared and on time, bringing all your equipment and energy. You'll always give your best effort, be open to learning, and ask questions if you're unsure about anything. You will be an awesome teammate, supporting everyone in the group, and understand that being a great teammate makes the whole team better!

