

Junior Group Handbook



Welcome to the Junior Group!

We're excited to kick off another great season together. Whether you're joining us for the first time or returning for another year, we're thrilled to have you on the team.

- **New members** – welcome aboard!
- **Returning swimmers** – congratulations on your successes last season. We can't wait to see what you'll achieve this year!

This handbook will help you understand what the Junior Group is all about, what's expected of you, and introduce some key terms we use throughout the season.

If you have any questions—whether you're a swimmer or a parent—please reach out to Coach Jesus.

Contact Information

- **Junior Group Lead Coach:** Jesus Salcedo – jsalcedo@albanyarmada.com
- **Assistant Coach:** Arina Openysheva – aopenysheva@albanyarmada.com

Notes on Communication

- **Email** is the preferred method for communication between parents and coaches.
- **Swimmers emailing must CC a parent** in accordance with USA Swimming's MAAPP policy.
- **GroupMe (Junior Group Chat)** is the preferred tool for time-sensitive communication between swimmers and coaches (e.g., reporting absences). Please post in the group chat rather than sending direct messages.
- **MAAPP Hours:** Swimmer-coach communication may occur only between **5:00 AM & 10:00 PM**.

What is the Junior Group?

The Junior Group is designed for middle school and early high school athletes who are committed to their swimming journey. Training focuses on all four strokes, the individual medley (IM), and distance events.



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Junior swimmers will learn to take greater ownership of their athletic development, with emphasis on training at an elite level, preparing for meets, and developing race strategies.

Group Objectives:

- Master stroke techniques and develop strong competitive skill habits
- Build a strong aerobic base to improve endurance
- Analyze splits and advanced race strategy
- Hone the mental aspects of training, including visualization and race preparation
- Learn the basics of the dryland training for Juniors which includes **Foundation Training & Functional Pattern Training**
- Embody the core values and ideals of **Albany Armada Aquatics**

Age Range: 11-14

Practice Frequency: 5 sessions per week, which includes 2 days of dryland training & one goal setting session.

Yardage: Approximately 3000 yards per 1.5-hour practice

Qualifying Times: At least one USA Swimming **BB** time achieved in your most recent age group

Challenge Sets:

- 10 x 100 @ base +10
- 10 x 100 free best average= base
- 6 x 200 IM @ 3:15
- Armada 500 Kick for time

Requirements

Attendance: Junior Group swimmers are expected to attend **100% of available practice sessions**, with a minimum of 80% attendance, including goal-setting sessions & dryland. Consistency is key to building success, and your teammates rely on your presence to push everyone forward. If you find you're missing too many sessions, a swimmer-parent-coach meeting may be scheduled to discuss next steps.

Communicating Absences: **One-time conflicts:** Please notify Coach Jesus at least a day in advance for unavoidable conflicts, such as school meetings or doctor's appointments. **Illness or Injury:** If you are feeling unwell (fever, stomach problems, infectious illness), please stay home and let Coach Jesus know. For minor issues like sniffles, it's usually okay to come to practice unless you suspect it's COVID-19. Injured but still want to train? Let Coach Jesus know, and we can modify your workout to suit your needs as you recover from the injury.

Long-Term Conflicts: Long-term conflicts can impact your progress. If you foresee regular conflicts, please have a parent schedule a meeting with Coach Jesus to discuss attendance.

Individual Meetings: Throughout the season, you'll participate in group **goal-setting sessions and also have individual meetings**. These individual sessions are a great opportunity to connect with your coach and communicate your goals for the season. Meeting times will be shared via SignUpGenius, and the link will be posted in the Junior GroupMe chat.



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Meet Participation: Junior swimmers are required to attend all swim meets & time trials. When signing up for events, it's important to check in with Coach Jesus regarding your focus events when possible. Given meets close so quickly use this as a guideline: swimmers aged 11-12, focus on 100s and 200s, rather than shorter distances like 50s and the 100 IM.

All swimmers must complete a **pre-race** and **post-race worksheet**. **These will be worked on during goal setting sessions:**

- **Pre-race worksheet:** Complete during Monday's goal setting
- **Post-race worksheet:** Complete during the following Monday's goal setting.

Equipment List: Be prepared! Swimmers are required to have their gear ready for every practice. Mesh bags can be stored at the pool. Here's the gear you'll need:

- Mesh bag
 - Fins
 - Paddles
 - Snorkel
 - Pull buoy
 - Kickboard
 - Swim notebook/journal
 - Plastic workout sheet (provided)
 - Tempo trainer
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Junior Group Glossary

Catch: The pulling phase of your stroke when your hand grabs the water to propel you forward.

Championship Finish: A four-step finish—no breath from the flags, finish deep, extend into the wall, and kick hard.

Decompression: Expanding your rib cage to take in a big breath, engaging your core in the process.

Foundation Training (FT): Our mobility and strength program designed to train large muscle groups to better support your body during swimming.

Gear-shifting: Changing speeds during a set or race to adapt to different points of the swim.

Negative Split: Swimming the second half of your race faster than the first.

Important Links:

- **Team Website:** [Albany Armada Aquatics](#)
 - **Swimmer's Corner:** Google Drive for race worksheets, meet results, and goal-setting.
 - **USA Swimming Times Search:** Search for your personal best times
 - **Swim Cloud:** Search for your personal best times and your rank
 - **PacSwim.org:** Check the latest news, top times, and time standards.
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Junior Group Expectations Agreement



For Coaches:

We will always be prepared, excited, and ready to help you grow as a swimmer. We'll design thoughtful, challenging workouts and provide individualized feedback to help you improve. We're here to listen and support you, and together, we'll create a fun, positive training environment!

For Athletes:

You will come to practice ready to give your best effort! Make sure you're on time, prepared with your equipment, and have a positive, growth-focused mindset. Communication is key—let us know if something isn't clear or isn't working for you, and always strive to be a great teammate. Remember, each day is a chance to improve and become better than the day before!



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