

Mini Blue Group Handbook



Welcome, Mini Blue Swimmers!

We're so excited for a season full of learning, fun, and new friendships!

- **New swimmers** – welcome to the Armada family!
- **Returning swimmers** – congratulations on all your hard work last season. Let's make this year even more amazing!

Your lead coach this season is **Coach Jesus**, and he's looking forward to working with each of you. You can reach him anytime at jsalcedo@albanyarmada.com.

To help everyone get off to a great start, we've put together this handbook with important information for you and your family. Please take some time to read it together, and don't hesitate to reach out to Coach Jesus if you have any questions.

Contact Information:

Mini Blue Lead Coach: Jesus Salcedo jsalcedo@albanyarmada.com

Assistant Coach, Arina Openysheva aopenysheva@albanyarmada.com

What You Need to Know to Join Mini Blue

To join Mini Blue, swimmers should already know some cool swimming skills. Here's what we're looking for:

- **Freestyle:** Swim 25 yards (one length of the pool) using side breathing.
- **Backstroke:** Swim 25 yards while keeping a nice, balanced body position.
- **Breaststroke:** Be able to kick with your toes pointing out and your legs moving together.
- **Butterfly:** Do the dolphin kick with your arms at your sides.

All new swimmers will have a tryout to show what they can do. Mini Blue has limited spots, so there may be a waiting list—but we can't wait to see you swim!



Goals for Moving Up from Mini Blue

As you grow as a swimmer, here are the goals you'll work toward:

- **Freestyle:** Swim 50 yards in under 50 seconds, with great body balance and flip turns.
- **Backstroke:** Swim 50 yards in under 1 minute, with strong shoulder rotation and kicking.
- **Breaststroke:** Swim 50 yards with the correct kick and stroke timing.
- **Butterfly:** Swim 50 yards with smooth, legal strokes.

You'll also work on doing a 100-yard individual medley (IM), swimming 50s of kick under 1 minute, and participating in swim meets regularly. Most importantly, we want you to be a great listener, follow directions, and have fun working together with your teammates!

What is Mini Blue?

Mini Blue is all about learning and having fun while getting better at swimming! Our group is for swimmers aged 6-10 who are ready to work on their four strokes (freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly) and learn some awesome competitive skills. We'll practice swimming the right way with fun drills and build up confidence for swim meets.

We want you to love swimming, make new friends, and feel proud of what you accomplish. Expect to work hard, learn cool new skills, and enjoy every practice with your teammates!

Practice Expectations

We want to see you at practice at least two times a week (out of the three available). The more you practice, the better you'll get! We also encourage you to come to Saturday stroke clinics and swim meets—these are great ways to keep learning and getting stronger.

What to Bring to Practice

Every day at practice, you'll need:

- **Fins** (recommended pair linked [here](#))
- **Kickboard** (recommended one linked [here](#))

Don't forget your Armada cap goggles, and a big smile!



Swim Meets

Swim meets are where we get to show off all our hard work! Mini Blue swimmers are required to attend practice meets, and we strongly encourage you to join official meets too. When you sign up for a meet, Coach Jesus will help you choose the events that are best for you. Usually, we suggest you swim in 3-4 events per meet.

Meets can fill up fast, so make sure to register as soon as you can! If you're not sure which events to swim, just ask Coach Jesus before you register.

- 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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Staying on Track

Everyone in Mini Blue must follow the Armada **Code of Conduct** (for swimmers and parents) to help keep practices safe and fun. If someone doesn't follow the rules, it can lead to a suspension or even removal from the team—but we know you'll do your best to be a positive teammate!

Fun Swim Skill Terms to Know!

- **Position 11:** This is your super streamline position! Arms straight, head between them, with your shoulders high.
 - **Catch:** The part of your stroke where you pull against the water.
 - **Championship Finish:** Finish strong by kicking hard as you approach the wall without breathing from the flags in!
 - **Flip Turn:** A fun half somersault you do when you reach the wall to start your next lap.
 - **Streamline:** This is how you should leave the wall or dive—arms tight, elbows squeezed, and head locked in for speed!
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Fun Drill Terms to Know!

Freestyle:

- **Position 11:** Arms straight and strong with your head below the elbows.
- **Inline Kick:** One arm by your cheek, the other by your side, with your belly button facing the side of the pool.
- **Bubble Arm, Breathe Arm:** Take one stroke, blow bubbles, then take the next stroke to breathe!



Backstroke:

- **Inline Kick:** One arm behind your neck, the other by your side. Eyes on the sky!
- **6-Kick Switch:** Start with 3 kicks on one side, then switch sides and keep kicking!

Breaststroke:

- **Kick:** Heels up to your suit, draw a circle, then squeeze your legs together for a great breaststroke kick!
- **Separation Breaststroke:** Glide like a missile between each pull, breathe, and kick.

Butterfly:

- **Y-Position Kick:** Arms out wide, chest pressed down, and hips up!
 - **Separation Butterfly:** Start in a Y-position, push your chest down, and get your legs ready for a big pull.
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Expectations Agreement

For Coaches:

We will always come to practice prepared, excited, and ready to teach! We'll be on time and have fun workouts that help you improve. We're here to support you, listen to your ideas, and help you get better at swimming. We'll make sure to create a fun and positive environment where everyone can succeed!

For Athletes:

You will come to practice ready to go! Make sure you're on time, have your equipment, and feel energized to do your best. You'll stay open to learning, ask questions if you're unsure, and communicate with us if something isn't clear. You'll also be a supportive teammate, because when you lift up others, the whole team gets stronger—including you!

Each day is a new chance to learn, grow, and become an even better swimmer. Let's make the most of it!

Go Armada Mini Blue Group!

