

Swim Meet Survival Guide: What to expect

What Happens at a Swim Meet: Swimmers

- Be prepared for an early morning and arrive at the required arrival time for your swimmers group. Swimmers are expected to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to their group warm up, **even if your first event is half way through the event schedule.**
- Group arrival times: Check the team update for arrival times. Swimmers are expected to check –in & do a team stretch before they get in for warm up.
- Before the meet we recommend printing the swim connection or fast swims meet summary and use this info to write your swimmers event #, stroke and distance on their hand with a sharpie. We want all swimmers to know what they are swimming and this method keeps it handy.
Example: event #3- 100 free
- Check in for your events at the check in table. Swimmers will be asked to circle each event and write their initials next to their name to confirm your check in. If a swimmer is unsure about swimming an event, talk to your coach before checking in.
- Find coaches for warm-up either on the pool deck or in the team area. If you are in the RBG, Blue, Mini or Yellow coaches will be on the pool deck with the first group of swimmers who start their warm up at 7:30am.
- Once the meet starts, locate the area where they will post heat and lane assignments and keep an eye on the event postings as your swimmers event nears.
- When your event is posted, note the heat and lane and report them to your coach.
- Check in with your coach before AND after your event for race advice and post race feedback. Plan for a warm up before and after your events.
Pre event warm up: 100-200 free, 100-200 drill-swim of the event your swimming,
2x 50's build with fast turns, 4x half lap sprints
- Important note for 8 & under swimmers: ALL 25yard events will start at the OPPOSITE end of the pool from the timers & starting blocks.
- Promote healthy eating; bring healthy snacks for your swimmer to stay fueled through the meet.
- KEEP WARM and STAY HYDRATED!

What Happens at a Swim Meet: Parents

- Help your swimmer “pack smart” for the meet (see pack list).
- Find the team canopy and set up a spot for you and your swimmer.
- Help your swimmer check-in and find coaches for warm-up.
- Swimmers only need to check in for the events they want to swim; if they need to leave early, don't check in for those specific events. Always seek the advice of your coach before you scratch an event.
- **Volunteer to time:** Every family will be expected to do a timing shift 60- 90minute shift. If you need help getting your swimmer to their event while you time, there are lots of parents who can help your swimmer during your timing shift. Seek out a parent with a swimmer in the same age group of your child to help escort them to their race while you are timing.
- Keep an eye on the event postings throughout the meet.
- When your swimmer's event is posted, visit the coaches, warm up & help them find their heat and lane.
- Help your swimmer keep track of events and help them get to the blocks on time. Swimmers should report to the blocks about 5 minutes or a few heats before they start depending on the race. It is not a good idea to wait too long behind the blocks.
- Support your swimmer and be positive! Here is some important advice for ALL parents:
- Pre Race: If your swimmer is new to meets and needs help getting to the block, definitely help them and guide them along to warm up, checking in with their coach and warming down.
- Once your swimmer is experienced enough with the pre & post race routine give them space and allow them to do this independently.
- Before a race a swimmer is already nervous, don't add to it by giving them race advice. Just remind them to listen to what their coach said, remind them you LOVE them no matter what the outcome and don't forget to HAVE FUN!
- Be their “rock”- there will be ups and downs in swimming, big meets, new events, challenging events, bad weather, you name it. So as the parent you need to be consistent with how you support your swimmer. If you're consistent with how you support your swimmer it will help them be a better swimmer in the long run.
- During the race:
When your swimmer is racing it's definitely exciting and nerve wracking, because you want them to be happy and often that means swimming fast or improving their time. Do your best to contain your urge to scream and holler for your swimmer. Remember this is your child's space and their arena. Going wild on the pool deck takes the attention away from your swimmer and if your swimmers sees or hears you it will only add pressure and most likely hinder their performance.

- **Post Race: Remember those Pre-Race words?**
No matter what the outcome is, you love them and that's what your child needs to hear after a race. Your swimmer will get race feedback from their coaches. Let the coach comment and review the race with your swimmer. Your role is to be consistent with your support. Here are some words to say after your swimmer finishes their swim:
 - I love watching you swim! You look great! You look so strong! I'm proud of you! Are you hungry?
After that if your swimmer wants to talk about their race then let them lead that conversation.

What to Pack for a Meet?

- The team will have a canopy that will accommodate swimmers and parents and will shield most from sun and rain.
- Key is to keep swimmers as warm and as dry as possible, especially their feet, which get really cold on the wet pool deck. Bring deck shoes to wear when they are wet and warm boots to wear when they are dry.
- General rule of thumb is that you need a towel every time a swimmer gets in the pool. If he or she is doing two races, you need three towels (includes warm-up).
- Bring your own food —swim meet food is often not very healthy. Encourage healthy eating habits and fuel your athlete with the right food.

Pack list:

- Meet registration confirmation you receive from Swim Connection or Fast Swims
- Meet sheet, includes the event list and driving directions.
- Collapsible camping chairs, one for your swimmer, one for yourself.
- A warm/team jacket and shoes/boots (easy on and off with bare feet and WARM)
- Bring deck shoes/flip flops prior to race and to wear when wet.
- Sun protection, hat sunscreen etc.
- Don't forget: team cap/goggles/change of clothes/ blanket and additional sweatshirt or warm clothes.
- Swimmers must wear the team Cap for meets. They are available from your coach for \$5 latex or \$10 for silicone.
- If it's raining, expert tip: bring a few large garbage bags & put your swimmers bag in the garbage bag during the meet so everything stays dry. Keep some extra towels in the car as a back up.
- Key is to keep kids warm, dry, hydrated and energized with healthy food!
- Bring a book or something to do while waiting for your swimmers' races.