

Meet 101: A Swim Meet Checklist

Although it sounds as simple as "bring your goggles and a towel," preparing for a swim meet takes a little bit of planning.

This checklist and collection of helpful hints - with input from veteran swim families - is designed to give you a full rundown of the kinds of things you may want or need during our summer swim season.

A Swim Meet Checklist (in order of priority)

GOGGLES - Two pairs, in case a last second emergency occurs.

SWIM CAP - Caps are not required for summer swimming, though many swimmers (boys and girls) use them. Because it can rip trying to put it on, it helps to have a second one in your bag.

TOWELS - At least two towels per swimmer. It is summer and it is hot, but getting out of the water can be chilly, especially later in the evening. If the weather is calling for rain, add at least 1 towel per swimmer.

SUNTAN LOTION - Although swim meets don't officially kick off until 6:pm, the first warm-ups begin at 4:30 or 4:45 when the sun is still baking. Many pools don't have lots of shaded areas and you and your swimmer will be out in the sun. [See note below about Sharpies and suntan lotion.]

WATERBOTTLE - Filled with water, Gatorade, etc. It's very important to avoid dehydration.

ENTERTAINMENT - There are times when the swimmers have a lot of time between races, it helps to have books, crayons/paper, cards, dolls and trucks, or other quiet games that the kids can play - and that you don't mind getting wet.

SHARPIE - You can write your child's event numbers on his/her hand and with the heat sheet you can add heat and lane information, too. Fingernail polish remover, suntan lotion, or baby oil will take off the ink easily post-meet.

CHAIRS - Bring something to sit on. Most pools don't have enough seating space.

CARBO FILLED FOOD - Most venues have a snack bar or food table, but you may want to bring granola bars, fruit, yogurt, bagels, or similar food to snack on between races. Avoid candy bars, donuts, chips etc.

SWEATS, T-SHIRTS - Try to bring an extra sweatshirt, t-shirt, shorts to keep you warm between your races. Spirit wear is great for this purpose.

RAIN GEAR - A poncho, rain coat, or water-repellent clothing are good to have in the event of rain. If there is a storm, the meet will be paused, but if it is just raining the meet can go on ... which means you may be standing poolside timing.

INSECT REPELLENT - Sometimes our team area is in the grass and as the evening goes on, the mosquitoes and no-see-ums come out.

SWIMSUITS - It never hurts to have a backup suit in case one rips or straps break, etc.

HELPFUL THINGS TO KNOW AND REMEMBER

- Sharpies and suntan lotion don't mix. If you write your swimmer's events on their hand and then spray them with lotion, the writing will come off. Suntan lotion is a perfect ink remover at the end of the night, though.
- Wetting your head before you put on a swim cap can help it go on easier - it also minimizes the amount of chlorine your hair absorbs.
- Because of the potential for evening showers or storms, packaging items in Zip-top bags can be a lifesaver.
 - o Regular sizes can keep wallets, phones, and electronics dry; and pens, suntan lotion, snacks, etc. organized.
 - o Extra-large ones can ensure you've got at least one dry towel even if it rains.
- Make sure swimmers are on time for warm-up
- Check in with the Volunteer Coordinator to confirm your work position for the meet (both home and away). Please be alert for announcements, including timers meetings, switching halves, etc.
- Don't let the kids eat right before a race.
- Make sure you know when your child is swimming and that they are listening for the Clerk to call them to the staging area.