

Freshmen

Senior Newbies

Welcome to your freshman year of high school! Now you enter a whole new world with the "big kids." As a newbie, you may be a little intimidated by the senior group.

However, there are two things to remember: they were once where you were and one day you will be one of those seniors. Maybe it doesn't make them seem any less cool or important but may make you less intimidated.

New Competition Calendar

Senior Meet Schedule with Age Group *and* Senior Time Standards

September thru December: Senior Open and Senior-2 meets the peak at:

Junior Nationals – Sectionals – Sr2 P&F – C/B/BB+ *or* Winter AGC?

January and February: Senior Open meets then peak at:

San Diego Travel Meet

March thru May: High School dual and invitational meets, then peak at:

League – North Coast – Senior Walk-on – State

June and July: Senior Open meets, then peak at:

Junior Nationals – Futures – Western Zone Senior – Far Westerns – Zone 2 P&F

Time Management

With all the new opportunities, you will need to be more organized during your freshman year. It's not always easy to balance homework, tests, papers, swimming, chores, and more. If you start learning how to balance it all now, you'll be way ahead of the curve when you get to college and adulthood. Organizing your time is a skill that will help you in every facet of your life.

Keep some of your Gold Group or Summer Rec traits:

Be fearless: make new friends, more friends, share friends.

Be supportive: know and be a good teammate to everyone in the group.

Be confident: do not shy away or shrink in stature.

Be aggressive: believe you can beat anyone.

College Swimming Timeline

- Start researching colleges and universities.
- Find schools that have the major you would like to pursue, because your degree is more important to a successful life than your best swimming times.
- Check out the team's recent results and the coach's history with the program. Look at their swimmer's best times and progress on swimcloud.
- Draft an email to the programs you are interested in – an introductory letter and swimming resume including: your name, birthdate, address, phone number, email, GPA and test scores (once you take those tests). Include your training background (how many workouts/hours per week) and any dryland you do (weights, running, medicine balls, etc.), how many years you've been swimming, your competition background, a record of your times/improvement, and explain all other activities you participate in.
- Most teams have questionnaires posted online: During your freshman/sophomore years, the college coaches are limited in how they can respond to you, but can send you a questionnaire in response, and general team info.
- Check Initial-Eligibility Requirements. There are certain courses you will need to take to be eligible to swim as a freshman in college.

Sophomores

Senior Group – Year 2

You made it through ninth grade and your first season in Seniors! School gets a little more serious. Learning to Drive starts this year. Honors Courses, AP Courses, A Periods, PSAT and other College Board tests start this year. You may start driving and working towards your driver's license. It's time to step up your swimming as well. Your second year in seniors will be less surprising than your first. Now that you know what to expect, you can step your focus and training. Let's go!

Competition Calendar:

Now you've been through it once (see this section on the freshman page). With experience comes the responsibility to know which events to enter at which meets and when entries are due, and how to really prepare yourself to do your best.

Time Management

You will have to continue to manage your time, especially as you get more responsibilities and expectations – at home, at school, with friends, and at the pool. It is very important to set yourself up for success in August and stay ahead of the wave through the school year.

How you add to (or subtract from) the Senior Group:

Be fearless: facilitate friendship – meet new ones, share old ones.

Be supportive: does your daily outlook reflect the good teammate you strive to be?

Be confident: challenge yourself and let that propel you to greater heights.

Be aggressive: who and what are you chasing in practice? who are you holding off?

College Swimming Timeline

- Continue researching colleges and universities.
- Find schools that have the major you would like to pursue, because your degree is more important to a successful life than your best swimming times.
- Check out the team's recent results and the coach's history with the program. Look at their swimmer's best times and progress on swimcloud.
- How do your times fit in with a potential college team? Educate yourself on Division I-II-III, scholarship funding (14W or 9.5M), ways to join (invitation only, recruited athletes, walk-ons), and how to apply. Also consider, location, cost, size, facility, atmosphere, co-ed or not...
- Send the email (see freshman timeline) to the coaches of the programs you are interested in, and send follow ups after December, after High School season, and after summer. Remember, you have to promote yourself to each coach first!
- Most teams have questionnaires posted online: During your freshman/sophomore years, the college coaches are limited in how they can respond to you, but can send you a questionnaire in response, and general team info.
- Meet with your school counselor and confirm that you are on path/pace to graduate and meet college eligibility requirements.
- Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center.
- Look at the dates for the upcoming PSAT, ACT, and SAT tests for later this year and next year.
- Get more comfortable speaking with adults. You will have to be able to clearly and succinctly communicate with college coaches.
- Coaches may communicate more with you, starting in July after your sophomore year. They may only speak with you on a limited basis but may send updates and emails more regularly.

Juniors

Senior Group – Year 3

You made it through tenth grade and your first two seasons in Seniors! Junior year is a big step up from sophomore year. Standardized Tests, driving tests, and an expanded social world are at your door. It's time to take another step forward with your swimming. With two years of Seniors under your belt, you are ready to roll and it's time to start leading the group. You can increase your focus and training again. Let's go!

Competition Calendar

Now you've been through it twice (see this section on the freshman page). You also have experienced the responsibility to know which events to enter at which meets and when entries are due, and how to really prepare yourself to do your best. Take a bigger ownership stake – and see yourself grow as a swimmer.

Time Management

You will have to continue to manage your time, especially as you get more responsibilities and expectations – at home, at school, with friends, and at the pool. It is very important to set yourself up for success in August and stay ahead of the wave through the school year. Formulate and stick to a plan to stay ahead of college test dates and college materials.

How you add to (or subtract from) the Senior Group:

Be fearless: facilitate friendship – take a freshman under your wings.

Be supportive: who in your swimming peer group needs your support?

Be confident: challenge yourself and let that propel you to greater heights.

Be aggressive: who and what are you chasing in practice? who are you holding off?

College Swimming Timeline

- You should have a solid list of 10-15 schools that meet your academic, athletic, and social needs, but you need to start narrowing it down now.
- Continue to update coaches you sent your initial email (see freshman timeline) with updates on your training, improvement, and progress – academically and in the pool.
- Coach communication will depend on the school, coach, and your previous communication and swimming ability.
- Meet with your school counselor and confirm that you are on path/pace to graduate and meet college eligibility requirements.
- Be prepared for and take the necessary standardized tests this year and early next year.
- Get more comfortable speaking with adults. You will have to be able to clearly and succinctly communicate with college coaches.
- Coaches may communicate more with you, starting in July after your sophomore year. They may only speak with you on a limited basis but may send updates and emails more regularly.

Seniors

Senior Group – Year 4

This is your last year of high school and your last seasons in Seniors! It is tempting to feel like you've already reached the end of the road with school, and to take this year on with one foot out the door to next year. But Senior year deserves your best efforts academically and in the pool.

Grief: I've lost all my friends. Who will I follow now? "A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and **shows the way.**" John C. Maxwell

Practice: team spirit, good sportsmanship, inclusiveness, character building.

Balance: so much to do, so little time.

Senioritis: Be patient, your future will be here soon and then you'll miss your past. Was there 8th-grade-itis? Was there 5th-grade-itis? You've still got a lot of learning and life left to do. In the grand scheme of things, high school graduation is just another of many milestones along the way. Treat it as such.

Humility: You are trying to become an adult and although it may appear so, this time is not only about you. Be good to friends and family.

College: How do I get there from here? Dealing with acceptance and rejection. If you haven't already, get Mike your list of schools (academics and swimming). Include at least one dream and one safe school on the list.

Don't take this year of swimming for granted, enjoy every moment.

From the actual sport itself, to the friends and teammates, to the emotions you feel, do not dare take a single thing for granted.

From Mia Hamm: "Somewhere behind the athlete you've become and the hours of practice and the coaches who have pushed you is a little girl who fell in love with the game and never looked back...play for her." Take her advice, play for the kid who fell in love with the game. Play for the little kids sitting in the stands admiring you. Play for your parents who spent so much of their life driving you from practice to game no matter how far. Play for the coach who knew you were better than you were performing and pushed you until they saw it. Play for the girl who came to your game just for you. Play for the people who can't anymore. Play because this may be the last time you do, don't forget that.

College Swimming Timeline

- You should have your list of schools narrowed down, and a plan to manage the application process and deadlines, decisions, and planning for your first year of college.
- Continue to communicate with coaches via email or phone calls with updates on your training, improvement, and progress – academically and in the pool.
- Coach communication will depend on the school, coach, and your previous communication and swimming ability.
- Be prepared for and take the necessary standardized tests early this year.
- Get more comfortable speaking with adults. You will have to be able to clearly and succinctly communicate with college coaches.
- Coaches may communicate more with you. They may only speak with you on a limited basis but may send updates and emails more regularly.