



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Swim League Parent Handbook

YMCA of San Diego County



Contents

- Program Focus and YMCA Philosophy
- Swimmer Expectations
- Parent Responsibilities
- Coach Responsibilities
- Swim Team Tryout and Level Requirements
- Registration
- Swim Meets
- Family Contact Information
- Code of Conduct Signature Pages

Contact Us

INSERT COACH NAME AND TITLE

Email Address

INSERT SUPPORTING STAFF AND TITLE

Email Address

AQUATICS DIRECTOR OR SUPERVISORY STAFF

Email Address

Branch Address, Phone Number, & Website

Welcome to the Swim Team of The YMCA of San Diego County.

Program Focus and YMCA Philosophy

Our Mission: The YMCA of San Diego County is dedicated to improving the quality of human life and to helping all people realize their fullest potential, as children of God, through the development of the spirit, mind, and body.

The YMCA of San Diego County Swim Team staff is dedicated to give families involved with Swim Team a great experience while providing fitness and fun. We strive to help each child develop the healthy mind, body and spirit which represent the three points of the triangle in the YMCA emblem. Our philosophy is to encourage this in a positive, family-oriented manner. Additionally, we reinforce respect of family members, teammates, coaches, officials and opponents through respect of themselves.

Our Swim Team goals are:

- To help each swimmer reach their full potential as confident swimmers.
- To help each swimmer learn good sportsmanship and being part of a team.
- To help promote lifelong fitness for all of our members.
- To teach each swimmer character development including **Honesty, Caring, Respect and Responsibility.**

Participation on the TEAM NAME Swim Team teaches life lessons in how members of teams work together as individuals to become one unit. With everyone, including parents, swimmers, and coaching staff working together and supporting each other as a team, we are sure each season will be successful.

Swimmer Expectations

Regular Workouts

Swimmers and parents are responsible for arriving to work-out on time. Regular attendance is a must for a child to succeed. Swimmers who attend practices sporadically may be excluded from competition at the coaches' discretion. Sporadic attendance may also contribute to minor injuries because of missing regular practice fundamentals, strength and conditioning. Practice workouts are planned with skill progressions. Missed progressions will deter mastery of skills.

During practice, swimmers are expected to learn and observe common lane etiquette which includes but is not limited to: circle swimming, interval spacing, send-off order, passing or over taking, sharing of wall space, and all pool rules. Swim Team participants are welcome to swim during lap swim times to practice and reinforce skills they learn in Swim Team. Look for a pool schedule near the front desk for lap swim times. A swim test will be required for swimmers who are under the age of 18.

Additional Guidance:

- Treat other swimmers with respect, be kind to all swimmers regardless of age or level, and do not think to hold yourself out as better than another swimmer. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses.
- Ask permission to leave the pool. This applies to leaving practice early, going to the restroom, or calling home. This is so the coaches know where you are and that you are safe.

- Be honest. Cheating is a form of disrespect to your coaches, to your parents and, most importantly, to yourself. If you cannot or will not complete a workout set, be honest about it.
- Tell your coach when your body is telling you to stop or slow down. If you are sick, on medication, or are injured, we need to know and you need to listen to your body.
- Provide your body with a healthy diet that will help to perform at your best.

Be responsible for your own safety. Respect the rules by staying off the equipment without the specific permission and supervision of a coach. Wait inside the YMCA for your ride.

Swimmer Behavior:

HONESTY, CARING, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY

Each swimmer has the responsibility to come to practice on time and be respectful of the YMCA Swimming Program rules. Swimmers who train with dedication, discipline and commitment to following technical guidelines will progress and succeed. A responsible swimmer comes to practice prepared to follow these steps. Swimmers who work hard and do what is expected of them will succeed. How well and quickly an athlete progresses is up to him/her.

- Swimmers should NOT visit or converse with parents and spectators during workouts.
- Swimmers need to come ready to swim and listen to coaches. Keep your ears above the water when coaches are teaching. No splashing, flopping, or fooling around is acceptable.
- All drills should be performed as instructed. If you do not understand how a drill is done, do not be afraid to ask for clarification.
- Please refrain from talking during drill instruction.
- Please do not hang on the lane lines.
- Swimmers need to be **Respectful** towards other swimmers and towards other members in the pool area and in the locker rooms.
- Please limit shower time to 5 minutes to conserve natural resources.
- Lifeguards are here for your protection, swimmers are expected to **Respect** them.
- Keep deck/patio area clean and bags pushed to the side. Do not put your bags down in the middle of the walk way or in the way of the drains or doorways.

See attached code of conduct.

Discipline Policy

To ensure the safety and welfare of all swimmers, the following progressive discipline steps will be taken for those swimmers who disregard pool/safety rules, and/or display disrespect for coaches, teammates, and/or lifeguards:

1. Step One; Verbal warning to the swimmer.
2. Step Two; Swimmer sits out during practice for 5 – 10 minutes.
3. Step Three: Swimmer will be asked to leave the Swim Team activity or event for the day. Parents will be notified and an incident report will be filed, pending Parent/Staff intervention conference.
4. If the situation does not improve, the swimmer will be asked not to continue with the program or participate for an extended period of time in team activities. This action will be communicated by the Aquatics Director to the parent and swimmer.

Attire

Swimmers should always wear a swim suit when working out. No baggy shorts or t-shirts are to be worn. Swimmers can wear board shorts over their swim suits only if they are tight and fitted to the body. Hair must be tied up and out of the face before each practice and preferably under a swim cap. No jewelry is to be worn when the swimmer is working out. Stud earrings are okay (no rings, hoop earrings, necklaces, anklets, etc.). No gum or food is allowed in or around the pool.

What to Bring to Practice

Swimmers need to be **Responsible** during practice. They need to bring the following items with them to all practices:

- YMCA ID (For Bronze level and over)
- Goggles (an extra pair is always good too)
- Swim Cap
- Water Bottle
- At least one towel
- Parka, sweatshirt, sweatpants in cool weather; sunscreen and hat when it is hot
- Equipment required for your level (You are expected to help clean up and put equipment away after practice and always use equipment in the manner it is intended.)

We encourage the swimmer to remember these items and not to rely on their parents to bring the items to practice for them.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents play a large role in the development of a successful swimmer. Your role is as important as that of the YMCA or of the coaches. We welcome your presence at every team function and team Competition. Your input and support are necessary for your child's success. Here is what you can do to help your daughter/son achieve her/his dreams:

On the physical side it is your job to insure that your athlete gets enough sleep, healthy food and drink, gets to and from the YMCA on time, has the proper clothing and equipment, and is prepared to receive proper instruction from knowledgeable and caring coaches. The emotional side is just as important. It is your role as the parent to provide unconditional love, encouragement, and support.

The parent's responsibility is to:

- Bring your child to practice and competitions on time.
- Pick up your daughter/son ON TIME from workouts
- Attend any mandatory parent meetings
- **VOLUNTEER!** Help with the swimming events that we host as well as those we attend
- Pay team dues and entry fees on time
- Let The Coaches Do The Coaching: Parents must be willing to relinquish authority to coaches at swim meets and workouts.

Tardiness: Although we know that some situations cannot be avoided (parents work schedules, traffic, etc.), your effort to get your swimmer to practice on time is greatly appreciated. The warm-up prior to the beginning of practice is an important element of the workout. If your child does not warm-up properly injuries are much more likely to happen. We also ask that they complete the entire workout. Conditioning at the end of the workout is very important.

Gossip and Rumors: As adults at the YMCA, YMCA Staff, Coaches, and Parents are role models of our core values and positive talk. Please refrain from discussing events or situations that you may not have all the information about. Please see the coach or director if you have any questions or concerns. . We teach **Respect, Honesty, Caring, and Responsibility**. Positive, encouraging language and problem solving will build trust for your swimmer and their team. Comparison of swimmers or criticism challenges team work and good sportsmanship.

Guidelines for parents during competitions:

- Cheer loud and often, in a courteous manner.
- Cheer for all of the members of the YMCA Swimming team and feel free to cheer for the efforts of swimmers on other teams.
- Promote YMCA swimming in every way you feel appropriate: t-shirt, sweatshirts, banners, and cheers. Kindly refrain from speaking in a negative way about another YMCA, coach, swimmer, or official.
- Please bring any concerns to your coach. The meet director, administrative officials, stroke and turn officials, and other coaches are focused on making sure the meet runs smoothly. Please refrain from talking to your swimmer once they are in the competition area with their coaches or behind the blocks. We ask them to focus all their energy on the competition.

Coach Responsibilities

To instruct swimmers to perform the most technically correct swimming while teaching respect for self, coaches, family and peers. Coaches are responsible for determining swimmers readiness to compete, prevention of injuries through proper warm-ups and conditioning and mentally preparing swimmers for swim meets. Coaches are responsible for all aspects of the competition: warm-up, racing strategies and swimmer's behavior. Parents must be willing to relinquish responsibility and authority to coaches at meets and work-outs. This is our policy and that of the YMCA of the USA Swimming. In the event of an accident or injury requiring medical attention you, the parent, will of course be contacted.

Injuries

Swimming can be a rigorous activity. Although we try to prevent injuries, they do occur. Sprains, strains, and pulls are what we typically encounter in swimming. If your swimmer has a persistent pain, please have it checked by a doctor. A sports physician is always recommended since they are trained to deal with athletes and will suggest means of rehabilitation. Please share all information with coaches. If your child has an injury requiring limited use (i.e. muscle pull) consult the coach for a modified training program. Swimmers should attend practices and work around the injury. In most cases a discouraging situation can be made better by working out healthy areas while rehabilitating.

Swim Team Tryout and Level Requirements

	Age guideline	Practices/week	Length of practice	Entry Recommendations	YMCA Membership
Novice	12 and under	2x/week	45min	3 strokes: 50 free; 25 back; 25 breast	Optional
Bronze	13 and under	3x/week	1hr	4 legal strokes; 4x100 free timed	Required
Silver	14 and under	4x/week	1.5hr	4 legal strokes; 4x100 free timed	Required
Gold	Over 13	5x/week	2hr	6x100 free timed 2x200 IM timed	Required

TRY-OUT DETAILS

All swimmers must complete a tryout with a coach prior to joining the swim team. Please contact your facility for the tryout schedule.

Practice Days and Times

Practice will be held according to the current published team schedule. Practice times may be adjusted at any time for seasonal changes, school breaks, mechanical or other pool issues, inclement weather, etc. Every effort will be made to contact parents whenever possible. Please keep your contact information current with your coach. Generally, additional make-up practices and refunds are not available due to cancellations.

Registration

We offer Swim Team continuously 12 months a year. The Winter Season runs Sept. 1st through March 31st; summer season runs April 1st through August 30th. The fee for Swim Team is based on the swimmer's program level listed above. Scholarships are available; please inquire at your facility's Front Desk. Please note that swimmers who are not registered for swim team will not be allowed to practice. Team registration paperwork and bank draft information are required in order to participate on the swim team.

Bank Draft

Bank draft is available for automatic drafts from a checking account, debit card, pre-paid cash card, or credit card. Please see the attached application. **Starting, stopping, or changing the bank draft requires written notification 10 days prior to your scheduled draft date.**

Additional Fees

There will be additional fees for meets. You will be notified each month of the upcoming fee for the meet. The meet fee depends on the level of the meet. This typically ranges from \$10.00-\$14.00 for single day meets and \$20.00-\$30.00 for Championship swim meets. There are also additional fees for swim suits, apparel and caps, as well as any additional training equipment required for each level of the swim team.

Communication

Often we have emails and/or texts going out to parents about Swim Team updates, swim meets and fun happenings at the YMCA. Get involved and help us have an open communication line by making sure we have your most up to date contact information (ie. email address and phone numbers) and that you are checking for swim team news frequently.

Swim Meets

Meets

Various levels of competition are offered throughout the year, ranging from Novice meets through USA Swimming sanctioned competition. YMCA meets are held on Saturdays or Sundays at San Diego YMCAs.

A swimmer must swim in at least one regular season meet to compete in the two day end of season YMCA Championship Meets (Summer and Winter). All meet information is shared via email. All fees and due dates will be listed on the meet flyer. Also refer to your competition schedule that is emailed at the beginning of the season. All participants are responsible for their own meet expenses and fees. Meet information is usually received two weeks prior to the meet date. Information is then given to parents. Meet fees must be paid promptly.

Swimmer fees must be paid before swimmers are entered into a meet event. The YMCA is billed for your swimmer once you are signed up for the meet, even if you don't attend.

If a swimmer has signed up for a meet and an unexpected illness or emergency arises and he/she no longer is able to attend the swim meet, please notify a coach ASAP. Adjustments have to be made to the team entry including relays.

General Meet Information

Meets can vary in length from 2 hours or up to 5 hours (or longer), depending on the level of meet, number of swimmers present and any unforeseen challenges. The host team of each meet sets the schedule for their meet, so starting times will vary.

Novice meets are best for newer swimmers. They are not officiated, the events are not pre-scheduled for each swimmer, and they cost \$10 per meet for unlimited events. **All Levels** meets are best for swimmers who swim legal strokes consistently in practice. They are officiated by both YMCA and USA Swimming certified officials, are pre-scheduled for each event, the results are tracked throughout, and cost \$14. Season culminating Championship meets are two days in length. A swimmer **must** have swum in at least one regular season meet in order to be eligible to swim in the Championship meet and the cost is \$20 for one day, or \$30 for two days of competition.

- It takes a lot of people to help run a swim meet. Parents are expected to volunteer in some capacity at each swim meet. We especially need parent timers at every meet.
- It is the **responsibility** of each swimmer to be at the clerk of course (bull pen near the starting blocks) at the proper times.
- It is also important to have warm clothing to wear or stay in the shade between events. Temperatures vary and waiting areas often times will be cool.

- Bring at least 2 towels. Use one during the meet and save the other so you will have a dry one after the meet.
- Bring nourishing snacks for your swimmer to eat at the meet. Most pools usually have a concession stand as well. Some snack suggestions include fruit, granola bars, and sports drinks or water.
- It is expected that swimmers engage in restful activities or cheer on their teammates between events.

Relays

- Relays will be determined by the Coaches
- Relays will be based on individual times, attendance at practice, and swimmers' positive attitude.
- Split times will NOT be used to determine relays.
- Please show good sportsmanship and team spirit; we may ask you to swim your least favorite stroke or swim up with the next age group for the good of the team. Do the right thing, and do your best FOR THE TEAM ALWAYS.

Meet Transportation

Parents are responsible for driving their swimmer to and from any away meets. Carpooling is encouraged, **but not facilitated by the YMCA**. Should YSD provide transportation to a meet, you will be notified in advance.

What to Bring to Meets

Swimmers will need to bring the following to Meets:

Goggles (2 pairs in case one breaks)
 Towels (more than one is good)
 Healthy Snacks
 Water Bottles
 Swim team suit
 Swim team cap (and a spare in case the team cap breaks)
 Extra Clothes
 Jewelry and rash guards are not permitted to be worn during competition

Parent should bring the following:

Folding Chairs
 Camera if you desire (no photography is allowed behind the starting blocks)
 Pop up/canopy if you have one

Warm-ups

It is strongly recommended that all swimmers warm-up at swim meets. Warm-ups give swimmers the chance to not only loosen and warm-up their bodies to prevent injury, it also gives them the opportunity to get familiar with a "new" pool. It is important to practice starts off the blocks, practice turns, and count from the flags if doing backstroke. Not all pools are the same, so we highly recommend ALL swimmers arrive early for warm-ups. All swimmers must warm up at their assigned team time.

At The Meet- Before it starts:

1. Please arrive at meet sites at least 15 minutes prior to warm-ups to get checked in, settled in and begin stretching.
2. Upon arrival, find a place to put your swimmer's blankets, swim bags and/or sleeping bags. The team usually sits in one place together, so look for some familiar faces.
3. Find the check-in place. Make sure your swimmer checks in at the table as well as with his or her coach! Check for special posted instructions in the check-in area.
 - a. Check-in is required so that the people running the meet know who is actually at the meet. After check-in, the meet administrators "seed" the swimmers into heats. Heat and lane assignments will be posted, so be sure your swimmer knows where to look!
4. Once "checked in", write or have the swimmers write each event-number on his or her arm or hand in ink. This helps him/her remember what events he/she is swimming and what event number to listen or watch for.
5. Your swimmer now gets his/her cap and goggles and reports to the pool and/or coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. A swimmer's body is just like a car on a cold day - he/she needs to get the engine going and warmed-up before he/she can go all out!
6. After warm-up, your swimmer will go back to the area where his/her team is sitting and wait there until their first event is called. This is a good time to make sure he/she goes to the bathroom if necessary, gets a drink, or just gets settled in.
7. The meet will usually start about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups are over.
8. According to USA Swimming rules (because of insurance purposes), parents are not allowed behind the blocks unless they are serving in an official capacity. The YMCA follows all USA swimming rules. Similarly, all questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to a coach. He or she, in turn, will pursue the matter through the proper channels. Never approach the officials' table to ask questions without a coach directing you.
9. Psych Sheet or Heat Sheets. A psych sheet is sometimes available for sale in the concession area of the pool for Championship meets. It lists all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time". When the team entry is sent in, each swimmer and his/her previous best time (up to the date that the entry was submitted) in that event is listed. In regular season swim meets, if the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a "no-time" or "NT". A "no-time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event. A Heat sheet will be available close to the start of the meet that lists the actual heat and lane a swimmer will be competing in.

Once the Meet Starts:

1. It is important for any swimmer to know what event numbers he/she is swimming (this is why it is so important to have the numbers on their arm or hand). He/she may swim right away after warm-up or they may have to wait awhile.
2. All swimmers should report to their coaches and inform them of their heat and lane assignments plus check in with them again prior to each event. If your swimmer does not talk to the coach before and after each race, he or she is missing an important part of the meet. Coaches will discuss race strategy and warm up with the swimmer prior to each event and will discuss the swim and areas for improvement after the race as well as explaining any disqualifications
3. All Levels and Championship meet results are computerized while Novice meets are not. There are generally two ways a swimmer gets to his/her lane:

- Computerized: A swimmer usually reports directly to his/her lane for competition a number of heats before he/she actually swims. Check with your swimmer's coach for specific instructions.
 - Novice meets: A swimmer's event number will be called, usually over the loudspeaker, and he/she will be asked to report to the "clerk of course" or "bullpen". Swimmers should report with his/her cap and goggles.
 - Generally, girls' events are odd-numbered and boys' events are even-numbered. Example: "Event #26, 10-Under Boys, 50 freestyle, report to Clerk of Course." The "Clerk of Course" or "bullpen" area is usually where all swimmers checked in before the warm-up.
 - The clerk will usually line up all the swimmers and take them down to the pool in correct order. You can expect at least 4-8 heats of each event.
4. The swimmer swims his or her race.
 5. After each swim:
 - He/she asks the timers (people behind the blocks at each lane) his/her time.
 - Depending on the coach's previous instructions, the swimmer may be asked to do some recovery swimming if a "warm down" pool or lanes are available.
 - The swimmer should then go immediately to his or her coach. The coach will discuss the swim with each swimmer. Some coaches may wish to talk with the swimmer before his/her recovery swim.
 6. Generally, the coach follows these guidelines when discussing swims:
 - Positive comments or praise
 - Suggestions for improvement
 - Positive comments
 7. **Things you, as a parent, can do after each swim:**
 - Tell her/him how great he or she did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with him. You need to tell her/him how proud you are and what a great job she/he did.
 - Take her/him back to the team area and relax.
 - This is another good time to check out the bathrooms, get a drink or something light to eat.
 8. The swimmer now waits until his/her next event is called and starts the procedure again. When a swimmer has completed all of her events he/she and his/her parents get to go home. Make sure, however, you, as a parent, check with the coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included on a relay if they are scheduled for the end of the meet. It is not fair to other swimmers who may have stayed to swim on a relay where your swimmer is expected to be a member and he/she is not there.
 9. Results are usually posted somewhere in the facility. Awards are often gathered for a team and given to the coach at the end of the meet. The coach will give the awards to the swimmers at a later time.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding any information in this packet, please make an appointment to see your Coach or Aquatics Director.

Family Contact Information (TEAR OFF)

Swimmer's Name: _____

Parent's Names: _____

Best Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Best way to contact you: _____

Help us make the Program Better

How can we make this an enjoyable experience for you? _____

What does your child enjoy most about Swim Team? _____

We need all parents to volunteer to help the team. What areas are you interested in (for example Snack Bar, Timing, Set Up, Clean Up, Fundraising, Communications, etc.)

YMCA Swim Team Code of Conduct

Swimmers

As a team member, I will be responsible to come to practice on time, be respectful of other programs going on in the YMCA, prepared to train hard, follow directions and make a commitment to my coaches, parent and teammates. As a swimmer, I will be responsible for my workouts and do what is expected of me. How well and quickly I progress is up to me.

I understand that being on the Team is a privilege based on my swimming skills and social skills. As a Team member I represent the YMCA. I recognize that good sportsmanship, fair play, and cooperative attitude must govern my behavior at all times. Failure to observe this code will result in suspension or termination of privileges.

I fully understand the YMCA values of Caring, Respect, Responsibility and Honesty and will uphold these values.

Swimmer's Name

Date

YMCA Swim Team Code of Conduct

Parent or Guardian

As the parent/guardian of _____, I will be responsible for bringing my child to practice and competitions on time, attend scheduled parent meetings, help with the swim meets we host, pay my daughter's/son's dues and entry fees on time and allow the coaches to do the coaching. I also understand that I will be responsible for participating in YMCA fundraisers.

I will refrain from criticizing coaches, swimmers, or other parents in front of my child or on deck. I understand that coaches have full authority in regard to coaching at all competitions and workouts.

I understand that being on the team is a privilege based on my daughter's/son's swimming skills and social skills. As a team member he/she represents the YMCA. I recognize that good sportsmanship, fair play, and a cooperative attitude govern behavior at all times. Failure to observe this code will result in suspension or termination of privileges.

As a Parent/Guardian I fully understand the YMCA values of Caring, Respect, Responsibility, and Honesty and will uphold these values.

Parent/Guardian

Date