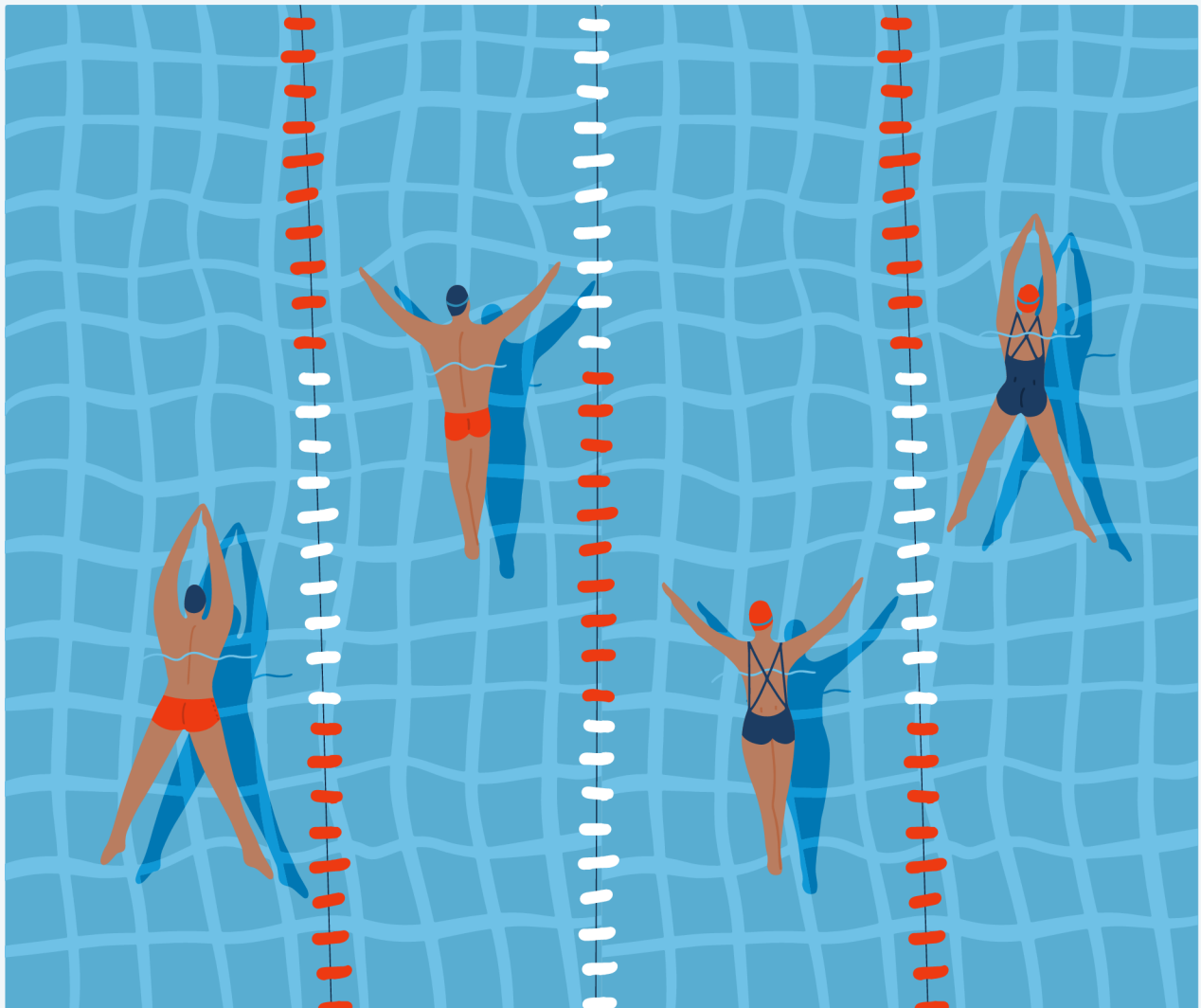




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SWIM MEET TERMINOLOGY & FAQs

Source: MySwimPro ([Link](#))



SWIM MEET TERMINOLOGY

Swim Meet

A swim meet is a competition between individual athletes or between two or more swim teams, organized by a swimming organization or governing body. Swim meets can be held in indoor or outdoor pools. Some swim meets also include a diving competition. The goal of competing is to finish your events as fast as possible, ideally to log a new personal best time or qualify for a larger meet, such as nationals.

If you are competing with a swim team, you will earn points for your overall place in each event. The team with the most points at the end of the meet wins the meet.

Event

An event is an individual swim race.

Events are broken down by distance (50, 100, 200, 500, 1,000, 1 mile), stroke (freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly or I.M.) and oftentimes by age, gender and relay type. You will typically swim 1-5 events in a swim meet, and most meets have a limit to the number of events each swimmer is allowed to register for. You will never swim every event in a swim met.

Most swim meets number their events, and they typically go in a standard order unique to each swim league.

Heat

In each event, there can be many swimmers competing. Depending on the size of the pool, only a limited number of swimmers can race at a time. If a pool has six lanes, then six swimmers will race in the event at a time, which is called one "heat." If there are 60 swimmers competing in the 100 freestyle event in that six-lane pool, there will be 10 heats.

Typically, the swimmers with the slowest seed (entry) times will swim in the first heat, ending the with fastest swimmers in the last heat. Some formats use a circle seed, where swimmers of varying speeds are mixed up within heats.

If you win your heat, you may not have won the entire event. Be sure to check the official results sheet to see where you placed. Usually, official results will be posted within a few minutes of all heats concluding for that event.

Heat Sheet

This is where you find out what you're swimming, when, and where. Most meets print these out and tape them on the pool walls. Some even sell them at the door for a few extra dollars.

?? vs Wells Branch - 5/22/2010 Meet Program - RWB 2010					Age	Team	Seed Time
Event Number	Event Name						
Heat Number	Lane	Team	Relay	Seed Time			
#1 Mixed 6 & Under 100 Yard Freestyle Relay							
Heat 1 of 1 Finals							
Lane Number	1	WB-ZZ	E	NT			
		Stephan, Karls G W5	Scott, Daeni E W5				
		Shanc, Kyle A W6	Simpson, Abs B W6				
	2	WB-ZZ	C	NT			
		Wadehra, Beck R M5	Zayas, Riley S M5				
		Briggor, Mara E W6	Cardwell, Aubrey G W6				
#12 Girls 6 & Under 25 Yard Freestyle							
Heat 1 of 4 Finals							
	1	Chambres, Joy C	4 WB-ZZ	NT			
	2	Walker, Mia T	4 WB-ZZ	NT			
	3	Harper, Sophia N	5 WB-ZZ	NT			
	4	Harris, Arwen M	4 WB-ZZ	NT			
	5	Nguyen, Elisabeth	4 WB-ZZ	NT			
Heat 2 of 4 Finals							
	1	Scott, Daeni E	5 WB-ZZ	NT			
#14 Girls 7-8 25 Yard Freestyle							
Heat 1 of 3 Finals							
	1	Tran, Kimberly T	8 WB-ZZ	NT			
	2	Kane, Jennifer T	7 WB-ZZ	NT			
	3	Finch, Chloe E	8 WB-ZZ	NT			
	4	Schulze, Rachel B	8 WB-ZZ	NT			
	5	Prosper, Anne-Marie J	8 WB-ZZ	NT			
	6	Adams, Fifi J	7 WB-ZZ	NT			
Heat 2 of 3 Finals							
	1	Mehta, Anaya	8 WB-ZZ	NT			
	2	Wadehra, Serena J	8 WB-ZZ	NT			
	3	Carter, Anaya J	8 WB-ZZ	NT			
	4	Waworuntu, Demi K	8 WB-ZZ	NT			
	5	Miles, Payton P	8 WB-ZZ	NT			
	6	Harper, Shelby N	8 WB-ZZ	NT			
Heat 3 of 3 Finals							
	1	Verdicchio, Abbie H	7 WB-ZZ	NT			
	2	Jamalsbad, Hanna	7 WB-ZZ	NT			
	3	Buckley, Emma R	8 WB-ZZ	NT			
	4	Ulsak, Caren R	7 WB-ZZ	NT			

Seed Time

The swimmer's fastest time prior to this meet. Seeding is the method of placing swimmers in lanes in order of their entry times.

Psych Sheets

A ranking of swimmers by event and time.

Lane Number

This is your assigned lane in the pool that you will be racing in, during your heat. Typically, the fastest swimmers in each heat get assigned to the middle lanes.

Try to get to your lane at least 3-4 heats before your race for shorter events, and at least 1-2 heats before your race for longer events. Double check with the lane timers that you are in the right place (they will have a list of swimmers who are slated to swim in their lane that day).

Relay

A relay is typically a combination of four swimmers on the same team. The swimmers take turns completing parts of the race, typically 1/4 of the total distance. Relays are usually either freestyle or a medley.

A 200 freestyle medley means that swimmer #1 swims 50 yards freestyle, then swimmer #2 immediately swims the second leg, then swimmers #3 and #4 swim legs 3 and 4 consecutively. The fastest swimmer is responsible for the last "leg" of the race, and the entire group's time is the final result of the race.

A medley relay is similar, but each swimmer is responsible for completing a different stroke of the I.M. Swimmer #1 does backstroke, swimmer #2 does breaststroke, swimmer #3 does butterfly, and swimmer #4 does freestyle.

Leg

A portion, normally one-quarter, of an individual event or relay event.

Short Course (SCM or SCY) Pool

Short course meters (SCM) identifies a pool that is 25 meters (27.34 yd) in length. Short course yards (SCY) applies to pools that are 25 yards (22.86m) in length.

Long Course Pool

A pool configured for swimming with a 50-meter long race course. Long course racing is done in long course meters (LCM).

I.M.

Slang for individual medley, an event in which the swimmer uses all four competitive strokes in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle. The 100, 200 and 400 IM may be found at swim meets.

Check In

Event organizers will have a check-in table set up at the meet. When you arrive, go to the table and check in with the staff to confirm that you are present. Some meets have a strict policy that you have to check in at least 1 hour prior to the start of the meet.

Meet Official/Referee

A judge on the deck of the pool. Various judges or officials watch the swimmer's strokes, turns and finishes or are timers.

Touchpad

The touchpad is the area at the end of each lane in the pool where a swimmer's time is registered and sent electronically to the timing system and the scoreboard. This touchpad is very sensitive and works best when you push your fingers into it aggressively at the end of your race to ensure your split is recorded.

Watch Time

The recorded time from a stopwatch started and stopped manually by a lane timer. The lane timers use these stopwatches as backup in case the touchpad does not work correctly.

Split

Your split time is the amount of time it took you to swim a specific portion of a race. A timer can record a split after one lap — the length of the pool; two laps — down and back — or any other distance he chooses.

Calculating split times in swimming is a means of calculating an individual swimmer's or relay team's pace over a series of laps. Recording splits and calculating times is useful in determining what legs of the race are covered in what amount of time.

Example: A swimmer's final time for a 100 freestyle is 1:10. In his first 50, he split a :30. On the second 50, he split :40.

DQ (Disqualification)

A DQ is a disqualification from an event. At most meets, stroke and turn judges observe the swimmers to ensure that the starts, strokes, turns, and finishes are performed according to the rules.

If you are disqualified in a race, it means that you have broken one or more of the rules designated for that stroke or for that event. The judge will raise their arm, then fill out a DQ slip. You will be notified of your DQ after your race, and your time will not be counted.

Examples include: diving off the block before the horn is blown, wearing illegal equipment, swimming the wrong stroke in a heat, doing a flutter kick in a breaststroke event, or grabbing on to a lane line. Disqualifications can be seen as a sad or horrible thing, but it is not the end of the world! It's often a great learning experience and is a big motivation to learn how to compete properly.

Scratch

Scratching an event is declaring that, while you are at the meet and intend to race, you will not be participating in a particular race.

Pool Record

A pool record is the fastest recorded time for a specific event in that pool.

Meet Record

A meet record is the fastest recorded time that a swimmer has ever swam a specific event in that same annual/repeating swim meet.

Points

Points are awarded to the team for swimmers placing 1-8 in individual meets and 1-2 in relays. A winner is determined at the end of each meet.

Taper

The resting process in training for swimming competition. As major competition draws near, swimmers will “taper” off the distances swum each day. A perfectly designed taper will enable the swimmer to compete at their peak capability and is one of the most difficult aspects of swim coaching.

Warmup

Used by the swimmer before the race to get their muscles loose and ready to race.

FAQS

Do I need a technical suit (like those in the Olympics) to compete in swimming?

Nope, you don't! Technical suits are very expensive, and many elite swimmers use them during championship-level swim meets. Purchase an affordable, high-quality swimsuit either online or in a sports store. They typically range from \$50-\$100.

How do I know what time I will be swimming?

Swim meet events do not typically run by the clock. Swim meets begin at a designated time, and proceed through the event list in consecutive order, regardless of how long it takes. It is up to you to know what events and heats you are competing in, and to be aware of the pace in which the meet is running at.

Look to the meet scoreboard (where the times for each swimmer appear) to see the event number and heat number, and cross-check with your heat sheet to understand when your events are.

What if I need/want to cancel an event?

That's perfectly fine! You might not get a refund on your meet fee, but the heat will just go on without you in the lane.

Can I change my events?

Yes! Meets typically change the event and heat schedule up to 1 hour in advance of the meet start time. Try your hardest to make all changes at least 1 day in advance of the meet. Once the meet has started, you cannot change your events or heats.

I placed in an event, where do I pick up my medal/ribbon?

Most meets will provide your coaches the medals/ribbons. We encourage you to stay at the meet until the end, and cheer for those who cheered you on earlier in the day!

How do I find out how I did in my event?

Shortly after your event ends, meet officials will print out an official document with all of the results. You can usually find these distributed around the pool about 5-10 minutes after your event ends.

Do I need to cool down after I race?

Yes, we highly encourage all swimmers to do a cool down after each race.

Can I use a ladder to get out of the pool?

Yes. If you are so tired from your heat, most meet officials will allow you to swim over to the wall and use the ladder to get out.

What happens if I don't show up to my heat?

You will be a scratch and you will be disqualified. The heat will go on without you, and they will not make an announcement. If you are part of a relay team, and you do not show up, your entire relay team will be disqualified.

How are the the events timed?

Events are typically timed with an electronic touchpad that is connected to the swim meet's timing system and scoreboard. Swimmers finish their final lap and aggressively press their fingers into the touchpad to record their final times. Almost every meet also has a meet official designated to each lane to record your swim with a handheld stopwatch, just in case the touchpad fails and doesn't register your time.

