

SUBURBAN SWIM LEAGUE
STROKE & TURN OFFICIALS - 2023

BACKSTROKE

Start: Both hands on wall or ankles. (Hands below knees of person “giving ankles”. Heels on deck.)

Both feet on wall. Toes may be above water surface, but not above / curled over edge.

*100 Yard Relays – No Backstroke start on Free Relays.

Stroke:

Swimmer remains on back, except when turning. (Shoulders vertical or toward back)

Some part of body breaks surface at all times after the swimmer surfaces, except when turning and at the finish.

May also be submerged for 15 meters after start/turn before head breaks surface - Use backstroke flags at opposite end of 25 yd/m pools. (20 yd pools-must surface before touch at opposite end.)

Turn:

Some part of body touches the wall.

May roll over past vertical prior to turn, but must be followed by an immediate and continuous execution of the turn. This turn is generally executed by a flipping action that begins with a single or simultaneous double arm pull. Raising/lowering the head is part of the turning action. Gliding or kicking independent of the turning action is NOT allowed. (If the swimmer turns over at the wall and immediately reaches out to touch the wall with no glide or additional strokes/kicks, it would be considered “continuous” and legal.)

If swimmer remains on back until the touch, he/she may turn in any manner desired after touch.

Upper shoulder must be vertical or toward back when feet leave wall.

Finish:

Must be on back at touch (shoulders vertical or toward back).

(If swimmer stands up and touches without turning around, but NO steps toward wall - legal.)

After the swimmer’s head has passed the backstroke flag closest to the finish, the swimmer may resubmerge prior to the finish.

BUTTERFLY

Start: Forward start. (One, or two feet at edge *before* “Take your Marks”, body stationary.)

Stroke:

After start and turn, shoulders remain at or past vertical toward breast.

May be submerged for 15 meters (backstroke flags) after start/turn. Head must break surface at or before 15m.

After surfacing, swimmer must remain on surface until completion of that length.

FIRST (double) arm pull after start/turn may be underwater but must bring swimmer to surface.

No limit on kicks underwater. No stroke/kick ratio.

Arm movement is simultaneous, but does not have to be in the same plane or mirror each other.

Any part of the arm from wrist to shoulder must break the surface when brought forward. (SSL Interpretation)

Kick:

Simultaneous up and down movement of legs and feet.

MAY be on different horizontal levels. One foot may be on top of the other. Knees may be separated.

NO alternating legs/feet (flutter kick), breaststroke kick, or scissors kick.

Turn & Finish:

Body on breast. Touch is simultaneous, at above or below water surface.

The hands must be separated on the touch – not directly stacked on top of one another. *Slight overlapping is ok.*

Shoulders vertical or toward breast when feet leave wall on turn.

FREESTYLE

Forward start. (One, or two feet at edge *before* “Take your Marks”, body stationary.)

May be submerged for 15 meters (backstroke flags) after start/turn before head breaks surface.

Freestyle Events: Any stroke or combination of strokes.

Individual Medley/ Medley Relay: Freestyle may NOT be swum in the style of butterfly, back, or breast. See Individual Medley and Medley Relay for Freestyle.

Must touch at the end of each lap. May stop to rest, but may NOT push off bottom.

BREASTSTROKE

Start: Forward start. (One, or two feet at edge *before* “Take your Marks”, body stationary.)

Stroke:

After start/turn, body on breast.

Stroke cycle: one arm pull FOLLOWED BY one kick.

Two strokes without kick in-between -OR- Two kicks without stroke in-between - DQ

Arm movement is simultaneous.

Hands pushed forward together (from breast) on, under, or over the water.

Hands brought back simultaneously on or under water. **The arms do NOT have to be in same horizontal plane.**

Elbows must remain under water during recovery phase (except last stroke before *turn and finish*).

NO butterfly recovery allowed.

Hands beyond hipline ONLY during first stroke cycle after start or turn.

Head breaks surface during each complete (or incomplete) stroke cycle.

One stroke cycle allowed underwater after start and each turn.

Head must break surface before hands turn inward at widest part of 2nd stroke after start & turn.

Kick:

After start/turn, one optional downward butterfly kick is allowed at any time prior to the first breaststroke kick.

Breaststroke kick is simultaneous. **The legs do NOT have to be in same horizontal plane**

Feet must be turned out during backward push.

Feet breaking water surface is NOT a DQ, unless followed by a clear downward butterfly kick.

Turn and Finish:

Touch is simultaneous, at above or below water surface, but does *not* have to be same plane.

The hands at the touch must be separated – not stacked directly on top of one another. A slight overlapping is ok.

A single or partial stroke without kick is allowed prior to turns and finish.

Head may be submerged after last stroke prior to touch, if it has broken the surface during that stroke cycle.

Shoulders must be at or past vertical toward the breast when the feet leave wall on turn.

INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY

Start: Forward start. (One, or two feet at edge *before* “Take your Marks”, body stationary.)

Stroke: Fly, Back, Breast, Free – in that order. Rules for each stroke apply.

Transition turns: Must finish each stroke according to finish rules for that stroke.

Fly-Back turn: Shoulders vertical or toward breast before touch, simultaneous 2-hand touch.

Shoulders vertical or toward *back* when feet leave wall.

Back-Breast turn: Finish on back. Shoulders vertical or toward breast when feet leave wall.

Breast-Free turn: Shoulders vertical or toward *breast* before touch, simultaneous 2-hand touch. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner and must return to the breast before any kick or stroke. The swimmer must remain on the breast for the remainder of the race.

RELAYS

Medley: Back, Breast, Fly, Free.

Medley: Each swimmer follows rules for that stroke, including finish. In freestyle, the swimmer must be on the breast except when turning. The swimmer must return to the breast before any kick or stroke.

No “Step-up or Running starts” - either relay. (Must have at least one foot at or near edge before beginning starting motion.)

No Backstroke starts on any relay, except first swimmer of Medley relay. (including 100 yard relays.)

Take-off: next swimmer may be in motion prior to touch of in-coming swimmer, but must be in contact with the end of the pool when or after the touch is made.

Single confirmation is used for relay take-offs at dual meets.

Dual confirmation will be used at Time Trials.

GENERAL:

Benefit of doubt goes to swimmer. Judge your lanes only. Signal DQ immediately. DQ slips (SSL or USA-S) are required. Write judge’s name so legible.

3 Questions: What did you see? What was the rule violation? Where were you positioned?