

SUBURBAN SWIM LEAGUE  
***STROKE & TURN RULES INTERPRETATIONS – 2024***

While the USA Swimming Stroke and Turn rules are to be applied to all swimmers, the Suburban Swim League allows the interpretations that are listed below:

**8 & UNDER and 6 & UNDER SWIMMERS:** The interpretations below will be allowed for the entire DUAL MEET season. However, they will **not** be accepted at Time Trials & Championships.

1. Swimmers must be able to swim the basic Stroke. A Breaststroker should be doing the basic Breaststroke, etc. Single stroke violations may be overlooked, such as the swimmer who does an occasional flutter kick or underwater recovery in the butterfly. A swimmer who pauses and resumes swimming legally should not be disqualified. Violations which are blatant and repeated are not allowed and should be disqualified. Allowance should never be made for a swimmer who incorrectly swims a stroke to gain an advantage.
  - *A swimmer who starts an incorrect stroke at the beginning of a race should **be disqualified**.*
  - ***Swimmers that** “flop-in” at the start and then swim correctly without *repeated* stroke violations should **not** be disqualified.*
  - *A swimmer in the Breaststroke or Butterfly who does a deep dive at the start and strokes/ kicks to the surface in a manner not consistent with the rules for that stroke, should be disqualified. This includes doggie paddle, flutter kick, scissors kick, and breaststroke kick in the butterfly. The violations must be clearly seen and must be describable by the official to be a disqualification.*
2. Two hand touches are required in breaststroke and butterfly. Some discretion may be allowed when the swimmer is attempting to touch with both hands simultaneously, but the contact is not simultaneous. *A clear one-hand touch must be disqualified in the Breaststroke and Butterfly.*
3. Swimmers in Backstroke should remain on their back until the touch is made. Discretion is allowed if the swimmer rolls slightly past vertical as the touch is made. *A clear rollover to the breast followed by the touch, is disallowed.*
4. Freestyle swimmers in the Medley Relay may roll onto their back (rest/breathe) until the touch is made. They may kick or scull to remain afloat but may not “swim backstroke – e.g. alternating arm pull)
5. Relays -
  - *If a swimmer enters at the opposite end on the start, the disqualification should be overlooked if the swimmer is recovered with no interference.*
  - *If a swimmer in the next event enters as a continuation of the present relay, the disqualification should be overlooked if there is no interference.*
  - *If a swimmer remains in the pool at the completion of their leg of the relay race and does not exit the pool immediately there should be no DQ for not exiting the pool immediately. If the swimmer who remains in the pool causes another swimmer to violate the rules, the DQ should be called.*
6. Time Trials and Championships - *At Time Trials and Championships, each stroke shall be interpreted according to the USA-S Rulebook. **The allowances listed above will not be accepted at Time Trials and Championships.***

**ALL SWIMMERS: DUAL MEETS AND CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**BUTTERFLY: Stroke:** **If any part of the arm from wrist to shoulder breaks the surface when brought forward, it is considered to be a legal stroke recovery.**

**2-HAND TOUCHES – BREASTSTROKE & BUTTERFLY:** Although USA Swimming now requires that the hands are separated on the touch, the SSL is not concerned with a slight overlapping. It will only be a violation if one hand is **clearly on top of the other hand (i.e. stacked one on top of the other)**.

**15 Meter Mark for Backstroke, Butterfly and Freestyle** – use the far flags in 25 y/m pools, the far end of the pool in 20 yard pools. This applies even in pools with 15 meter marks on the lane lines.

**Handicapped and Disabled Swimmers** – Swimmers who are disabled or have a handicap that prevents the use of a limb (arm or leg) or appendage (hand or foot) will not be required to use the limb or appendage as required by the USA Swimming Rule 101. For example:

1. Swimmers missing a leg or arm will not be required in butterfly or breaststroke to move the arms or legs simultaneously.
2. Swimmers with a leg or arm that cannot be used will not be required in butterfly or breaststroke to move the legs or arms simultaneously.
3. In butterfly or breaststroke, swimmers with a leg or arm that is not fully developed will be required to move the leg or arm simultaneously with the other leg or arm but not as a mirror image of the whole leg or arm. This is no different than a swimmer with two fully functioning legs or arms that move in accordance with Rule 101 but are not moved as mirror images of each other.
4. A swimmer with a foot that will not turn outward in breaststroke will be required to move the legs simultaneously ~~and on the same plane~~, but will not be required to turn the handicapped foot outward. A butterfly or scissors kick is not allowed.

**Autistic or other special needs swimmers.**

1. Allowances will be made as requested by the coach to accommodate special needs.
  - a. E.g. the coach may request that DQs of an autistic or special needs swimmer not be signaled by raising a hand and be reported inconspicuously to the referee. The referee will prepare the DQ slip and inform the coach but so as to not let the swimmer know about the DQ.

**Hard of hearing or deaf swimmers** – on the Start, use hand signals to signal the swimmer to step to the edge of the pool (raise arm vertically), Take your Mark (lower arm to horizontal position), Start signal (drop arm to the side). Alternately, a coach, parent, or other swimmer may tap the swimmer on the leg when the Start Signal is given. Confirm the hand signals to be used with the coach or parent before the meet. Ask the coach to remind you of the use of hand signals just before the race.