

Swim tips



[Trish18](#) 454 posts since

Jun 5, 2007

Looking for some beginner swimming tips. What are some good bits of wisdom to know when jumping back into the pool for the first time in a long time?

Tags: swimming, beginner, tips



[Active Toby](#) 1,540 posts since

Jun 5, 2007 1. **Re: Swim tips** Jul 10, 2007 10:54 AM

I would recommend using a kick-board to work on your kicking and a pull-buoy to work on your pull and then put it all together as well. I highly recommend bilateral breathing. Its such a good way to keep your stroke balanced and train your body to maximize each breath. Let us know how it goes!



[Wilco](#) 58 posts since

Jul 8, 2007 2. **Re: Swim tips** Jul 10, 2007 5:21 PM

I concur with Toby. 1/4 of the time upper body (use those things that you secure with your thighs) , 1/4 of the time lower body (kickboard), 1/4 combined, and 1/4 of the time treading water to help with the cardio and acts as a cool down.



[into](#) 11 posts since

Jul 15, 2007 3. **Re: Swim tips** Jul 24, 2007 2:22 AM

Trish 18 "when jumping back into the pool for the first time in a long time?" First check the depth of the water and you may have better luck entering cautiously, avoid head injuries at all costs. Also make sure your bathing suit fits, you don't want to have the suit slip off. Try to start with some upper body conditioning/strength training-the upper arms are key to the crawl/freestyle. Also incorporate abdominal work outs and flexibility/core work. You can learn a lot by visiting the pool and observing technique. Swimming is very much about technique. All sorts of interesting approaches are alive and well. The basic concept is "form, form and and more form". Proper technique is the key to swimming.

The basis concepts involve getting sleek in the water. Getting sleek means to develop the perpendicular axis in the water. Swimming side ways rather than flat. With each stroke rotating on one's side. Use the kick not so much for propulsion as for balance. Kick from the

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thigh, pivot from the hips. Stay tall in the water. Practice bilateral breathing on alternate laps to balance the left/right stroke.



[FirstimeTRier](#) 14 posts since

Jul 23, 2007 4. **Re: Swim tips** Jul 25, 2007 6:30 PM

I agree with Toby also;

work on your shoulder rotation, kick(with a kick board) and the breathing. I know bi-lateral breathing is not an easy part to achieve but work on it. Always remember not too look up as it will lift the head and will sink the legs, so keep your head down so your legs and lower torso stays afloat. Good luck!



[T3charlie](#) 79 posts since

Jul 9, 2007 5. **Re: Swim tips** Jul 26, 2007 7:39 PM

Trish, head to the local bookstore or jump on-line and read up on some of the stroke drills that are invaluable when developing your swim technique. All are designed to lengthen your stroke, improve your timing and your body's ability to "flow", and add power and grace to your form. The number one tip I can offer for returning swimmers or for newbies is that it takes time in the water to be a good swimmer. Laps, laps, laps. I disagree with the idea that a kickboard should be used a great deal (someone said a quarter of the time). Kickboards - in my humble opinion - are a resting device, and real kick training should be done streamlined in the water. I also would downplay the value of pull-bouys in a beginner's regimen. While you are "young" in the water, your full-body timing (the interplay between stroke, kick, and body positioning) should be developed. I'm sure there will be plenty of folks who disagree, so my last suggestion will be to find and interact with a local Master's swimming group so that you can swim with people of various skill levels and get real-time, tangible feedback and critique of your training. In that way, you can learn what best works for you. Good luck! Xraytriguy



[culinarydoctor](#) 77 posts since

Oct 31, 2007 6. **Re: Swim tips** Dec 31, 2007 7:08 PM

Hydrodynamics are the physics that govern water. By spending time in the water, it helps to develop the natural flow, or understanding of hydrodynamics. Swimming a mile might

actually help with your 25m / 50m / 500m times. There is really no substitute for swimming, but the various tools that can be used in the pool can help to improve specific skills. For instance the kick board and pull buoy. Fins and webbed neoprene gloves can also be used, either alone or in combination; kickboard and fin, or pull buoy and webbed gloves. By increasing the surface area of propulsion the generated force increases, which helps to strengthen the utilized muscles. The X-Vest is another training tool for advanced swimmers.

It is basically a weighted vest, but it is also waterproof. Makes treading water more difficult, let alone moving through the water. Many swimmers also use bricks for various drills, and last semester when I took a lifeguarding class we grabbed a 5 gallon jug of water, filled it and treaded with it above our head as the whole thing dumped out. It was very challenging, and next summer I will be using this technique to cool off in the heat of the day. One last tool that I recommend for swim training is the expand-a-lung (<http://expand-a-lung.com/>). This small, simple device is nothing more than a mouthpiece and a valve. It is used to increase the pressure required to inhale and exhale. In my opinion the expand-a-lung is better than other products like it because it can be adjusted by turning the valve. Helps to focus on contracting the diaphragm. Great to for breathing training. Other smart practice is Qi Gong. wu sa.

As mentioned before, body roll (parallel torso rotation) can drastically improve swimming by increasing each stroke length, especially for freestyle / frontcrawl. Here are some specific tips for each stroke and land exercises for them as well.

Freestyle - bend your elbows as your arm moves forward, and then drive your hand into the water. Land exercises; back extension with alternating arms extended holding light weight, torso twists, flutter kicks, and other ground abdominal work. Core strength is key.

Breaststroke - pull, breathe, kick, glide. Practice the kick-glide especially, feet flexed to toes pointed as you kick. Land exercises; lat pulldown / pull ups, plie squats, shoulder circles and tricep extensions.

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Backcrawl - hands enter with the pinkies, pull the water past your ear, scoop the water and push it to your hip. Land exercises; kettlebell swings, shoulder circles, tricep extensions and other ground abdominal work.

Sidestroke - keep your bottom ear in the water, this will help to bring your body more parallel. Leading hand guides, following hand pushes, and the legs drive (top leg forward, bottom leg backwards, and then together). Land exercises; front kicks, back kicks and tricep extensions.

I'm still working on my butterfly, and will keep you updated for technique tips. One more thing, don't be afraid to jump out of the pool and do some pushups or bodysquats. Overall fitness will improve swimming. Stay tuned for my up and coming book about maximizing impact while performing cannonball. just kidding. happy new year!