

Definitions and Abbreviations

Swimming Terms

Pull or Pulling: Can be done using all strokes, but most commonly doing freestyle, with a pull buoy between your thighs. This can be done with or without paddles.

IM or Individual Medley: Swim each stroke in order of Fly, Back, Breast, Free for equal distances (*i.e.*, 100 IM equals 1 length, or 25 yards, of each stroke).

Rollover IM: Swim each stroke in IM order, except total length of the individual swims is not divisible by 4. For example, 75 Rollover IMs would be Fly, Back, Breast. The next 75 would be Free, Fly, Back, the next 75 would be Breast, Free, Fly, and so on.

Descend: Swim each distance faster than the previous distance. For example, 4x100 descend, would be swim the first 100 at 75% effort, the next at 80% effort, the next at 85% effort, and the last at 90% effort – the time it takes for each 100 should descend.

Build: Swim each length of a distance faster/harder than the previous. For example, build a 100 would be the first 25 at 75% effort, the second at 80% effort, the third at 85% effort, and the last at 90% effort.

Distance Per Stroke or DPS: Swim focusing on covering as much distance per stroke as you can. Usually requires slowing down your stroke/turnover rate. Focus on extending your arms in front of you as far as possible and making your stroke as long and efficient as possible.

Kick-Swim: Alternating laps between kicking dolphin or flutter kicking on your back followed by a lap of freestyle swimming.

Circle Swimming: Swimming within a lane in a circular manner, so that your right shoulder is always close to the lane line. Usually done when there are more than 2 people in a lane.

Breakdown: Consists of doing equal lengths of swimming, kicking, pulling, and then swimming again. For example, an 800 Breakdown would be 200 yards each of swimming, kicking, pulling, and swimming. Usually done as a warm-up.

Swimming Golf of SWOLF: Count your strokes for one length of the pool and add that number to the time (seconds) it took to get a score. For example, if it took you 16 strokes and 20 seconds, your score = 36. On the next lap try to lower your score by increasing your speed and/or the efficiency of each stroke.

Base: The interval, or the time of each swim in a set at which you can comfortably swim a sustained aerobic effort for a long distance (*e.g.*, 1000 yards). It is not the fastest interval you can swim but it does challenge you while allowing you to remain in control of your swims (*i.e.*, keep up strong pace for the whole set). For example, if you are doing a set of 10x100s at "base" you should be able to maintain your speed and have 5-10 seconds of rest between each 100. If you can complete each 100 on 1:50 or 1:55 then your base is 2:00. If a swim (or a set of swims) in a workout is written as "base +5" then, in the example above, it would be on 2:05. "Base -5" would be 1:55.

Arm Stroke Drills

Sophia Drill: Swim with a pull buoy between your ankles, with or without pull paddles.

Texas 50s: Start in the middle of the pool. Swim to one end, do a turn, swim a complete length, do another turn, swim back to your starting place in the middle of the pool. This drill is used to practice turns.

One Arm Lead: Kick on your side, your lower arm (in the water) fully extended in front of you, the other arm fully extended down your side. Keep your head turned down watching the center line of the lane.

Gallop Drill: Swim 3 strokes freestyle then roll on your side, lower arm extended in front of you, upper arm fully extended down your side (see One arm lead) kick for 6 kicks. Swim 3 more strokes, then roll to your other side and kick 6 more kicks. Repeat for length of swim.

Zipper Drill: Swim freestyle, as your arms recover (come out of the water to be placed in front of you) run your thumb up your side making sure your elbow comes out of the water first.

Fingertip Drill: Swim freestyle, as your arms recover keep your fingertips in contact with the surface of the water. Frequently combined with Zipper drill.

Catch-up Drill: Swim freestyle, but after each stroke recovery the hands meet in front before the other arm begins to stroke – they “catch-up” in the front. Referred to as front-end swimming.

Kicking Drills

Vertical Tombstone: Flutter or freestyle kicking with a kick board, with or without fins. Hold your kick board in front of you perpendicular to the surface of the water with the long axis vertical (like a tombstone).

Horizontal Tombstone: Flutter or freestyle kicking with a kick board, with or without fins. Same as Vertical Tombstone except hold your kick board in front of you perpendicular to the surface of the water with the long axis horizontal.

Shooters: Kick under water for as long as you comfortably can. Surface when you need to take a breath, then re-submerge and kick until you reach the end of the pool. Allow yourself to catch your breath before starting the next lab. This drill can be done with or without fins, usually done dolphin kick, but can also be done with flutter kick (freestyle kick). The primary focus should be a good streamline position.

Vertical Kicking:

Position your body in an upright position and kick to keep your head out of water. This drill will vary with your arms in various positions that make the drill increasingly difficult. For example, start with your arms crossed on your chest, then hands out of the water, and most difficult arms straight up out of the water. Can be done using fins.

Devon Drill: Perform dolphin kick on your back with your arms above you, out of the water. Often done using fins.

Back Dolphin with a pull buoy between your knees:

Usually done with fins. Perform dolphin kick on your back, holding a pull buoy between your knees.