

Doncaster DARTES ASC

AGE GROUP TECHNIQUE GUIDELINES

Freestyle

Body Position

1. Head position should be comfortable at a 45° angle with the water line slightly above the goggles.
2. Hips and shoulders should remain high in the water with a straight line from head to feet.
3. Rotation of the body should be encouraged.

Legs

1. Swimmers should maintain a 6 beat leg kick.
2. Legs should be almost straight with the feet remaining slightly below the surface; Toes should be pointed with ankles relaxed to allow good hold on the water.
3. The legs should move in line with the body rotation to avoid the body twisting.

Arms

1. The elbow should be lifted to initiate the arm recovery and the hand and forearm should remain relaxed
2. Once the elbow is vertical from the shoulder the arm should begin to extend in a straight line with the finger tips slightly above the water.
3. Entry should be in line with the shoulder and occur just before the arm is straight. With the hand sliding into the water with the **MIDDLE FINGERS FIRST** little disturbance/ splash.
4. The body should follow the arm by rotating until full extension of the arm. From the side you should be able to draw an imaginary straight line through the head, hips and feet.
5. Catch should be with the elbow fixed and rotated upwards (high elbow), the forearm with the hand in line should then move below the elbows position.
6. At this point there would be straight line acceleration to push past the hip.

Breathing

1. Swimmers should aim to breath bilaterally (holding a 3 stroke breathing pattern)
2. The swimmer should continue to exhale while the face is in the water instead of holding the breath.
3. The rotation of the body should initiate the breathing as the head turns at the same time as the body.
4. The position should be as low as possible to the water level and looking directly to the side.
5. The head should return to the central position quickly but smoothly

Timing

1. The hips and shoulders rotate at the end of the catch to assist in the acceleration of the stroke.

Additional

- Distance per stroke should be emphasised with the aim of 12-14 strokes per 25m.
- All starts and turns should be performed in a tight streamlined position with 4 fly kicks and 2 strokes without breathing to maintain initial speed.

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- Rotation speed on turns should be less the 1 second from last hand entry to feet touching.

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Butterfly

Body Position

1. The head should be in a neutral position looking directly down.
2. The upper body should remain as flat as possible with the hips undulating but remaining high in the water.

Legs

1. Two kicks should occur for each stroke.
2. All kicks should be a whipping action starting with hip movement.
3. Both legs should move at the same time, with the aim of keeping the legs straight but relaxed, with toes pointed.

Arms

1. Arm recovery should sweep low over the water, with arms straight and palms facing upwards.
2. The entry should be directly in front of the shoulder and there should be minimal disturbance/ splash.
3. Once the hands enter they should remain high in the water to avoid excessive undulation, although the chest should press slightly as the hips rise above the surface to initiate the 1st kick.
4. The catch should occur with the **ELBOWS HIGH** and remaining in front of the shoulders until the hands and forearm are directly below.
5. During the underwater phase the hands should remain narrow and move in a straight line towards the hips, **NOT MOVE IN A KEYHOLE SHAPE**.
6. The stroke should always be accelerated towards the end to provide maximum propulsion and allow an easier recovery.
7. The hands release the water once the hands have push to the hips and exit little finger first.

Breathing

1. The swimmer should aim to breathe once every 2 or 3 strokes (depending on event distance/ individual preference) to avoid wasting energy.
2. Breathing should begin as the arms accelerate through the underwater phase.
3. The neck should extend and the chin should be pushed forwards along the surface of the water to allow the upper body to remain flat as possible and maintain efficiency.
4. The head comes out before the arms come out and the head goes in before the hands go in.

Timing

1. The 1st kick on entry and the 2nd as the arms push back towards the hips.
2. The 1st kick is a natural movement which is a reaction to body movement.
3. The 2nd kick provides propulsion and power and must be timed to complement the breathing.

Additional

- Distance per stroke is the key to effective fly swimming with a target of 10-12 strokes per 25m.
- All starts and turns should occur with a tight streamlined position and 4 fly kicks and at least 1 stroke without breathing.
- All turns and finishes should be performed with a two handed touch and the arms at full extension.

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Backstroke

Body Position

1. The head should be still but relaxed and in line with the body at all times.
2. An imaginary straight line should be through the head, shoulders, hips and feet.
3. **HIGH/ EXCESSIVE BODY ROTATION SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED.** To enable the engagement of more muscle groups helping to generate more force during the pull.

Legs

1. A 6 beat leg kick should be maintained. (6 kicks to every stroke cycle)
2. The legs should be kept in line with the body rotation and kick direction should be allowed to change to mimic angle of the hips.
3. The legs should be kept straight but relaxed with the toes point to allow better hold on the water.
4. The knees and feet should remain under the surface of the water.

Arms

1. The arm recovery should be straight arm with the hand relaxed.
2. The shoulder and hip should be rotated so that the body is practically on the side at the mid point of the recovery. The swimmer should be able to look along the shoulder arm and hand as it passes the above the head.
3. **THE ENTRY SHOULD BE IN LINE WITH THE SHOULDER.**
4. The little finger should enter first with minimal disturbance/ splash.
5. The hand/ arm remain straight but should sink approximately 10-12" to allow the palm of the hand to point down and get to still water.
6. The catch should occur with a **HIGH ELBOW** with the fingers and forearm pointing toward the pool bottom.
7. The stroke should accelerate throughout and finish with the hand pushing past the hips to finish the stroke.
8. Aim to pull relatively closely to the body; a wide pull will put strain on the shoulder and increase resistance/ reduce power.
9. The hand should release the water and exit thumb first.

Breathing

1. Breathing should be regular, breath in on one arm and out on the other.
2. Always stay relaxed on breathing never to explosive to prevent the body lifting and dropping in the water.

Timing

1. Arms should always remain opposite.
2. The rotation should occur as the catch finishes and the recovering arm is in a vertical position. This will accelerate the propulsive phase and allow entry in the right position.

Additional

- Distance per stroke should be emphasised with the aim of 12-14 strokes per 25m.
- All starts and turns should be performed in a tight streamlined position with 4 fly kicks.
- Breakouts should be smooth and transfer speed efficiently into the stroke.
- Competition quality finishes should be practiced at every opportunity.

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Breaststroke

Body position

1. The head should be held at a 45° angle with the arms pressing in at the side of the head.
2. The swimmers hands, head, shoulders, hips and feet should be in a straight line.
3. The hips should always remain high and at the same height in the water.

Legs

1. The leg recovery should be smooth with the feet moving towards the hips, **KNEES SHOULD REMAIN ROUGHLY SHOULDER WIDTH APART.**
2. The feet should be held ridged and turned outwards during the propulsive phase of the kick which should be a round accelerating whip action, directing the force backwards.
3. The kick should finish with the knees and ankles together and toes pointed to enable more efficient streamlining.
4. During the initial part of the pull the legs should be held ridged and high.

Arms

1. Thumbs pressed together in a tight breaststroke streamline position.
2. The arm action begins as the leg action finishes.
3. The arms remain straight as they press out until the body is in a "Y" position. This should be performed quite slowly to enable maximum hold.
4. The elbows then fix as the hands and forearms accelerate down and in to the middle. **PULL WITH HANDS NOT ELBOWS.**
5. At the end of the in sweep the hands should almost clap and will be away from the chest and at the surface to allow a shorter recovery.
6. The recovery should be performed with the hands at the surface of the water until full extension of the arms.
7. The in sweep and recovery should be as fast as possible.

Breathing

1. The head should be kept in line with the back and is more of a body lift than a head lift. This starts as the hands move through the down and in sweep as this provides the lift for the body.
2. Swimmers should not hold the breath at any point.
3. The arm recovery will dictate when the body and head move back into the water.

Timing

1. The feet should recover as the arms recover and begin to kick just before the upper body returns to the streamlined position.
2. Depending on event distance (50/100/200m) the glide phase will be held for differing lengths of time. Stroke technique should always remain the same.

Additional

- Distance per stroke is vital to fast breaststroke swimming especially over bigger distances so counts of 8-10 strokes per 25m should be targeted.
- Swimmers should maximise streamlining out of starts and turns with a powerful breast pull to the hips, a well timed fly kick and a strong breast kick during underwater transition phase.

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- Breakouts should be smooth and transfer the speed generated from the start/turn efficiently in to the first few stroke.