

VHSL COMMON STROKE & TURN DISQUALIFICATIONS

1. **FREESTYLE:**
 - a. Failure to touch at the turn. (NOTE: if touch missed, swimmer may reach back and make a legal touch or may come back if he missed the wall, but **only** in freestyle.)
 - b. Walking on, running on or contacting the bottom of the pool to gain an advantage.
 - c. Swimming in the wrong lane for any portion of the race—applies to all strokes/events.
 - d. Getting artificial assistance (e.g., grasping and pulling on the lane lines; pushing off side walls.)
 - e. Head fails to surface by 15 meters (16.4 yards); but it is OK to re-submerge at finish.
 - f. Failure to swim required distance—swimmer is responsible for distance even if lane counter and/or last lap bell is incorrect

2. **BACKSTROKE:**
 - a. Swimmer submerged after start or turn and head surfacing beyond 15 meters (16.4 yards); but it is OK to re-submerge at finish.
 - b. Turning shoulders past vertical on the turn and, after pulling forward with arm already in motion or simultaneously with both arms, taking additional pulls to bring swimmer closer to the wall before initiating the pulling or somersaulting action. (Note: Independent gliding/kicking is permitted either before or after the arm pull)
 - c. Failure to return to or past vertical toward the back before swimmer leaves the wall on the turn.
 - d. When shoulders have turned past vertical on the turn, swimmer misses touch on the wall after doing a somersault and sculls back to touch.
 - e. Turning shoulders past vertical at the finish.
 - f. Getting artificial assistance (e.g., grasping and pulling on the lane lines to assist forward motion; pulling or pushing off side walls.)
 - g. Toes curling over lip of gutter or deck after the start. Note, toes are no longer required to be below the surface of the water at the start.

3. **BREASTSTROKE:**
 - a. Body not at or past the vertical towards the breast following the start or when the swimmer leaves the wall after a turn.
 - b. At the start or after any turn, head still below the water surface when the arms reach the widest part of the second arm stroke after the start and each turn (8-2-2-c).
 - c. Sculling with the hands at the end of the first arm stroke after start or turn.
 - d. Over-the-water recovery with elbows **out** of the water (except after last stroke prior to turns or at the finish).
 - e. Sidestroke or scissors kick (any alternating movement of the feet or legs).
 - f. Downward butterfly kick or flutter kicks other than a **single** downward dolphin kick **after the first arm pull begins and before the first breaststroke kick** after the start and after each turn.
 - g. Touch not simultaneous; one-hand touch on turns or finish. (Need not be on the same level.)
 - h. Getting artificial assistance (e.g., grasping and pulling on the lane lines; pushing off side walls.).

4. **BUTTERFLY:**
 - a. Alternating kicking movement, such as flutter kicks, where legs are moving in different directions at the same time.
 - b. Scissors or breaststroke kicking movement.
 - c. Failure of head to surface by 15 meters (16.4 yards); but it is OK to re-submerge at finish.
 - d. Arm movements (both stroke and recovery) not simultaneous.
 - e. Arm recovery not over the water after pull; this is especially prevalent into the turn or finish (usually characterized by short pull and an underwater, stabbing touch).
 - f. Touch not simultaneous or one-hand touch on turns or the finish. (Need not be at the same level.)
 - g. Getting artificial assistance (e.g., grasping and pulling on the lane lines; pushing off side walls.)

5. **INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY** (All transition turns are judged by *finish* rules):
- Violation of any rule pertaining to individual strokes. (NOTE: When turning from the butterfly to the backstroke, after a legal touch, the swimmer's shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the back when the swimmer leaves the wall. Also, when finishing the backstroke portion, the swimmer must make a legal touch on the back (rule does not say so explicitly but this should be judged as "at or past the vertical toward the back"). Regardless of how the turn is thereafter executed, the swimmer's shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast before leaving the wall in breaststroke.
 - Swimming a legal breaststroke, or butterfly in the freestyle leg (NOTE: in NFHS, *illegal* variations of breaststroke or butterfly that are illegal from the first stroke and remain illegal are permitted in the freestyle leg but **any** stroke done on the back is considered backstroke).
 - Swimming the strokes out of order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle
6. **RELAYS:**
- Early take-off (swimmer on the block leaves before incoming swimmer touches the wall).
 - Running take-off (the forward start must be used by all relay swimmers other than the lead off of the medley relay); forward start is defined as foot/feet at the front edge of the platform or pool deck.
 - Failure to swim proper order of strokes.
 - Stroke violation.
 - Failure to swim required distance.
 - The 1st swimmer of a relay, once called to the starting platform by the referee, shall not change his/her swimming order in the relay event with any teammate. Also, each relay card must indicate, not later than the conclusion of the heat, the actual order of swimmers in that heat.
 - Entering the water without permission: whole team is disqualified if any member, other than the swimmer designated to swim, enters the pool before **all other competitors** have finished, **and that individual is disqualified from further competition**. (This is a Referee's call; however, the Stroke & Turn Judge should let the Referee know of violations in this area. If all other competitors have finished, that competitor is disqualified from his/her next scheduled event.)
 - Failure to exit the pool promptly after swimming required quarter of race.
7. **OTHER**
- Suits—only one suit may be worn and it must be made of permeable fabric. Men's suits may not extend below the knee or above the waist. Women's suits may not extend below the knee or below the shoulder on the arms nor cover the neck.
 - Jewelry—nothing is permitted other than medical or religious medal that is securely taped to the skin. Functional items such as elastic hair ties are not considered jewelry, if worn in the hair. The rule now provides that only the refusal to remove jewelry when directed to do so is a disqualification.
 - Pacing devices—no pacing device is permissible. Watches are an example, but are illegal under the jewelry rule as well.
 - Logos—the rules severely limit the size and number of commercial logos worn on the suit or cap; swimmers may not wear a suit or cap that displays a logo or name of any team other than the high school team they are representing at the meet. There is no size limit (yet?) on the logo for the school.
 - Unsportsmanlike conduct—making insulting or derogatory remarks, gestures or acts including taunting, or showing disgust with officials' decisions or with own or other competitors' performance. (NOTE: This is a referee call, but S & T judges should bring potential violations to referee's attention. The referee may choose to provide a first warning.)
 - Entering or re-entering the water without the referee's permission.
 - Jumping into water—for backstroke (and any other in-water) starts, rules state that swimmer shall **step** into the water—NO jumping in or cannonballs or flips off the deck or block. Considered a false start.
 - Shaving onsite is not permitted, before, during or after the meet.
 - Tattoos are not specifically addressed, but if deemed "objectionable" by the referee, could be subject to a conduct violation with swimmer disqualified from further competition in the meet, but covering the tattoo should be considered first.