



RECOMMENDED STROKE BRIEFING Virginia Swimming, Inc.



The job of the officiating team is to ensure fair and equitable competition for ALL competitors. The rules are the same without regard to the age of the swimmers, the level of meet or the time of year.

BREASTSTROKE:

- At the start of the race and after each turn, the swimmer *may* take one arm pull and one leg kick, in that order, while completely submerged (rules comm. interpretation). The head must break the surface of the water by the time the arms turn inward from the widest part of the second arm pull.
- From the beginning of the first arm stroke after the start and each turn, the body shall be kept on the breast, but the position of the shoulders is irrelevant.
- The arms must move simultaneously and in the same horizontal plane with no alternating movement.
- During the recovery movement, the hands may be at, above or below the water surface, and they must be pushed forward from the breast.
- The elbows must stay in contact with the water during the recovery phase of the arm stroke throughout the race except for the last stroke before the turn, during the turn, and the last stroke before the finish.
- The only time the hands may be brought back beyond the hipline is during the first arm pull after the start and after each turn.
- All vertical and lateral motion of the legs shall be simultaneous
- The position of the toes is key to judging the breaststroke kick. If the toes are pointed out during the propulsion part of the kick, it is a legal breaststroke kick. If the feet are dropping with the toes still turned in while the knees are pulling up during the recovery, it is legal.
- There shall be no scissor, flutter or downward butterfly kick. Breaking the surface of the water with the feet is not a disqualification unless accompanied by a downward butterfly kick.
- At the turns and the finish, a two hand simultaneous touch at, above, or below the water surface is required.
- Once a touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner.
- After the final pull into the wall at the turns and the finish the arms no longer need to be in the same horizontal plane. However, the shoulders must remain at or past the vertical towards the breast until the touch and must resume that position when the swimmer leaves the wall.

BUTTERFLY:

- After the start and each turn, the swimmer's shoulders shall be at or past vertical towards the breast.
- The swimmer may take as many underwater kicks as he or she wants but the first arm pull must bring him or her to the surface of the water.
- The head must break the surface of the water by the 15M mark following the start and each turn, after which some part of the body must remain on the water surface until the next turn or finish.
- During the swim, the arms must recover simultaneously over the water surface. There shall be no underwater recovery.
- All movements of the legs and feet shall be simultaneous. There shall be no alternating, scissors or breaststroke kick.
- At the turns and the finish, there shall be a two hand simultaneous touch.
- Once a touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner.

BACKSTROKE:

- Immediately following the start, standing in or curling the toes over the lip of the gutter is not permitted, although the toes may be brought above the surface of the water if a flat wall or full touch pads are being used.
- The swimmer must be at or past the vertical towards the back during the swim.

- The head must break the surface of the water by 15M and some part of the body must remain on the water surface throughout the swim, except for the first 15M after the turn and at the touch at the finish.
- At each turn, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall.
- During the turn, the swimmer may turn past the vertical towards the breast, at which time he may use a single or simultaneous double arm pull to execute the turn.
- Once a swimmer has left his or her position on the back, any arm pull or kick must be part of a continuous turning action.
- The swimmer must be at or past vertical towards the back when the swimmer leaves the wall after each turn and must touch the wall at the finish while on the back.
- As a turn judge at the finish when you have chosen to shift your view from the whole swimmer to the shoulders to ensure that he has not gone past vertical towards the breast, you can no longer make an underwater swim call.

FREESTYLE:

- The swimmer may choose to swim any style he or she wants but his or her head must break the surface of the water by the 15M mark.
- Some part of the body must remain on the water surface throughout the race except for the first 15M after each turn.
- Some part of the swimmer's body must touch the wall at the end of each length of the swim.
- Standing on the bottom during freestyle is OK, but walking on or springing from the bottom is illegal.

INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY/MEDLEY RELAY:

- The Individual Medley is swum in the following order: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Freestyle. Freestyle is to be done in any stroke of a style other than the previous three.
- The Medley Relay is Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly and Freestyle.
- Each leg of the race shall be judged by the rules pertaining to that stroke and each transition shall conform to the finish rules of that stroke.

RELAY TAKE-OFFS:

- Watch the feet of the swimmer on the block. When the feet of the swimmer on the block leave the starting platform, look down to the pool to see if the incoming swimmer has touched the wall. If so, the exchange is good.
- Do not raise your hand for an early take-off when using dual confirmation balloting. In recording your observation on ballots, an O indicates a good take-off and an X represents an early take-off.

GLOSSARY TERMS OF IMPORTANCE:

- **Body, calm state or surface, end of course, forward start, horizontal, propulsive, scissor, shall, simultaneously, vertical, wall.**

THE BENEFIT OF DOUBT ALWAYS GOES TO THE SWIMMER—CALL WHAT YOU SEE (AND NOT WHAT YOU DON'T SEE).