

General Information:

A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN TO SWIM

The YMCA Swim Lesson program was created by aquatic experts and field-tested at YMCAs across the country. It stresses a developmental approach to teach swimming and is based upon the latest research in child development and teaching. Lessons are developmentally appropriate and designed to quickly and effectively teach swimming skills.

Trained swim instructors will guide your child through a process of individual exploration conducted in a student-centered, caring atmosphere. Swim instructors have been given a variety of new creative teaching methods to use at all different swim levels.

YMCA PHILOSOPHY

The YMCA's mission is to provide programs that develop a person spiritually, mentally, and physically. We will be providing opportunities to learn, not only swimming skills, but also social skills, physical fitness, self-confidence, personal safety, and rescue skills. We will be building character through activities that encourage caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.

Everyone succeeds. There are no failures in YMCA swim lessons. Each participant will progress at his/her own rate. Having fun is one of the most important objectives of the YMCA Swim Lesson Program. Games and fun activities are an essential part of each class meeting. Class sizes are limited to ensure safety and maximum participation opportunities for the child.

Safety is our top priority. A lifeguard is present in the pool area during swimming lessons to assist with emergencies.

OUR EXPERIENCED AND CARING STAFF

The YMCA carefully selects its swim instructors based upon their experience and their ability to work with children. Our staff are well trained and experienced. All YMCA instructors are certified in CPR and First Aid and are trained in both teaching and water safety. New instructors must first work as an assistant teacher under the supervision of an experienced teacher.

SWIMMING POOL SAFETY

Safe swimming pools have rules. The Y's pool rules are posted on the website, in locker rooms, on the pool deck and at the end of this guide. Please familiarize yourself with them to ensure that you know what to expect during your child's swim lesson.

Weather may have an impact on swim lessons. Lightning behavior is random and unpredictable. The YMCA follows a policy of closing the pools when lightening is seen or thunder is heard. The pools will remain closed until 30 minutes after the last sighting of lightening.

SWIMMING LESSON OPTIONS

Accompanied by a parent*, infants and toddlers learn to be comfortable in the water and develop swim readiness skills through fun and confidence-building experiences, while parents learn about water safety, drowning prevention, and the importance of supervision.

- A / Water Discovery Introduces infants and toddlers to the aquatic environment.
- B / Water Exploration Focuses on exploring body positions, blowing bubbles, and fundamental safety and aquatic skills.
- Students learn personal water safety and achieve basic swimming competency by learning two benchmark skills: swim, float, swim—sequencing front glide, roll, back float, roll, front glide, and exit—and **jump, push, turn, grab**.
- 1 / Water Acclimation Increases comfort with underwater exploration and introduces basic self-rescue skills performed with assistance.
- 2 / Water Movement Encourages forward movement in water and basic self-rescue skills performed independently.
- 3 / Water Stamina Develops intermediate self-rescue skills performed at longer distances than in previous stages.

Having mastered the fundamentals, students learn additional water safety skills and build stroke technique, developing skills that prevent chronic disease, increase social-emotional and cognitive well-being, and foster a lifetime of physical activity.

- 4 / Stroke Introduction Introduces basic stroke technique in front crawl and back crawl and reinforces water safety through treading water and elementary backstroke.
- 5 / Stroke Development Introduces breast-stroke and butterfly and reinforces water safety through treading water and sidestroke.
- 6 / Stroke Mechanics Refines stroke technique on all major competitive strokes and encourages swimming as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What do I need to bring to swimming lessons?

A towel, a swim suit, swim diaper/wipes (if needed) and a change of clothes is all that is needed. Goggles are up to parent's discretion. Swim caps are not required but long hair should be pulled back and secured in a ponytail.

What is your cancellation policy?

We reserve the right to cancel any class because of enrollment levels. If the Y cancels a class, participants will be issued a credit or refund in full. If your child is unable to attend or is not satisfied after the first class, then a full credit or refund will be issued. Classes missed due to personal reasons will not be credited or refunded except when accompanied by a doctor's note.

Why doesn't my child start swimming right away on the first day of class?

It is important for the instructor to set the tone of the class and provide a comfort level for all participants on the first day. While the instructor may be familiar with some of the students, some others may be new to the program and the instructor has to determine the swimming abilities of all the students.

What determines the length of the class?

Preschool lessons are 30 minutes and youth lessons are 45 minutes. This is based on the attention span and physical endurance of the age group.

Why do you use floatation devices?

Instructional floatation devices (IFD's) play an important role early in beginner swim lessons. Swim belts (bubbles), noodles, kickboards and other such devices are used in all levels of swim lessons. IFD's help beginners move through the water with little or no assistance, building their self-confidence. Floatation devices are also used by experienced swimmers to teach new skills, and improve and refine existing skills.

Why can't we wear our shoes on the pool deck?

Street shoes bring in particles of dirt, rocks, and even glass or other sharp objects as well as germs. We offer shoe covers in each of the locker rooms if you wish to keep your shoes on.

Sometimes it seems that my child's class is just playing games or "goofing off." Why?

Learning takes place in many ways. The YMCA uses playful techniques that encourage the students to learn new skills in creative ways. For some age groups, play is an effective tool for learning. Instructors will often use a game or water sport which utilizes a skill being learned in class.

Do you close for weather? Other?

The YMCA closes the pool during thunderstorms until 30 minutes after the last flash of lightening or sound of thunder has been seen/heard. Fecal contamination from swimmers can be a 20 minute or 12 hour closing, depending on the nature of the "accident." Remember to "potty first," and all kids under age 3 must wear swim diaper/pants! Our pool is managed by a licensed Certified Pool Operator and checked regularly for proper chemical levels.

Do you offer make up lessons?

The YMCA does not offer make-ups for individual absences. If the YMCA cancels a class at the beginning of a session, a full credit/refund will be given if a transfer to another class is not possible, approved only by the Youth Development Specialist. Should a lesson not be held due to pool maintenance or weather issues, a make up lesson may be offered based on availability of pool time and staff.

Why is my child repeating a level?

Your child has to meet and overcome all the fears associated with just being in and around a pool BEFORE we can even get their attention on skills...or peel them off your leg. This takes time, patience, practice and a WHOLE lot of planning. We structure everything we offer, every piece of equipment we use, all of our curriculum, our games, our songs, and the teachers who bring it all to life for your child to do one thing... teach your child to swim faster, stronger, and better than any other swim program. It's true – some children will repeat a level 2, 3... maybe 4 times. It happens. Rest assured, our goal, is to move children as soon as they are appropriately ready to move.

Why do some instructors spend more time in the water than others?

Instructors have different styles of teaching and each level of instruction demands different styles. Beginner classes such as Pike, Eel, and Polliwog require the instructor to be in the water all the time. As students move up through the levels this becomes less necessary because they are familiar with more water skills, their confidence has developed and they are working on perfecting specific skills. An instructor may be able to observe these skills better from the deck.

Why do you teach rescue and boating safety?

Boating is an increasingly popular activity, and the vast majority of boating accidents are preventable. By teaching some basic safety practices, we can help save lives and needless accidents. Boating safety is included in all of our programs, from Pike to Shark. Simple non-swimming rescues and calling for help are also emphasized to help kids help others who may find themselves in trouble in the water.

Why can't I place my child in the next level up with their sibling? It would make scheduling easier for me.

Not every child develops at the same rate, thus he may not be ready to move up. YMCA swim classes are based on a child's current swimming ability and as he masters the skills at each level, his progress report will reflect that and the instructor will indicate whether he is ready to move up. Advancing a child too soon may actually cause them to regress. We would rather see a strong confident swimmer at a lower level than an insecure scared child at a level above his ability.