



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

GROUP SWIM LESSONS

PARENT HANDBOOK

YMCA OF THE BLUE WATER AREA

YMCA PHILOSOPHY OF LEARN TO SWIM PROGRAMMING

At the Y, strengthening community is our cause. Every day, we work side-by-side with our neighbors to make sure that everyone, regardless of age, income or background, has the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive. We are committed to strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

Youth Development: Nurturing the potential of every child and teen
We believe that all kids deserve the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve. That's why, through the Y, thousands of youth today are cultivating the values, skills and relationships that lead to positive behaviors, better health and educational achievement.

Swimming programs are part of "Swim, Sports and Play," where the Y focuses on positive, fun activities that build athletic, social and interpersonal skills.



WELCOME TO SWIM AT THE BLUE WATER Y!

We are excited to welcome you to the swimming program at the YMCA of the Blue Water Area! The Y's mission is to provide quality programs that develop a person mentally and physically. We will provide opportunities to learn, not only swimming skills, but also, social skills, physical fitness, self-confidence, and safety skills. We pride ourselves on building character through activities that encourage our values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

Our swim staff are chosen based on experience and their ability to work well with children. Our instructors work hard to ensure that everyone succeeds! And we believe that everyone progresses at their own pace. Having fun is one of the most important objectives of our swim program! That is why games and guided activities are at the heart of our instruction model!

Safety is a top priority for us. A lifeguard is present in the pool area during all swimming lessons to enforce rules and assist with any emergencies. Safe pools also have rules. The pool rules are posted on our website, the pool deck and in this handbook. Please familiarize yourself with our rules so you know what to expect when you come to swim with us.

We are glad you are here to make a splash with us! Please review this handbook that explains our policies and answers our most commonly asked questions. If you need additional assistance let us know!

**Sincerely,
The YMCA of the Blue Water Area's Swim Staff**



YMCA OF THE BLUE WATER AREA

POLICIES

Swim Class Registration–

Swim lesson registration for members opens approximately 3 weeks prior to the start of the session. Registration for non-members opens approximately 2 weeks prior to the start of the session. Swim lesson registration can be done on our website (bluewaterymca.com) or with our front desk staff. Payment is due at the time of registration.

We require at least three swimmers to operate a swim class. If, for whatever reason, a swim class does not exceed the three swimmer minimum the class will be canceled. All attempts will be made to find reasonable accommodations for registered students. If we are unable to transfer your swimmers registration, you will be issued a full refund.

Cancellation/Refunds/Transfers–

If for any reason a swimmer chooses to be unenrolled from their swim class, a full refund will be issued PRIOR to the second class of the session. Cancellations after the second class of the session will not receive a refund.

We reserve the right to cancel classes due to low enrollment. If the Y cancels a class, all participants will be issued a full credit or refund.

Transfers are limited to class availability. We will try our best to accommodate changes that will benefit your swimmer! Please be sure you are registering for the correct class as some classes fill up quickly and do not have room to transfer swimmers into them.

Swim Class Ratios–

Our parent child class may be up to 1:12 instructor to student ratio as each child swimmer will be accompanied by a parent/guardian in the water. Our preschool classes operate on a 1:4 instructor to student ratio. Our school age classes may be up to 1:8 instructor to student ratio, depending on the swimmers' abilities.

Absences and Make Up Classes–

Swimmers are encouraged to attend all classes offered during the session. Unfortunately, we do not offer make-up classes due to illness, conflict of schedule, etc.

Weather Policy–

Weather may impact swimming lessons, even with our indoor pools. Lightning behavior can be random and unpredictable. The YMCA follows a policy of closing the pools when lightning is seen or thunder is heard. The pools remain closed until 30 minutes after the last sight/sound of lightning.

If you are unsure about weather conditions affecting your swim lesson time, please contact our front desk.

Age Policy-

No child under the age of 12 is allowed in the facility without direct adult supervision. Children enrolled in swimming lessons must have a guardian in the facility during the entire duration of their swim lesson.

Photography Policy-

In general NO photography is allowed in the facility. Due to the sensitive nature of photography in the pool/locker room areas and areas with other children we ask that you not take pictures during your swim time.

Bathroom/Swim Diapers:

Please encourage your swimmer to use the bathroom BEFORE class. If your swimmer needs to use the bathroom during class a parent or guardian will need to escort them to the locker room. Those swimmers who are NOT potty trained must wear an appropriate swim diaper while in the water. Regular diapers are NOT allowed in the swimming pool.



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SWIM LESSON FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I know what class is right for my child?

A lesson selector guide is located towards the end of this handbook that will give you an overview of our swim lesson program levels. Simply stated, our classes are separated by age. Our parent child class is for children ages 6 months to 3 years. Our preschool classes are for children ages 3 to 5 years. Our school age classes are for children ages 6 to 12 years. Within these age groups, swimmers are grouped with other swimmers of similar ability, from non-swimmers to stroke development and endurance. Contact the Pool Director if you need to schedule an in-person skill evaluation.

What should I bring for my swimming lesson class?

A swimming suit, towel and swim diaper (if needed). Goggles are up to the parent's discretion but can be helpful and are often used in class. Swim caps are not required, but long hair should be pulled back and secured out of your swimmer's face.

Where do I park when I arrive?

The YMCA has a three story parking garage, most easily accessible from Military Street. GPS maps will often take you to the river side entrance on 3rd Street. This entrance has limited parking and is not handicap accessible. We recommend using the parking structure and entering the facility on the third floor.

How do I get to the pool?

You will enter the facility through the main lobby. If you are a member, you may scan your card and proceed to the locker rooms. If you are not a member, let the front desk staff know you are there for swimming lessons. You will continue down the stairs to the locker rooms, and access the pool through the locker rooms.

What locker room should I use?

Our facility has 5 separate locker rooms. The men's and women's locker room are only to be used by those who are 18 years old or older. Our boy's and girl's locker rooms are to be used by swimmers and their guardians of the same gender. Our family locker room can be utilized by swimmers and guardians of mixed genders. As with all locker room facilities, we recommend you lock your personal belongings or bring them with you on the pool deck.

Why does my child's class include free time?

Most of our swimming lessons will have a component of free play. This is more than just time to goof around. Free play is a valuable component of swim lessons because it supports skill development, boosts confidence, and makes learning to swim a more enjoyable experience.

Can I watch my child's class from the pool deck?

Yes! We provide folding chairs on the north and south sides of the pool for watching swimming lessons. We ask that you do not move chairs out of these areas in order to keep main walkways clear.

There is also a window viewing area off the main lobby where you are able to view the pools from the 3rd floor.

Will I need to get in the pool with my child?

If you have registered your young swimmer for the parent child class you will accompany your swimmer to the pool. It does not always have to be the same parent/guardian, but all children in the parent child class will need an adult with them in the water. After age 3, our preschool swim lessons focus on building more independence in the water and parents are not needed in the pool with their child.

Why has my child not advanced as quickly as other swimmers?

Remember all children develop differently and our instructors are trained to help different swimmers in different ways. Because of this, we don't compare swimmers to each other. We would rather focus on an individual's accomplishments, big and small!

Some examples of what might slow a swimmer's progress:

Fear of the water

Slow acclimation to being comfortable in the water

Difficulty focusing

Inconsistency in participation



SWIM LESSON FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS *continued*

What does “pre-registration” mean and how does it work?

In order to ensure our current swimmers will be able to continue their progress and have a spot in the next session we offer pre-registration. During week 4 of swimming lessons your swimmer’s instructor will fill out and give you a mid-session report with a recommended next swim stage. We will have staff available for mobile registration on deck and/or paper registration forms to fill out.

Some things to remember:

1. Pre-registration is for current swimmers only. New swimmers will be able to register when registration opens to members/community members.
2. You **MUST** have a current credit card on file with the front desk for us to complete the payment portion of your registration.
3. Week 4 is still early on in your child’s swim lesson session. You will receive a recommendation on what to register your child for in the next swim session. At the end of the swim session your child may or may not be ready for the previously recommended stage. Please let us know if you need to change your swimmer’s registration and we will do our best to accommodate any necessary changes.
4. Pre-registration is valid for **THAT CLASS DAY ONLY**. We will try our best to remind you and inform you of the date of pre-registration. If, for whatever reason, you are unable to take advantage of pre-registration you will need to register when registration opens to members/community members.

What if the class I want is full and has a waitlist?

Please sign up for the waitlist! You do not need to pay any money to register for the waitlist. We will contact you for class registration if a spot becomes available in the class. We also use waitlists to know which classes are in highest demand and we take that knowledge into consideration if we are able to open more classes for that session.

What if my child's skills or age exceed your programming?

We offer private swimming lessons for swimmers of all ages. We also offer a class called the Porpoise Club which operates like an introduction to swim team. This class is open to ages 7-18 who have completed stage 6 or can swim 50 yards front stroke, back stroke and breaststroke.

We also have a competitive swim team, the Blue Water Otters. See the front desk for more information on swim team pricing and scheduling.

Do you offer private swim lessons?

Yes we do! If you are interested in enrolling in private lessons, please fill out a private lesson interest form, available from the lifeguard office or the front desk. Our Swim Lesson Coordinator will contact you for more information and pair you with an available swim instructor.

When/why do you close the pools?

We close the pools for 30 minutes following any sight or sound of thunder or lightning. If the pool is closed due to weather we will offer land based strength training and/or safety activities.

Fecal contamination can result in 30 minutes to a 12 hour closure depending on the nature of the contamination. Please remember to take your swimmer to the bathroom prior to getting in the water, and put a swim diaper on any swimmer who is not fully potty trained. Our pool is managed by a licensed Certified Pool Operator and checked regularly for proper chemical levels.





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LESSON SELECTOR

WHAT AGE GROUP DOES THE STUDENT FALL INTO?



6 months–3 years
PARENT* & CHILD:
STAGES A–B



3 years–5 years
PRESCHOOL:
STAGES 1–4



5 years–12 years
SCHOOL AGE:
STAGES 1–6



12+ years
TEEN & ADULT:
STAGES 1–6

All age groups are taught the same skills but divided according to their developmental milestones.

WHICH STAGE IS THE STUDENT READY FOR?

Can the student respond to verbal cues and jump on land?

NOT YET

A / WATER
DISCOVERY

Is the student comfortable working with an instructor without a parent in the water?

NOT YET

B / WATER
EXPLORATION

Will the student go underwater voluntarily?

NOT YET

1 / WATER
ACCLIMATION

Can the student do a front and back float on his or her own?

NOT YET

2 / WATER
MOVEMENT

Can the student swim 10–15 yards on his or her front and back?

NOT YET

3 / WATER
STAMINA

Can the student swim 15 yards of front and back crawl?

NOT YET

4 / STROKE
INTRODUCTION

Can the student swim front crawl, back crawl, and breaststroke across the pool?

NOT YET

5 / STROKE
DEVELOPMENT

Can the student swim front crawl, back crawl, and breaststroke across the pool and back?

NOT YET

6 / STROKE
MECHANICS

*At the Y, we know families take a variety of forms. As a result, we define **parent** broadly to include all adults with primary responsibility for raising children, including biological parents, adoptive parents, guardians, stepparents, grandparents, or any other type of parenting relationship.



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POOL RULES AND REGULATIONS

To ensure the safety and comfort of our members and guests, the following rules will be strictly enforced.

The Lifeguard is in charge of the pool at ALL times and has final say in all rule interpretations.

- State law requires that all patrons take a shower before entering the pool.
- Swimmers must wear proper swim attire (bathing suits), children who are not potty trained must wear a swim diaper.
- Children under 12 years of age must have supervision by someone 16 or older at all times in the pool area unless they are in a program.
- Breath holding activities are not allowed in the pool.
- Diving from the competition pool deck is highly discouraged, no diving is allowed into the recreation pool. Adults and students with instructors, may dive from the east wall of the competition pool ONLY. Starting blocks are to be used only when an instructor or coach is present.
- Only US Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices are permitted in the pool. The lifeguard may restrict the use of toys and/or equipment at any time. Inflatable devices are not allowed in the pool.
- Masks, fins, snorkels are only allowed in the competition pool as part of a fitness regimen or instructional program. Mono-fins are not allowed.
- No running, rough play or climbing/hanging on walls or structures is permitted on the deck or in the pool. No climbing or sitting on the whale or water-play structure. Do not sit, stand, walk or climb on the submerged walls in the recreation pool.
- The Y is a family facility. The use of profane or vulgar language or disrespect of staff, members or guests will not be tolerated. Do not use the pool after the consumption of alcohol or drugs.
- No food or drink is allowed on the deck, except for water in plastic containers.
- Do not enter the pool if you have open blisters, cuts and infection, or have diarrhea in the past two weeks.
- No animals, except for trained service animals are allowed in the pool enclosure.
- Photography is not permitted in the pool area or anywhere within the facility without prior, expressed permission.

YMCA OF THE BLUE WATER AREA
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