

## It's time for Swim Practice!

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### **"Pool Time" is precious.**

One thing all swimmers and parents need to understand is that our "practice time" is "in-the-water time" or – "Pool time". ACWS shares the use of the West Shore Natatorium with several other entities. There are times when "Pool use" is in high demand. We need to respect the "Pool time" that has been given to us and also be mindful of other's "Pool time" when we come in contact with other groups.

To make the most of our practice time (for everyone), understanding a few important concepts is important.

- Know what time practices are scheduled for.

**Check the website on a regular basis for updates!**

[www.seaserpents.org](http://www.seaserpents.org)

Copies of practice calendars –in mailboxes or posted – may not be current!

You need to check the website on a regular basis.

*We will try to remind swimmers and parents of practices schedules. We will send out periodic emails reminders and coaches will also remind swimmers when they speak with them at practice – swimmers will learn quickly that they need to listen carefully. If you do not have Internet access, please let us know and we will attempt to inform you of major changes another way*

- Get to practice BEFORE practice starts.

**You need to be prepared to SWIM at the practice start time.**

If practice starts at 5:30 pm you should plan to arrive at the pool no later than 5:15 pm.

This will allow you time to change and stretch prior to getting in to the pool at 5:30 pm.

*There may be times when the pool is being used prior to our practice time. If this is the case, swimmers are asked to change and remain in the locker room lobby area and bleacher area to stretch. Please do not enter to pool deck area until you are instructed to do so by one of the coaches.*

### ***What happens at swim practice?***

Practices consist of instruction, demonstration, and implementation of the many aspects of competitive swimming. Not all swimmers will be asked to participate in the same way. All swimmers, however, are asked to be listening to the coaches at all times in order to know, understand and learn.

*If swimmers are talking while the coaches are talking – whether they are speaking to one, a few, or all swimmers – it interferes with their ability to learn as well as the ability of other swimmers to listen and learn.*

***We ask that swimmers always respect their coaches and their team.***

*We understand that talking does occur – it makes practice fun! But, we also ask that swimmers pay attention to the coaches to understand appropriate volume levels and appropriate times when talking can occur pleasantly during practices.*

## Stretching

- Before you enter the water for practice or for a meet (warm ups or your race), be sure to loosen up! Your muscles need to get ready to work for you BEFORE you ask them to swim for you in the water!

COACHES ASK THAT SWIMMERS DEVELOP A 10 MINUTE PERSONAL STRETCHING ROUTINE PRIOR TO PRACTICE.

**IF IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO GET TO PRACTICE IN TIME TO STRETCH, PLEASE ATTEMPT TO DEVELOP THIS ROUTINE AS SOMETHING THAT OCCURS AT HOME PRIOR TO COMING TO PRACTICE.**

- Stretching Tips:
  - Develop a stretching habit/routine for yourself
  - Stretch slowly
  - Hold your stretch for 5 to 30 seconds
    - Hold until it starts to ache (but not until it hurts!)
    - As you hold the stretch the tension in your muscle should decrease
    - Breathe in a deep, controlled rhythm
  - BREATHE during your stretches
  - Don't forget to relax your mind as well!
  - Make sure you stretch AFTER you swim as well. It helps your muscles to remember how far you have trained them to work for you!

STRETCHING HELPS FLEXIBILITY.  
FLEXIBILITY HELPS PREVENT INJURY!

strength, and endurance in the water.

Stretching helps to increase the flexibility in your muscles.

The more flexible your muscles are, the more easily you can improve your speed, power,

## Practices

ACWS Coaching staff will use many methods in order to teach swimmers. Some methods used are listed below. (List not all-inclusive.)

### Drills

- Swimmers will learn a number of different “drills” during practice in order to strengthen their understanding of different strokes and how to move through the water for smoother swimming.

### Stroke Technique Instruction

- Swimmers will receive continual instruction on stroke technique throughout the season. There may be certain practices designated to work on skill development of a particular stroke. If this is the case, coaches will mention this to swimmers prior to the practice date. This information may not be possible to publicize through the website so it is important for swimmers to be listening at practices.
- ACWS provides periodic “Stroke & Turn Clinics” for swimmers interested in more individualized instruction. Registration for these events is separate from “team registration” and may have a nominal fee. In addition to individualized instruction, swimmers receive a detailed handbook (similar in format to the team handbook) that provides written details and diagrams about specific stroke technique as well other valuable information. Watch the website and pool side postings for details on these special events!



### Start & Turn Instruction

- Swimmers will receive specific instruction on starts and turns (for all the various strokes) at swim practices. Generally, this will occur at the **end of each practice** for approximately 15 minutes. If a swimmer leaves practice early, they may miss out on some of this instruction.

### Advanced Swimmers

- ACWS Coaches also provide instruction targeted to meet the needs of the advanced swimmer. This may occur in special sessions (Split Sessions) or as a separate group (lane) during regular practices.
- Advanced swimmers are instructed in concepts such as “Understanding Negative Splits – while doing gets” to help them get the most out of their personal workout time.
- *In addition to instruction provided at practices, coaches will also provide feedback to swimmers during swim meets. Swimmers are encouraged to “visit the coach” on deck after their races to get immediate feedback!*

## SPLIT SESSION PRACTICES

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PRACTICES ARE  
ORGANIZED BY  
ACWS COACHING  
STAFF TO TRAIN  
ALL SWIMMERS IN  
THE BEST  
POSSIBLE  
ENVIRONMENT.

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- Sometimes this will mean that practice times will be “split up” (SPLIT SESSION) to accommodate specific needs. Most commonly this can be experienced when ACWS has a longer practice time available.
- Sometimes younger (novice) swimmers are “split” from the older (advanced) swimmers in order for coaching staff to work more closely with swimmers at their respective “levels”.
- If you have a question about which session to attend...  
**ASK A COACH.**

## FOR PARENTS

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ACWS attempts to coordinate pool time so that swimmers can participate as much as possible at practices. It is not required or expected that a swimmer attend all practices. It is not required that you inform a coach if a swimmer will miss a practice. We ask that as a courtesy, **if there is an ongoing conflict with swim practice, that you inform the coach.**

Parents who wish to observe practice are asked to do so from the windows in the Natatorium Lobby.

## PARENT COMMUNICATION WITH COACHES

- IN WRITING – You can leave a note for a Coach in their “mailbox” in the team mailbox.
- IN AN EMAIL – Coaches have email and links can be found on the website. Access, however to email is limited.
- IN PERSON - If you wish to speak with a coach, please do so either before or after swim practice.

**ACWS & THE COACHING STAFF ASK THAT YOU  
PLEASE NOT ATTEMPT TO DISCUSS INDIVIDUAL SITUATIONS  
WITH A COACH DURING SWIM PRACTICE.**

*Thank You!*