



Virginia Beach Swim League

Chesapeake-Norfolk-Virginia Beach

Stroke & Turn Clinic

- Overview of the rules of swimming
- Components of every stroke
- USA Swimming Video
 - Although some differences, a very good tool for learning about the strokes
- Stroke rule follow along with common disqualifications for each
- After this clinic recommend the following
 - Work at your time trials
 - Shadow a seasoned official during a meet
 - Learn the rules by practicing the 200 meter individual medley
 - PDF copy of rule book available at www.vbsl.net
 - OR www.usaswimming.org/
 - Tab to officials
 - Tab to education and training
 - Tab to Education and training resources
 - Ask questions
 - Have fun and enjoy the best seat in the house!



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Stroke Rules Overview

- Why aren't the rules written so clearly that we do not need interpretations?
 - There are situations where there is no right or wrong answer and leave adjudication for the referees and juries who are at the scene.
 - 1982 William Lippman *"Let's not try to cover every possible situation in swimming rules. Let's not write rules to cover these strange and rare possibilities. Leave something for the referee to decide. Let humans present consider the facts, and come to their own decision on how to handle it. It is impossible to make rules absolute for every instance. There must be room for human judgment to adapt to the intent of the rule and to the physical factors and make the final decision. That is my philosophy that is based on a belief that most adults involved in our sport are fundamentally honest and are willing to exercise their judgment for the best interest for all parties involved."*
 - **The competent swim official is a judge of competition not a judge of the rules**
- Only sport where the core rules are basically the same at all levels of competition
 - All competitive swimming events shall be conducted in accordance with the following rules that are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition.



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Stroke Rules

- Stroke rules are composed of four segments
 - Start, swim, turn and finish
 - Some events may only be start, swim and finish
- Highlights of Butterfly
 - On the start head must be up by 15m mark, body must be on the breast
 - Not a cycle stroke
 - 1st arm pull must bring them to the surface of the water
 - Once they are on the surface, they must remain on the surface
 - The arms must recover over the water and pulled back simultaneously
 - Up and down movement of the legs and feet must be simultaneous
 - Touch must be a simultaneous two-hand touch at, above or below the surface of the water

Common disqualifications: head not up by 15M, underwater recovery, illegal kicks, illegal touches, non-simultaneous arms, not on breast off wall, submerged during the swim/prior to the turn/prior to the finish



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Stroke Rules

- Highlights to Backstroke
 - Line up facing the starting end
 - Must push off on their back and continue to swim on their back throughout the race
 - Not a cycle stroke
 - Any style of kick is permitted
 - Head must surface by the 15M mark
 - Once they surface, they must remain on the surface
 - For turns, they are not permitted to roll to their breast until they have past the backstroke flags
 - They are allowed to turn towards their breast and complete a single of double simultaneous arm pull. They are permitted to kick and glide into the wall
 - Must leave the wall past vertical on their back
 - Must finish on their back

Common disqualifications: head not up by 15M, multiple strokes, not on back off wall, pulling on lane line, standing on the bottom, submerged during the swim/prior to the turn/prior to the finish, past vertical during the swim/at the finish



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Stroke Rules

- Highlights on Breaststroke

- At start and each turn the body shall be on the breast
- Cycle stroke
- All movements of arms shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane
- Hands shall recover from the breast on, under or over the water
- Hands shall be brought back under the water and only past the hipline on the first stroke at start or turn
- Head must break surface of water during each complete cycle
- After start and each turn, a single butterfly kick, must be followed by a breaststroke kick is permitted during or at the completion of the first arm pull
- At the turns, a simultaneous two-hand touch must be made at, above or below the surface of the water.
- Head may be submerged after the last arm pull prior to touch, provided it breaks the surface of the water a some point of the last complete or incomplete cycle.

Common disqualifications: kick prior to pull, hands past the hipline, two strokes under water, illegal kicks, illegal touches, not on breast off wall, arms or legs not in the same plane, non-simultaneous arms

- Highlights on Freestyle

- May swim any style
- May be completely submerged for a distance of not more than 15M
- Once on the surface they must remain on the surface
- Some body part must touch the wall at each turn.

Common disqualifications: head not up by 15M, no touch at turn, pulling on laneline, walking on or pushing off the bottom, submerged during the swim/prior to the turn/prior to the finish



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Stroke Rules

- Highlights on relays
 - Must swim in order listed on lane timer slip
 - Must touch wall prior to next swimmers' feet leave the wall
 - No "running" starts
 - Must "step up to or close to" the pool edge
 - Don't raise hand for an early take-off violation
 - Raise hand for a stroke violation
- Medley relay
 - Order of strokes is Backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle
 - Start and finish rules of each stroke apply

Common disqualifications: strokes out of order, swimmers out of order, stroke infractions from above, early takeoff during exchange

- Individual medley
 - Order of strokes is Butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle
 - Start and finish rules apply for each stroke

Common disqualifications: strokes out of order, stroke infractions from above



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Stroke Rules Summary

- There is no “grey” in swimming. It is either a violation or legal swim
- “Close” is not in the rules
- Ugly swimming is not necessarily illegal

Most importantly

**THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT ALWAYS
ALWAYS GOES TO THE SWIMMER!**

- Questions??
- Thanks for coming, have a great summer!