

Aquatic Conditioning

SKILL & TOPIC LIBRARY

Teaching This Program

Aquatic Conditioning is one offering from the competitive pathway students can pursue following YMCA Swim Lessons. The program focuses on continuing to build endurance and stroke technique on all major competitive strokes and encourages swimming as part of a healthy lifestyle. As you work with students in this program, focus on the following important milestones:

- Developing endurance in the competitive strokes
- Developing skills related to competitive swimming, such as flip turns, starts, and finishes
- Enhancing skills and building endurance

Positively Impacting Students

Remember, as a cause-driven leader at the Y, you have an opportunity to positively impact the students you work with. In addition to developing the recommended skills for all to have around water, the related activities and safety and character topics in this library help foster the following:

 Achievement

 Relationships

 Belonging

Keeping Students Safe

You also have a responsibility to keep kids safe as they explore the aquatic environment. In addition to a thorough understanding of aquatic safety, you have a responsibility to adhere to the child abuse prevention best practices included in your Y's policies and procedures. If you suspect a child has been abused or if you see abuse happen, including sexual abuse, please follow the mandated reporter policies in your state.

Using This Library

The skill progressions in this library help you break swimming skills down into easy-to-learn steps, allowing students to achieve more, faster. The activities in this library give students a chance to practice the skills. You can choose activities based on the needs of your Y and your students.

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Greeting

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

Ask Permission

To teach the habit of asking permission before getting into the water, have students repeat the phrase "Before I get into the pool, I must always ask first." This is an IMPORTANT rule. Then have students ask their parents, caregivers, or you for permission. Reinforce that students should always have someone watching them around water.

Pool Rules

Ask students to list the rules they should follow at a public pool and why they think the rules are in place:

- Walk. Don't run.
- Play safely. No pushing or rough play.
- Nonswimmers are allowed in shallow water only (i.e., water that comes only to the person's armpits).
- All youth must take a safety swim test and wear a colored safety band at the pool.
- Use pool lifelines for temporary support only.
- Holding your breath and swimming underwater for long distances is not allowed.
- Diving is allowed only in marked areas.
- Diving from the deck is allowed only where the water is more than nine feet deep.

- Lifeguard towers are for lifeguard use only.
- Keep the area around the lifeguard tower clear.
- Emergency equipment is for lifeguard use only.
- [Any pool rules specific to your facility.]

Pool Tour

Take students on a tour of the pool:

- Point out where the water depth changes from shallow to deep.
- Identify the lifeline(s). Explain that, to swim in the deep area, youth must pass a safety swim test.
- Identify the lifeguard(s). Explain that when a lifeguard blows his or her whistle, everyone in the pool should turn, look, and listen to the lifeguard's instructions.
- Review posted pool rules. Explain that the rules are designed to keep people safe so everyone can have fun.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Social Kicking

This set consists of 25 or 50 yards of kicking with a board. Put students into groups of two to kick together while talking about their day, week, etc. Have students change partners every 25 or 50 yards.

Name Dance

Have students choose a movement for each syllable of their name. For example, Perry's name has two syllables, so he might do a head nod for "Per" and a hip shake for "ry." Once Perry has demonstrated the movement(s) while saying his name, the whole group does it. Go around the group until every student has created his or her own name dance.




Birthdays and Holidays in the Pool

Incorporate celebration into lessons. If it is Safaya's 10th birthday, have the group swim 10 lengths of Safaya's favorite stroke.

Name Toss

Have students stand in a circle. One student begins by saying the name of another student and one thing he or she likes about that student before tossing a ball to him or her. That student says the name of a different student, what he or she likes about that student, then tosses the ball to him or her. Repeat until everyone has had a turn.

Skill / Front Crawl

PREREQUISITE	SKILL PROGRESSION	ADVANCED
 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Front crawl, bent-arm recovery, 25 yd. See YMCA Swim Lessons / Stage 6. 2 Front glide, with flutter kick, 50 yd. Build to 50 yd. 3 Front glide, rotary breathing, 50 yd. Build to 50 yd. 4 Flip turn In chest-deep water, practice flipping forward. 5 Front crawl, flip turn, 50 yd. Perform front crawl with long arm reach. When nearing wall, tuck chin and somersault, curling legs tightly into body. When upside down, push hard with feet off wall and twist body to front. Build to 50 yd. 	 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Front crawl, flip turn, 50 yd. Perform front crawl with long arm reach. When nearing wall, tuck chin and somersault, curling legs tightly into body. When upside down, push hard with feet off wall and twist body to front. Build to 50 yd. 2 Front crawl, smooth flip turn, 50 yd. Perform front crawl. When nearing wall, use the lane markings on the bottom of the pool (or painted T) as a visual cue to prepare for flip. Do not breathe from this point on. Keep eyes on the wall. Begin final pull stroke with one hand at side and one arm in full extension. One hand pulls through final stroke as other hand passes under the body. Perform a somersault by rotating body in the vertical plane. As body rotates, keep arms extended behind, then pull elbows sharply backward to help with body rotation. After the rotation, open up and extend feet toward the wall just prior to contact. Push hard with feet off wall as arms fully extend into a streamlined position and body twists to front for an explosive drive off the wall. 3 Front crawl, smooth flip turn, 200 yd. Same as progression 2, but with greater stroke distance, resulting in more flip turns. 	<p> Stroke competency achieved</p> <p>Challenge advanced students to swim the same distances faster or to swim for longer distances.</p>

Activities

S School Age
A Teen & Adult

LEGS

Change of Direction With Fins **S A**

Have students practice flip turns with fins on.

Kick With Flotation **S A**

Have students flutter kick on their fronts with a kickboard or other flotation device. Ask them to focus on kicking from the hip.

ARMS

Windmill Drill **S A**

Have students perform front crawl with their arms straight, like a windmill. Encourage students to reach and extend the entry point of their hands and arms.

Fist Drill **S A**

Have students perform front crawl with closed hands or holding tennis balls. Have them practice keeping their bodies balanced and feeling the forearm in the stroke.

Throw-It-Away Drill **S A**

Have students perform front crawl while pretending they have a weight in their hands. After they complete the pull, tell them to throw the “weight” out of the water.

BODY & BREATH CONTROL

Head Position **S A**

Have students practice swimming with their chins on the surface, then with their whole heads buried, then with their heads in a neutral position and their eyes looking down.

Minimum Number of Strokes **S A**

Have students perform front crawl across the pool and count the number of strokes it takes them to get to the other end. Let them rest, then repeat the swim. Encourage them to make it across with fewer strokes on the second length.

Thumb-Touch Drill **S A**

Have students perform front crawl. During the pull, have them touch their thumbs to their thighs before overarm recovery.

FLIP TURN

Arms at Sides **S A**

Have students practice changing direction on their approach to the wall beginning with the head and body position. Instruct students to keep their heads still and their arms stationary at their sides—no twisting. Tell them to tuck their chins to initiate the change in

direction for the turn. Have students practice 5–6 feet from the wall with no contact the first few times, then progress to using the wall.

One Arm in Front, Heel Slide **S A**

Have students practice adding a streamlined kick on front to the Arms at Sides activity. Instruct students to move toward an imaginary wall with one arm extended in front of their heads. As they approach the imaginary wall, have them pull their arm to the side to change direction, then press off the wall in a streamlined position. Encourage students to work on punching their feet toward the imaginary wall, placing them shallowly under the surface of the water.

Tennessee Drill **S A**




Have students practice changing direction without the twist off the wall. Instruct them to initiate a fast, narrow kick as soon as they push off the wall on their backs.

Variation: Have students push straight off the wall on their backs, then twist to the side and kick in a side glide.

Standing Flip **S A**

Have students practice flips from a standing position in the shallow end of the pool, away from the wall.

Skill / Back Crawl

PREREQUISITE	SKILL PROGRESSION	ADVANCED
 <p>1 Back crawl, pull, 25 yd. See YMCA Swim Lessons / Stage 6.</p> <p>2 Back glide, with flutter kick, 50 yd. Build to 50 yd.</p> <p>3 Flip turn In chest-deep water, practice flipping forward.</p> <p>4 Back crawl, pull & flip turn, 50 yd. Perform back crawl. When nearing wall, flip onto front, tuck chin, and somersault, curling legs tightly into body. When upside down, push hard with feet off wall and stay on back. Ensure continuous movement and no arm stroke during flip onto front before somersault. Build to 50 yd.</p>	 <p>1 Back crawl, pull & flip turn, 50 yd. Perform back crawl. When nearing wall, flip onto front, tuck chin, and somersault, curling legs tightly into body. Ensure continuous movement and no arm stroke during flip onto front before somersault. When upside down, push hard with feet off wall and stay on back. Build to 50 yd.</p> <p>2 Back crawl, smooth flip turn, 50 yd. Perform back crawl. Use backstroke flags to gauge distance to wall. When nearing wall, flip onto front and use the lane markings on the bottom of the pool (or painted T) as a visual cue to prepare for flip. Do not breathe from this point on. Keep eyes on the wall. Begin final pull stroke with one hand at side and one arm in full extension. One hand pulls through final stroke as other hand passes under the body. Perform a somersault by rotating body in the vertical plane. As body rotates, keep arms extended behind, then pull elbows sharply backward to help with body rotation. After the rotation, open up and extend feet toward the wall just prior to contact. Push hard with feet off wall as arms fully extend into a streamlined position on the back for an explosive drive off the wall.</p> <p>3 Back crawl, smooth flip turn, 200 yd. Same as progression 2, but with greater stroke distance, resulting in more flip turns.</p>	<p> Stroke competency achieved</p> <p>Challenge advanced students to swim the same distances faster or to swim for longer distances.</p>

Activities

S School Age
A Teen & Adult

LEGS

Streamlined Kick on Back **S A**

Have students maintain a streamlined position and practice flutter kick on their backs.

Back-Fin Kick **S A**

Have students flutter kick on their backs using flippers. Flippers force the kick to come from the hip.

ARMS

30-60-90 Drill **S A**

Have students perform back crawl by lifting one arm straight from the leg to 30 degrees, then moving it back to their sides. Have them lift the same arm to 60 degrees and back, then to 90 degrees and back. Finally, have them lift the arm all the way around and back to their sides (full back-crawl pull). Repeat with the other arm.

Double-Arm Drill **S A**

Have students perform back crawl using both arms simultaneously with a flutter or dolphin kick. Have them bend the elbows and work on shoulder flexibility.

Sailboat Drill **S A**

Have students perform back crawl. Tell them to begin the pull with their thumbs up. Have them stop their arms at the midpoint (90 degrees), pointing their arms

straight up like the mast of a sail, then return their arms to their sides. Alternate arms.

Stop-&-Go Drill **S A**

Have students perform back crawl by lifting one arm straight from the leg to 90 degrees, then moving it back to their sides.

Touch-Down Drill **S A**

Have students perform back crawl, keeping one arm at their hips while the other arm completes its pull and recovery, catching up to the second arm. Repeat with the second arm.

BODY & BREATH CONTROL

Changeover Drill **S A**

Have students perform seven strokes of front crawl, then flip over and perform seven strokes of back crawl.

Goggle Drill **S A**

Have students perform back crawl with their goggles resting on their foreheads, not strapped around their heads. Instruct them to swim without moving their heads so their goggles do not slip off.

Kick-Switch Drill **S A**

Have students perform back glide and flutter kick with one arm extended in a streamlined position and the other arm at their side by the hip. Have them kick three to eight times before switching arms and repeating. Have students practice moving side to side during the body roll as they reach back with one arm and then the other.

FLIP TURN

Count the Strokes **S A**

Have students prepare to sequence their flip turn by counting how many arm strokes it takes to back crawl from the backstroke flags to the wall. Tell them to take the number counted and subtract one to know when to roll to their fronts for the turn.




Against the Imaginary Wall **S A**

Have students focus on the change of direction—not the wall. Have them swim half a length, perform a flip turn from their backs in the middle of the pool, and then swim back to the starting point.

Flip Turn With Dolphin Kick **S A**

Have students practice placing their feet high on the wall to push off during the turn and performing fast, narrow dolphin kicks off the wall.

Skill / Breaststroke

PREREQUISITE	SKILL PROGRESSION	ADVANCED
 <p>1 Breaststroke, 25 yd. See YMCA Swim Lessons / Stage 6.</p> <p>2 Breaststroke, kick, 50 yd. Build to 50 yd.</p> <p>3 Breaststroke, arms, 50 yd. Build to 50 yd.</p> <p>4 Open turn When nearing wall, extend arms toward wall. When hands touch, tuck legs and pull them toward wall. Bring arms together in front of the body, overhead. Push off in a streamlined position.</p> <p>5 Breaststroke, open turn, 50 yd. Combine progressions 3 and 4. Build to 50 yd.</p>	 <p>1 Breaststroke, open turn, 50 yd. Begin with breaststroke arms. As hands come together in front of chest, lift head to breathe, pull heels up, and begin kick. Inhale and surge forward by submerging face and kicking legs together. Return legs and arms to starting position. When nearing wall, extend arms toward wall. When hands touch, tuck legs and pull them toward wall. Bring arms together in front of the body, overhead. Push off in a streamlined position on side and twist to front off the wall. Build to 50 yd.</p> <p>2 Breaststroke, open turn, 100 yd. Build to 100 yd.</p> <p>3 Breaststroke, open turn, 200 yd. Build to 200 yd.</p>	<p> Stroke competency achieved</p> <p>Challenge advanced students to swim the same distances faster or to swim for longer distances.</p>

Activities

S School Age
A Teen & Adult

LEGS

Kick-&-Glide Drill **S A**

Have students perform breaststroke kick with their hands stretched out in front and their faces submerged. Ask them to raise their heads to take a quick breath, and then submerge again and glide forward.

Heel-Touch Drill **S A**

Have students bring their hands together at the small of their backs and perform breaststroke kick, taking a breath with every kick at the proper time. Ask students to touch their heels to their fingertips on recovery to practice flexing the foot up and pushing the water back with the soles of the feet.

Push-Kick Drill **S A**

Have students perform breaststroke kick while holding onto the wall. Stand behind each student and place your hands on the soles of the student's feet. As the student kicks, use your hands to provide resistance, helping the student practice an effective kick and develop a feel for pushing water with the feet.

Streamline Kick **S A**

Have students perform breaststroke kick on the water's surface with their bodies extended and their hands stretched out in front, breathing as needed.

ARMS

Arm-Position Drill **S A**

Have students perform breaststroke with a pool noodle or other flotation device around their chests, under their armpits. Ask them to pull only, with their heads up. The pool noodle or other flotation device prevents the pull from moving behind the shoulders and strengthens the arms.

Breaststroke Pull With Dolphin Kick **S A**

Have students perform breaststroke arms with dolphin kick. Encourage them to drive the upper body forward as they kick.

Pull With Support **S A**

Have students practice breaststroke pull with a pull buoy or a pool noodle between their thighs to discourage kicking. Encourage them to drive the upper body forward as they pull.

BODY & BREATH CONTROL

One-Pull-Two-Kicks Drill **S A**

Have students perform breaststroke, pairing one pull with two kicks. Ask them to focus on the glide and breathing at the right time throughout the drill.

Sea Horse Drill **S A**

Have students perform breaststroke. When they begin the pull, with hands wide, instruct them to press the hands down slightly and thrust the hips forward until their bodies are vertical and their hips are underneath their shoulders. Encourage them to focus on engaging the hips during the stroke, not on lifting their heads and chests.

OPEN TURN

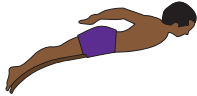
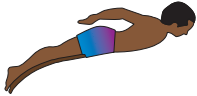

Against the Wall **S A**

Have students focus on the change of direction. Ask them to perform breaststroke to the wall, turn, then swim back to the starting point.

Change of Direction With Pull **S A**

Have students perform breaststroke to the wall, turn, then push off the wall in a streamlined position, executing a one-arm pull underwater and one kick before resuming full breaststroke at the surface.

Skill / Butterfly

PREREQUISITE	SKILL PROGRESSION	ADVANCED
 <p>1 Butterfly, simultaneous arm action & kick, 15 yd. See YMCA Swim Lessons / Stage 6.</p> <p>2 Butterfly, kick, 25 yd. Build to 25 yd.</p> <p>3 Butterfly, arms, 25 yd. Build to 25 yd.</p> <p>4 Open turn When nearing wall, extend arms toward wall. When hands touch, tuck legs and pull them toward wall. Bring arms together in front of the body, overhead. Push off in a streamlined position.</p> <p>5 Butterfly, 25 yd. Combine progressions 2 and 3. Build to 25 yd.</p>	 <p>1 Butterfly, 25 yd. Build to 25 yd.</p> <p>2 Butterfly, open turn, 50 yd. Push off wall into front glide. Move whole body in a rhythmic motion with hips close to surface and simultaneous arm action. Fingertips drop first, almost lining up with eyes. Hands press out, squeeze in, then press out again (with breath). Arms move out over water to the side and around. Fingertips drop in again to complete recovery. When nearing wall, extend arms toward wall. When hands touch, tuck legs and pull them toward wall. Bring arms together in front of the body, overhead. Push off in a streamlined position. Build to 50 yd.</p> <p>3 Butterfly, open turn, 100 yd. Build to 100 yd.</p>	<p> Stroke competency achieved</p> <p>Challenge advanced students to swim the same distances faster or to swim for longer distances.</p>

Activities

S School Age
A Teen & Adult

LEGS

Big Kick, Little Kick **S A**

Have students perform dolphin kick on their fronts. As they kick, have them think about performing big kicks and little kicks. The big kick happens when they bring their arms out of the water; the little kick happens when their arms enter the water.

Dolphin Kick on Back **S A**

Have students perform dolphin kick on their backs to practice the knee bend and hip movement. Encourage them to extend their toes further than their knees at the end of the kick.

Side-Kicking Drill **S A**

Have students perform dolphin kick on their sides in a streamlined position, with six kicks on one side and six kicks on the other.

Single-Leg-Kick Drill **S A**

In a streamlined position, have students perform butterfly kick with just their right legs, then repeat with their left legs. Ask them what the kick reminds them of (flutter kick).

Dolphin Kick With Kickboard **S A**

Have students perform dolphin kick with a kickboard, then take the kickboard away and have them perform it without the kickboard.

ARMS

Arms-Only Drill **S A**

Have students focus on arm movements by performing butterfly using only their arms while holding a pull buoy between their thighs or dragging their legs. Encourage them to drive the upper body forward as their hands enter the water.

Flutter Fly **S A**

Have students perform butterfly with a flutter kick. Ask them to focus on keeping the upper body low to the water and performing quick hand movements forward.

Keyhole **S A**

Have students perform butterfly arms standing up, drawing a keyhole with their arms and focusing on a strong push at the end and overarm recovery.

One-Arm Drill **S A**

Have students perform butterfly across the pool pulling with one arm, then swim another length pulling with the other arm. Have them swim a final length with both arms.

BODY & BREATH CONTROL

Butterfly With Fins **S A**

Have students perform butterfly with fins.

3 x 3 x 3 Build-Up Drill **S A**

Have students perform butterfly, pulling three times with the right arm, then three times with the left, and finishing with a complete stroke three times. Remind students to lift their heads to look forward as they breathe.

OPEN TURN

Against the Wall **S A**

Have students focus on the change of direction. Ask them to perform butterfly to the wall, turn, then perform butterfly back to the starting point.

Change of Direction With Side Push-Off **S A**

Have students perform butterfly to the wall, turn, push off the wall in a streamlined position on their sides, twist to the front, execute a fast and narrow dolphin kick, and then return to the surface to resume full butterfly.

Stretch-&-Crunch Drill **S A**

Have students perform butterfly across the pool, focusing on the stretch and crunch of the core. When they finish the arm stroke and begin arm recovery, their cores "stretch"; when their arms land on the water, their cores "crunch."

Skill / Individual Medley

PREREQUISITE	SKILL PROGRESSION	ADVANCED
<p>No prerequisite for this skill.</p>	<div data-bbox="604 537 1493 675" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>1 Individual medley, 100 yd. Have students swim 25 yd. of butterfly, 25 yd. of back crawl, 25 yd. of breaststroke, and 25 yd. of front crawl, in that order.</p> <p>2 Individual medley, turns, 100 yd. Have students swim 25 yd. of butterfly, 25 yd. of back crawl, 25 yd. of breaststroke, and 25 yd. of front crawl, in that order, with appropriate turns.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stroke competency achieved</p> <p>Challenge advanced students to swim the same distances faster or to swim for longer distances.</p>

Activities

S School Age
A Teen & Adult

BUTTERFLY

3 x 3 x 3 Build-Up Drill **S A**

Have students perform butterfly, pulling three times with the right arm, then three times with the left, and finishing with a complete stroke three times. Remind students to lift their heads to look forward as they breathe.

Butterfly With Fins **S A**

Have students perform butterfly with fins.

Dolphin Dives **S A**

Have students perform butterfly by pushing off the bottom, launching out of the water, taking a stroke, then diving back to the bottom to push off again.

BACK CRAWL

Changeover Drill **S A**

Have students perform seven strokes of front crawl, then flip over and perform seven strokes of back crawl.

Kick-Switch Drill **S A**

Have students perform back glide and flutter kick with one arm extended in a streamlined position and the other arm at their side by the hip. Have them kick three to eight times before switching arms and repeating. Have

students practice moving side to side during the body roll as they reach back with one arm and then the other.

Shoulder-Roll Drill **S A**

Have students kick on back with their hands at their sides and their palms down. Have them do three to eight kicks while rotating to the side and lifting their opposite shoulders. Repeat on the other side.

BREASTSTROKE

Breaststroke Pull With Dolphin Kick **S A**

Have students perform breaststroke arms with dolphin kick. Encourage them to drive the upper body forward as they kick.

One-Pull-Two-Kicks Drill **S A**

Have students perform breaststroke, pairing one pull with two kicks. Ask them to focus on the glide and breathing at the right time throughout the drill.

Pull With Support **S A**

Have students practice breaststroke pull with a pull buoy or a pool noodle between their thighs to discourage kicking. Encourage them to drive the upper body forward as they kick.

Sea Horse Drill **S A**

Have students perform breaststroke. When they begin the pull, with hands wide, instruct them to press the hands down slightly and thrust the hips forward until their bodies are vertical and their hips are underneath their shoulders. Encourage them to focus on engaging the hips during the stroke, not on lifting their heads and chests.

FRONT CRAWL

Fist Drill **S A**

Have students perform front crawl with closed hands or holding tennis balls. Have them practice keeping their bodies balanced and feeling the forearm in the stroke.

Minimum Number of Strokes **S A**

Have students perform front crawl across the pool and count the number of strokes it takes them to get to the other end. Let them rest, then repeat the swim. Encourage them to make it across with fewer strokes on the second length.

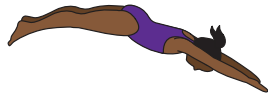
Thumb-Touch Drill **S A**

Have students perform front crawl. During the pull, have them touch their thumbs to their thighs before overarm recovery.

Skill / Front Start

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS: Be aware of water depth, and provide appropriate warnings and instruction. Remind students to execute a shallow dive. If students use starting blocks, stand next to the block to check start position and make adjustments.

PREREQUISITE



1 Dive, kneeling

See YMCA Swim Lessons / Stage 6.

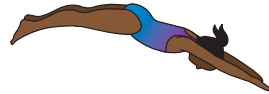
2 Dive, standing, over object

Stand on edge of deep end, toes on edge of pool deck, arms in a streamlined position. Instructor holds object (pool noodle) to dive over. Bend at waist and point hands toward surface of water, fingers pointing toward bottom. Lean and slide into water, hands and head first.

3 Dive, standing

Same as progression 2, without object.

SKILL PROGRESSION



1 Dive, standing

Stand on edge of deep end, toes on edge of pool deck, arms in a streamlined position. Bend at waist and point hands toward surface of water, fingers pointing toward bottom. Lean and slide into water, hands and head first.

2 Front start

Use either grab start (two feet forward) or track start (one foot back), depending on age and development. If using track start, focus on a strong back leg with toes straight ahead, and place other leg forward, with toes over the edge of the block. Grab block on each side of front leg, with thumbs forward. Look down or slightly back. Lean forward with forward knee over the toes and hips over the heels. Throwing head and arms forward, drive with the legs to perform a shallow dive.

ADVANCED



Skill competency achieved

Challenge advanced students to swim front crawl, breaststroke, or butterfly faster or for a longer distance.

Activities

S School Age
A Teen & Adult

Breakout Drill **S A**

Have students perform a start off the deck or block. Instruct them to focus on the underwater breakout of the stroke on the start using the following progression, performed in 5–6 seconds:

1. Streamlined position
2. Dolphin kick
3. Fast flutter kick
4. First arm stroke
5. Second arm stroke
6. First breath

Diving Contest **S A**

Run a diving start contest. Give “awards” to students for things like smallest splash, straightest dive, biggest jump, most arm swing, etc. Make sure students stay safe when they dive; discourage backward or spinning dives.

Grab Start **S A**

Have students stand with their feet together at the front of the deck or block and their big toes wrapped around the edge. Instruct them to fold forward and keep their hands at their sides as their fingers reach for the block or deck. Encourage them to focus on leaning their body mass forward and jumping through their big toes as they perform a front start.

Long, Shallow Dive **S A**

Have students dive in and surface glide upon entry. Encourage students to enter the water farther out each

time, attempting to add distance rather than depth to the dive. Once in the water, have students angle their hands up toward the surface to slow their downward motion as they stay in a streamlined position.

Variation: Once students have mastered this dive, they can start the dive with a back-and-forth arm swing to gain momentum or add track- or grab-start mechanics.

Noodle Dive **S A**

Hold a pool noodle, and have students dive over it.

Variation: Hold the pool noodle farther from the wall, and then have students dive over it.

Racing Start **S A**

Have students stand in a track-start position (feet on the pool deck) and attempt a competitive racing start or dive. Instruct them to bend over in a crouched position with their fingertips touching the side of the pool and their chins tucked. When you say “Take your mark...go!” students dive into the pool headfirst.

Ready, Throw **S A**

Have students stand in track-start position (feet on the pool deck) and attempt a competitive racing start or dive. Instruct them to work on throwing their arms forward into the dive and making sure their hands move fast and their elbows are straight when they enter the water.

Ready, Throw, Jump **S A**

Have students work on throwing their arms and extending their legs at takeoff. Encourage students to

extend beyond the balls of their feet up through their big toes as they jump in feetfirst.

Submarine **S A**

Have students line up on starting blocks with their toes over the edge. Tell students to stand tall and straight with their arms over their heads and their hands together. Say “I am a submarine booster; wait until I come to boost you off.” Move behind the students and, one at a time, place your hands on each student’s waist. Tell the student to bend forward with his or her hands pointing into the water. Guide the student into the water, saying “Blast off!” as each diver is launched. Remind students to steer themselves up once their arms enter the water.

Swing Jump **S A**

Have students practice swing jumps on the pool deck. Instruct students to begin in a standing position and swing their arms back behind the hips and then forward again before jumping feetfirst into the water. Have students work on throwing their arms forward and extending their legs at takeoff. Encourage them to extend beyond the balls of their feet up through their big toes as they jump in.

Variations:

- Do swing jumps from the deck into deep water.
- Do swing jumps from the blocks into deep water.
- Do swing dives from the blocks into deep water.

Skill / Back Start

SAFETY CONSIDERATION: If students use starting blocks, stand next to the block to check start position and make adjustments.

PREREQUISITE	SKILL PROGRESSION	ADVANCED
<p>No prerequisite for this skill.</p>	<div data-bbox="726 542 919 719" data-label="Image"> <p>An illustration of a swimmer in a purple and blue swimsuit, sitting on a grey rectangular starting block. The swimmer is in a crouched position, ready to start a race. Her hands are on the block, and her feet are also on the block, positioned as high as possible.</p> </div> <p>1 Back start, foot placement Place hands shoulder width apart on the block or wall. Place feet as high as possible on the wall, but keep toes below the water line and feet slightly apart. Keep feet and legs in-line and chest to knees, with knees inside armpits.</p> <p>2 Back start, ready position Same as progression 1, but at start signal draw the body up, keeping elbows out, not down, and head looking forward.</p> <p>3 Back start Same as progression 2, but at start signal, arms push back to a streamlined position. Drive hips out of the water and head backward until the back arches and the feet lift or flick clear of the water. During recovery, put fingertips into water before hips, maintain a hyperextended position, and immediately start a strong, fast dolphin kick to return to the surface and begin back crawl.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stroke competency achieved</p> <p>Challenge advanced students to swim back crawl faster or for a longer distance.</p>

Activities

S School Age
A Teen & Adult

Back Start From Wall **S A**

Have students perform a back start holding the wall instead of the block. Instruct them to begin with their feet on the wall. When students push off the wall, have them throw their hands back with force and attempt to launch their bodies up and out of the water, pushing their torsos away from the wall.

Variation: Have students add five underwater dolphin kicks after pushing off the wall.

Explode Back **S A**

Have students get into back-start position, but hold the wall instead of the block and wrap their toes up over the edge of the pool. Ask them to focus on the push off rather than the dive back. As they push off, instruct them to try to get their entire bodies out of the water, then reenter the water with their backsides. After they explode back, have them try to glide along the surface of the water.

One Hole **S A**

Have students perform a back start as if they were going through a long narrow hole.

No Hands **S A**

Have students perform a back start holding the wall instead of the block. Instruct them to begin with their toes wrapped up over the edge of the pool. As they push off, have them keep their hands by their sides and enter the water in hyperextension with their heads back. Ask them to focus on trying to get their entire bodies out of the water.

Over the Noodle **S A**

Hold a pool noodle, and have students practice arching over it while performing a back start.

Back Rocket **S A**

Have students perform a back start holding the starting block. Instruct them to begin with their feet on the pool wall. Have them “blast off” by diving backward into the water and pushing off the wall with their feet (the push is their “rocket booster”).


Explode Out **S A**

Have students perform a back start holding the starting block handles. Instruct them to begin with their toes wrapped up over the edge of the pool. As they complete the start, ask students to focus on trying to get their entire bodies out of the water and reentering the water with their backsides, exploding up and out rather than back.

The Gymnast **S A**

Have students perform the Explode Out activity but with a focus on exploding up and out of the water enough to get their hands to touch their feet in the pike position before they reenter the water.

Skill / Finishes

PREREQUISITE	SKILL PROGRESSION	ADVANCED
<p>No prerequisite for this skill.</p>	<div data-bbox="646 597 1003 683" data-label="Image"> </div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="604 743 1339 808"> 1 Finish, front crawl Finish on side with head down, driving into the wall and kicking hard. <li data-bbox="604 857 1486 963"> 2 Finish, back crawl On completion of last stroke, extend one shoulder to achieve maximum reach. Drive toward the wall, partially on side, with head back, kicking hard. <li data-bbox="604 1011 1423 1117"> 3 Finish, breaststroke Finish on a full recovery. As the arms reach full extension, touch the wall with both hands. <li data-bbox="604 1166 1213 1230"> 4 Finish, butterfly Touch the wall with both hands and arms in full recovery. 	<div data-bbox="1535 602 1913 643" data-label="Text"> <p> Stroke competency achieved</p> </div> <p data-bbox="1535 743 1957 841">Challenge advanced students to swim the same distances faster or to swim for longer distances.</p>

Activities

S School Age
A Teen & Adult

FRONT CRAWL

Front Crawl Finish Drill **S** **A**

Have students swim front crawl toward the wall with force. Instruct them to focus on full recovery on the final stroke, finishing on their sides with one arm fully extended and their heads down as they drive toward the wall, kicking hard. Remind them to pay attention to the location of the wall and the lane markings so that they can finish on a full stroke.

Variation: Have students compete against another student in an adjacent lane as they finish.

Whole Front Crawl Change of Direction **S** **A**

Time students as they swim front crawl for 50 yd. with a flip turn.

Variation: Have students compete against another student in an adjacent lane as they finish.

BACK CRAWL

Back Crawl Finish Drill **S** **A**

Have students swim back crawl toward the wall with force. Instruct them to focus on full recovery on the

final stroke, finishing partially on their sides with one arm fully extended and their heads back as they drive toward the wall, kicking hard. Remind them to pay attention to the location of the wall so that they can finish on a full stroke.

Variation: Have students compete against another student in an adjacent lane as they finish.

BREASTSTROKE

Breaststroke Finish Drill **S** **A**

Have students swim breaststroke toward the wall with force. Instruct them to focus on full recovery as both arms reach to full extension simultaneously on the final stroke. Remind them to pay attention to the location of the wall and the lane markings so that they can finish on a full stroke.

Variation: Have students compete against another student in an adjacent lane as they finish.

BUTTERFLY

Butterfly Finish Drill **S** **A**

Have students swim butterfly toward the wall with force. Instruct them to focus on full recovery as both arms reach to full extension simultaneously on the final stroke. Remind them to pay attention to the location of the wall and the lane markings so that they can finish on a full stroke.

Variation: Have students compete against another student in an adjacent lane as they finish.

Skill / Relay Start

PREREQUISITE	SKILL PROGRESSION	ADVANCED
<p>No prerequisite for this skill.</p>	<div data-bbox="669 565 961 711" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>1 Relay start, track start to two-foot takeoff Student on the block watches the swimmer coming into the wall for sighting and timing of the relay start. Student on block places feet in track-start position, then steps back foot forward to meet front foot.</p> <p>2 Relay start, windup As student on block steps forward and places toes over the edge of the block, he or she winds up arms, accelerating through the windup, and then jumps off the block, using the momentum of the arm swing and the push off to get distance off the block.</p> <p>3 Relay start, relay exchange Student on the block combines progressions 1 and 2, while swimmer finishes fast with a long stroke.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stroke competency achieved</p> <p>Challenge advanced students to swim the same distances faster or to swim for longer distances.</p>

Activities

S School Age
A Teen & Adult

Follow the Swimmer **S A**

Have one student stand on the block or deck with toes over the edge and knees bent and relaxed. Instruct the student to keep arms relaxed, straight, and pointed toward the incoming swimmer and use hands to follow the swimmer in to watch for sighting and timing of the relay start. When the swimmer gets close to the block, student dives in using a front start.

Standing Windups **S A**

Have students stand in a grab-start position and swing their arms from the shoulders. Instruct them to keep the arm swing big (not small and fast) and accelerate through the windup. Use the momentum of the arm swing to get distance off the block.

Swim-Ins **S A**

The incoming swimmer finishes fast, while the student on the block looks for the swimmer, winds up, and starts into the water. Instruct the student on the block to begin the windup when the swimmer is one to two feet away from the wall. Encourage the student to look down, not at the swimmer coming in.

Trophy Dive **S A**

Ask students to recreate the pose on a swimming trophy. Have one student stand on the block or deck with toes over the edge, knees bent and relaxed, chest leaning slightly forward, and arms straight and slightly behind the hips. Have the student on the block do a windup arm swing as the incoming swimmer approaches. When the incoming swimmer is at the flags, say "Trophy, Swing!" as the student on the block assumes the trophy position. Encourage the student to look down, not at the swimmer coming in.




Diamond Drill **S A**

Gather at least four students (additional students can line up behind the block). Send the first student to the block. Ask the second student to enter the water at the opposite wall. Send the third and fourth students to the middle of the pool and have them face in opposite directions. When you say "Go!" the students swim to the next position based on lane direction: The student in the middle of the pool facing away from the block swims to the opposite wall. The student at the opposite wall swims to the middle of the pool. The student in the middle of the pool facing the block sprints at full speed and performs a finish. The student on the block performs a relay start and sprints to the middle of the pool. If there are additional students behind the block, begin the next round.

Track Start to Two-Feet-Forward Jump **S A**

Have students begin with feet in track position and toes over the edge, then step the back foot forward to meet the front foot. Instruct students to wind up as they step forward and jump off the block.

Skill / Endurance

PREREQUISITE	SKILL PROGRESSION	ADVANCED
 <p>1 Endurance, any stroke or combination of strokes, 50 yd. Build to 50 yd.</p> <p>2 Endurance, any stroke or combination of strokes, 100 yd. Build to 100 yd.</p> <p>3 Endurance, any stroke or combination of strokes, 150 yd. Build to 150 yd.</p>	 <p>1 Endurance, any stroke or combination of strokes, 150 yd. Build to 150 yd.</p> <p>2 Endurance, any stroke or combination of strokes, 250 yd. Build to 250 yd.</p> <p>3 Endurance, any stroke or combination of strokes, 500 yd. Build to 500 yd.</p>	<p> Stroke competency achieved</p> <p>Challenge advanced students to swim the same distances faster or to swim for longer distances.</p>

Activities

S School Age
A Teen & Adult

Balloon Relay **S**

Divide students into teams. Have half of each team line up on the opposite side of the pool. Give the first person on each team a blown-up balloon. On your signal, students push the balloon with nose, cheeks, or forehead while swimming across the pool to a teammate on the other side, who swims it back. The relay continues until all members of each team finish.

Battleship **S**

Have students imagine that the pool is a battleship. The deep end is the bow of the ship, the shallow end is the stern, the left side as you face the bow is port, and the right side as you face the bow is starboard. Tell students that you will say one of these directions and they should respond by swimming to that side and sitting on or touching the pool edge. For instance, if you say "Port," students swim to the left side of the pool.

Carps & Cranes **S**

Mark off a square or rectangular playing area in the pool with a lane line dividing the area in half at the center. Mark end lines clearly, as they will serve as home bases for the teams. Divide students into two equal teams and have them line up along the lane line facing each other, with the end lines behind them. Designate one team carps and the other team cranes. When you call out "Carps" or "Cranes," that team tries to catch members of

the opposing team before they can reach the safety of their end line. The captured members join the other team. The team with the most players at the end of play wins.

Forty Ways **S A**

Have students line up at one end (or at the side) of the pool. Have the first student in line swim across the pool using a stroke of his or her own choice. The second student then swims across using a different stroke, and so on until all students have gone. Any innovative way to move through the water is acceptable. If you play for more than one round, change the order of the students for each round.

Newspaper Relay **S A**

Divide students into teams. Have half of each team line up on the opposite side of the pool in waist-deep to over-the-head water. Give the first student on each team a newspaper page. Tell the student to swim a set distance on his or her back without getting the page wet and then hand the paper over to a teammate on the other side of the pool.

Noodle Relay **S A**

Divide students into teams. Have half of each team line up on the opposite side of the pool. The relay consists of three heats, with each person on the team swimming across the pool three times, switching off to a teammate on the other side of the pool between lengths. In the first heat, everyone sits on a pool noodle. In the second heat,

everyone lies on their stomachs on a pool noodle. In the last heat, everyone pulls the pool noodle across the pool.

Obstacle Course **S A**

Create an obstacle course in waist-deep to over-the-head water (depending on students' skill level) using some of the following equipment: diving bricks, kickboards, buoyed lines, rope, large plastic hoops, mats, poker chips, buckets, balls, or other pool equipment, and a stopwatch or a clock that times to the second. Specify which skills you want students to use in different parts of the course in order to provide skill-specific practice. Students first try to swim through the course without stopping, then swim through for time.

Relay Races **S A**

Divide students into teams of equal ability and have them race across the pool. As each student finishes, he or she exits the pool and lines up. The first team to line up gets a round of applause. The other team(s) gets big smiles and words of encouragement.

Variations:

- Bob across the pool.
- Swim backward across the pool.
- Swim on back across the pool.
- Let students make up their own variation.

Topics

At the Y, we set ourselves apart because we are committed to delivering an experience that goes beyond physical skills. Use the character and safety topics that follow to promote cognitive and social-emotional development. This holistic approach creates a safe space where adults and children can build relationships and feel like they belong, in addition to feeling a sense of achievement as they develop important life skills.

TOPIC 1	TOPIC 2	TOPIC 3	TOPIC 4
<p>PARTS OF A WORKOUT</p> <p>Explain the importance of warm-ups and cooldowns:</p> <p>Warm-ups and cooldowns are short swims done at the beginning and end of a workout. They help prevent injuries by ensuring our muscles are warm and loose for a workout and remain loose after a workout. Warm-ups and cooldowns differ from the main set because they are usually short and performed at a slower pace.</p> <p>Explain what a main set is:</p> <p>A main set forms the core of a swimming workout. During a main set, students typically swim longer distances at a faster pace.</p>	<p>GOAL SETTING</p> <p>Ask students why goals are important:</p> <p>Goals help you focus on something you are trying to do or achieve.</p> <p>Ask students to set personal swimming goals:</p> <p>Have them think about the skills they have already learned and what they want to accomplish by the end of the session.</p> <p>Help students achieve at least one of their goals throughout the session.</p>	<p>DRY-LAND TRAINING</p> <p>Explain the importance of dry-land training:</p> <p>Dry-land training is exercise that takes place out of the pool. It helps build strength and is a component of successful swim training.</p> <p>Have students practice dry-land activities. Use the following or create your own:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 20 abdominal crunches - 10 push-ups - 15 jumping jacks - 10 supermans (students lie on their stomachs and raise their arms and legs as far off the ground as they can) 	<p>DRILLS</p> <p>Explain the importance of drills:</p> <p>Drills help swimmers improve endurance, technique, and speed.</p> <p>Run drills for each of the four main strokes. Select drills from this library, and explain how the drill is designed to improve the stroke.</p>

TOPIC 5

READING A WORKOUT

Review the importance of each workout component: warm-up, drills, main set, and cooldown.

Explain how to read a workout by reviewing the following shorthand:

- 50 FR = 50 yd. front crawl
- 50 BA/BK = 50 yd. back crawl
- 50 FY/FLY = 50 yd. butterfly
- 50 BR = 50 yd. breaststroke
- 2x (25 BA, 50 BR, 75 FY, 100 FR) = perform what is in parentheses twice

Explain that in competitive swimming front crawl is referred to as freestyle and back crawl is referred to as backstroke.

TOPIC 6

PACE CLOCK

Explain the function of a pace clock:

A pace clock helps you time how long it takes to swim a distance. You can use it to set intervals during workouts to improve speed.

Explain how to read a pace clock:

Visually break the pace clock into “pie” pieces. Sixty-second intervals equal the whole pie, 30-second intervals equal half, and 15- or 45-second intervals equal a quarter or three quarters. Intervals can start at the “top” (i.e., begin when the second hand reaches the 0 or 60 at the top of the clock) or the “bottom” (i.e., begin when the second hand reaches the 30 at the bottom of the clock).

TOPIC 7

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Discuss why physical activity is important:

It makes your heart healthy, strengthens your muscles and bones, lengthens your life, and prevents illness.

Ask students to list some fun ways to be physically active:

Playing sports, running, swimming, etc.

Swimming is a healthy way to be physically active; it exercises your whole body but is gentle on your joints. The water’s buoyancy supports body weight, which means less pressure on your joints.

TOPIC 8

HYPOXIC BLACKOUT

Discuss hypoxic blackout and how it can happen:

Holding your breath and swimming underwater for a long time can cause a person to black out or lose consciousness.

Discuss how to prevent hypoxic blackout:

- Don’t hold your breath and swim underwater for long distances.
- When swimming short distances underwater, always have a buddy.