

# Skill & Topic Library

# B / WATER EXPLORATION

## Teaching This Stage

In this stage, children focus on exploring body positions, blowing bubbles, and fundamental safety and aquatic skills. As you develop youth at this stage, focus on the following important milestones:

- Encouraging children to move purposefully in the water in response to visual and verbal cues and using toys and flotation devices
- Emphasizing basic aquatic safety to parents
- Building relationships among and between parents and children by providing opportunities for fun and interaction in the water

## Positively Impacting Parents and Children

Remember, as a cause-driven leader at the Y, you have an opportunity to positively impact the children and parents 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 Children Safe

You also have a responsibility to keep children safe as they explore the aquatic environment. Limit participants to a single inhalation whenever you ask them to hold their breath and submerge. Set safety limits when setting up activities that involve submerging or swimming underwater. 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 children to achieve more, faster. The activities in this library give children a chance to practice the skills. You can choose activities based on the needs of your Y and your students.

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.



# Contents

<b>Greeting</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Blow Bubbles</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Front Tow</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Water Exit</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Water Entry</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Back Float</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Roll</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Front Float</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Back Tow</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>Monkey Crawl</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>Safety &amp; Character Topics</b> .....	<b>22</b>

# Greeting

## SETTING EXPECTATIONS

### Ask Permission

To teach the habit of asking permission before getting into the water, have children repeat the phrase “Before I get into the pool, I must always ask first.” This is an IMPORTANT rule. Then have children ask their parents or you, if their parents aren’t available, for permission. Reinforce that children should always have someone watching them around water.

### Pool Rules

Ask parents and children 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 children and parents 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, children 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.
- Find the posted pool rules and review them. Explain that the rules are designed to keep people safe so everyone can have fun.

## BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

### Animal Names

Have children or parents pick an animal that starts with the letter of the child’s first name, for example, Dolphin Dion. Use the animal names throughout the session.

**Variation:** Use food, places, or an adjective.

### Name Dance

Have a child, or his or her parents, choose a movement for each syllable of the child’s 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 or his parent has demonstrated the movement(s) while saying his name, the whole group does it. Go around the group until every child has his or her own name dance.

### Name Game

Have children and parents line up along the wall. Go down the line pointing to each child and singing the following:

Names, names, what’s in a name? I’ve got a name,  
you’ve got a name. What’s your name?

Ask the child or parent to say the child’s name. Have the group repeat the name so everyone becomes familiar with everyone else’s name. Repeat for all children.

### Name Toss

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

**Variation:** Have parents and children blow bubbles as they toss the ball.

## WATER ADJUSTMENT

### Head & Shoulders

Have parents sit with their children on the stairs in shallow water or on the side of the pool. As a group, sing the following and dip each body part into the water as it is mentioned:

Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes.

Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes.

Eyes and ears and mouth and nose.

Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes.

### Hokey Pokey

In shallow water (if possible), arrange parents and children in a circle and do the “Hokey Pokey”:

You put your right arm in,

You put your right arm out,

You put your right arm in,

And you shake it all about.

You do the Hokey Pokey and you turn yourself around.

That’s what it’s all about.

Repeat using the left arm, right and left legs, head, and whole self. You can also try other body parts, such as the nose, ear, shoulder, and so on.

### If You’re Happy and You Know It

Have parents hold their children and sing the following:

If you’re happy and you know it, clap (splash) your hands.

If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands.

If you’re happy and you know it,

Then your life will surely show it,

If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands.

#### Variations:

If you’re happy and you know it, nod your head, etc.

If you’re happy and you know it, kick your feet, etc.

### The Incy Wincy Spider

As a group, sing “The Incy Wincy Spider.” Parents can drape young children across their forearms and help them do hand motions with the song. Older children can do their own hand motions as they sit on the side of the pool.

The incy wincy spider crept up the water spout.

Down came the rain and washed the spider out.

Out came the sun and dried up all the rain.

And the incy wincy spider crept up the spout again.

### Water Walking

If you have a zero-depth pool, allow children to independently explore the environment, asking parents to remain within arm’s reach. In traditional lap pools, allow children to independently explore a swim platform or the area where they can touch the bottom under constant supervision.

### Wheels on the Bus

Have parents form a circle in the pool, holding their children. As a group, sing the following:

The wheels on the bus go round and round,

Round and round, round and round. The wheels on the bus go round and round, all through the town.

Move hands in a circular motion in the water.

**Second verse:** The doors on the bus go open and shut.

Move body back and forth.

**Third verse:** The windows on the bus go up and down.

Bob or get chin wet.

**Fourth verse:** The baby on the bus cries wah, wah, wah.

Move one hand toward and away from mouth.

**Fifth verse:** The parent on the bus goes sh, sh, sh.

Put one finger to mouth.

**Sixth verse:** The driver on the bus says, “Move on back.”

Throw thumb behind shoulder.

**Seventh verse:** The horn on the bus goes beep, beep, beep.

Hit water with one hand.

**Eighth verse:** The people on the bus all wave bye-bye.

Wave good-bye.

# Skill / Blow Bubbles

## PREREQUISITE



### 1 Blow bubbles, on surface, assisted

On the surface of the water, parent holds child facing toward or away from him or her and demonstrates how to blow bubbles, cuing "One, two, three, blow bubbles."

**Note:** Young children may submerge mouths and suck water in rather than blow. Do not let children drink pool water because it can lead to upset stomachs and accidents in the pool.

## STAGE PROGRESSION



### 1 Blow bubbles, on surface, assisted

On the surface of the water, parent holds child facing toward or away from him or her and demonstrates how to blow bubbles, cuing "One, two, three, blow bubbles."

**Note:** Young children may submerge mouths and suck water in rather than blow. Do not let children drink pool water because it can lead to upset stomachs and accidents in the pool.

### 2 Blow bubbles, mouth & nose submerged, assisted

If a child is happy putting his or her face in the water, parent holds child facing away and cues child to submerge face. Parent gently scoops child forward so water runs over child's face, not up child's nose.

## ADVANCED



### 1 Blow bubbles

Blow bubbles with nose and mouth. If hesitant, start with blowing on the surface of the water. Build to submerging mouth and nose while exhaling. Hum, if needed, to practice skill.

### 2 Get head & face wet

Submerge face or instructor pours water over head.

### 3 Submerge head

Submerge entire head underwater. If hesitant, start with putting mouth and nose underwater, then eyes, ears, and, finally, top of head.

### 4 Submerge, bob independently

Hold onto wall, submerge body, and exhale underwater.

## Activities

I Infant  
T Toddler

### Bubble Band I T

In a group, have children blow bubbles as parents make the sound of an instrument. Tell the parents to only make a sound when their children are blowing bubbles. Encourage the group by acting as the conductor.

### Bubble Boat T

Have children pretend to be a boat in water by floating or gliding on their fronts. Have them practice blowing bubbles while being towed around the pool by their parents.

### Bubble Pass T

Have parents and children stand in a circle in shallow water. Pass around different objects big enough to fit over a child's mouth and nose (e.g., cup, bucket, shoe, flowerpot). Have parents fill the object with water and ask children to blow bubbles into it.

### Bubbles & Pop I T

Have children and parents put their faces and mouths in the water and blow bubbles together. When a child stops blowing bubbles, his or her parent says "Pop!" and both child and parent pop up together.

### Feel the Wind T

Have the children pick out their favorite toys and blow on them on the pool deck. Then place the toys in the

water and have the children blow on them there. Parents can help the children "feel the wind" by pretending their hands are clouds and placing them in front of the children's mouths, out of the water. As they lower their hands into the water, have them tell the children to "make it rain" (blow bubbles).

**Variation:** Put out different items that float in the pool (ping-pong ball, cork, ball, water bottle). Have children blow the items to the other side of the pool or through a hoop.

### London Bridge I T

Use a pool noodle to make a bridge. Raise and lower the bridge. Encourage children, in the arms of their parents, to submerge under the bridge. Children who don't want to submerge can go under the bridge without going completely under the water. Children who will not voluntarily submerge can blow bubbles instead.

### Magic Soap I T

To encourage children to get their faces wet, ask them to wash their faces with imaginary magic soap and a magic washcloth.

**Variation:** Have them use watering cans and buckets to pour water over their faces.

### Partner Bubbles I T

Have children work with a parent or a friend. Ask them to encourage each other to put their mouths and noses in the water, then exhale and hum.

### Peekaboo I T

Have parents hold their children facing toward them. Ask parents to submerge their heads and pop back up saying "Peekaboo!" to the children. Encourage children to blow bubbles as their parents submerge.

### Popcorn I T

Have parents say "Pop...pop...pop...POPCORN!" On "pop," parents slightly lift their children, while the children blow bubbles. On "popcorn," parents lift the children higher. Caution parents not to lose contact with their children.

### Straws & Bubble Pipes T

Have parents and children use drinking straws or bubble wands to practice blowing air into the water. Then have them blow at the water's surface without straws or wands.

#### Variations:

- Have children and parents use large plastic whistles to blow underwater.
- Have them blow a ball across the water.
- Ask children to blow out birthday candles.

# Skill / Front Tow

## PREREQUISITE



### 1 Front tow, chin in water, assisted

Parent holds child as child glides on front. Parent cues child to kick and gently dips child's chin in water. Encourage parent to hold child in various ways and let water support child as much as possible.

## STAGE PROGRESSION



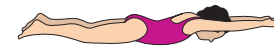
### 1 Front tow, chin in water, assisted

Parent holds child as child glides on front. Parent cues child to kick and gently dips child's chin in water. Encourage parent to hold child in various ways and let water support child as much as possible.

### 2 Front tow, blow bubbles, assisted

Same as progression 1, but child blows bubbles.

## ADVANCED



### 1 Front walk to wall, face submerged

Stand 5 ft. from wall, submerge face (nose down), walk to wall. If hesitant, blow bubbles.

### 2 Front glide, assisted, holding wall

Hold onto wall, move into front glide by lifting feet off bottom, submerge face.

### 3 Front glide, assisted, to wall, one arm's length, feet on bottom

Stand one arm's length from wall. With arms in a streamlined position, bend over to submerge face (exhaling through nose), feet remain on bottom. Move toward wall and grab it with both hands.

### 4 Front glide, assisted, to wall, 5 ft.

Same as progression 3, but with both feet off bottom. Build to 5 ft. from wall.



## Activities

I Infant  
T Toddler

### 3-2-1 Blastoff! T

Have parents hold their children in a front-glide position. Ask children to pretend to be a rocket and kick as parents yell "Three, two, one, blastoff!" Have parents cue "Kick, kick, kick" to get their children to kick in the water.

### Animal Rescue I T

Have parents hold their children in a front-glide position. Throw floating toys, animals, and ducks into the pool. Put one kickboard in the center of the area. Ask parents to swim with their children to collect the floating toys one at a time and "save" them by putting them on the floating kickboard.

### Be Like T

Have parents hold their children in a front-glide position. Ask children to pretend to be like the following as they float with their faces in the water:

- A cloud
- A feather
- An ice cube floating in water
- A letter "T"
- A napping puppy
- An airplane
- A rocket

### Bumper Fish T

Have children pretend to be a fish. Ask them to float on front with their parents and try to bump their parents in the tummy with their heads.

### Chase the Toy I T

Have parents hold their children in a front-glide position. Throw a toy and have each parent and child pair collect and return it.

### Floating With Equipment I T

Have parents help their children float on their fronts using kickboards, barbells, and pool noodles for support. Young children can lie with their tummies on the kickboard; older children can place pool noodles or barbells under their armpits. Remind parents not to lose contact with their children.

### Kicking on Front I T

Have parents hold their children in a front-glide position. Ask parents to give a verbal cue (e.g., "Kick, kick, kick" or "Swim, swim, swim") as you (or the parents) move the children's feet in a kicking motion. Encourage parents to give lots of praise when children kick on their own in response to the cue.

**Variation:** Have parents give a verbal cue (e.g., "Scoop, scoop, scoop" or "Swim, swim, swim") as you (or the parents) move the children's hands in a scooping motion.

### Pass the Fishy I T

Hold one child at a time in a front-glide position. As you say "One, two, three, pass the fishy," pass the child to his or her parent. Encourage children to get their chins wet and kick as they are passed. If a child is ready, his or her parent can pass to you. Remember to let children know what is going to happen before they are passed and ensure parents do the same.

### Row, Row, Row Your Boat I T

Have parents hold their children in a front-glide position as they sing "Row, Row, Row Your Boat":

Row, row, row your boat,  
Gently down the stream.  
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,  
Life is but a dream.

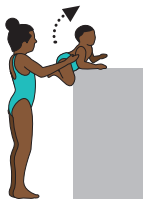
#### Variations:

Drive, drive, drive your car,  
Gently down the street.  
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,  
Life is but a treat.

Ride, ride, ride your bike,  
Gently down the street.  
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,  
Life is but a treat.

# Skill / Water Exit

## PREREQUISITE



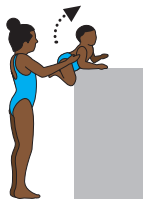
### 1 Water exit, parent lifts child

Parent lifts child out of water and onto pool deck.

### 2 Water exit, parent & child together

Parent and child walk or climb out of pool together using stairs, side, or zero-depth area. Parent can hold child as they exit.

## STAGE PROGRESSION



### 1 Water exit, parent lifts child

Parent lifts child out of water and onto pool deck.

### 2 Water exit, parent & child together

Parent and child walk or climb out of pool together using stairs, side, or zero-depth area. Parent can hold child as they exit.

### 3 Water exit, independently, using ladder, side, or stairs

Child climbs out of pool independently using ladder, side, or stairs.

### 4 Water exit, assisted

Parent cues "Elbow, elbow, tummy, knee" for child to climb out of water. Parent assists as needed.

## ADVANCED



### 1 Elbow, elbow, tummy, knee, assisted

Grab edge of pool and lift body out of water by pushing down on pool deck, one elbow at a time. Shift weight to tummy and bring one knee onto pool deck. Move into a standing position. Instructor provides extra leverage by holding student under armpits as student lifts one knee onto pool deck or by putting one knee under the student to act as a step stool.

### 2 Water exit, independently

Same as progression 1, but without assistance.

## Activities

I Infant  
T Toddler

### Chop, Chop, Timber I T

Have children sit on the side of the pool and curl up in a little ball (like a seed). Have parents “water” the children with a watering can, or by sprinkling or splashing water on them. Encourage children to stand up and “grow” when they get wet. Have parents “chop” the children by lightly tapping at their shins and lifting them into the water. As they lift the children into the water, parents turn the children toward the wall, helping them grab the wall and climb out.

### Elbow, Elbow, Tummy, Knee I T

Have parents say “Elbow, elbow, tummy, knee” while they help their children climb out of the water.

### Give Me Five T

Have parents hold out their hands, palms up and have children jump into the water, hitting their parents’ hands. This will slow down the children’s fall and keep their faces from getting too wet. Parents support children once they enter the water, guiding them back to the wall and helping them exit.

### Humpty Dumpty I T

Have children sit along the edge of the pool. Have parents stand in the pool face-to-face with their children and recite the following:

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.  
Parents lift their children into the pool.

As soon as the children enter the pool, have parents turn them back toward the wall and help them grab the wall and climb out.

### In & Out I T

With the help of their parents, have children get into and out of the pool in various ways (at wall, using stairs, walking if it’s a zero-depth pool, etc.).

### Jack & Jill I T

Have parents sit on the edge of the pool with their children. One at a time, as they say the following, parents enter the water, turn, and hold their children as they come in after. Parents then turn and go back to the wall.

(Parent’s name) and (child’s name) went up the hill  
To fetch a pail of water.

(Parent’s name) fell down and broke (his/her) crown,  
Parent enters the water and makes a splash.  
And (child’s name) came tumbling after.

### Jack Be Nimble I T

Have children sit or stand on the edge of the pool, while parents recite the following:

Jack be nimble, Jack be quick.  
Jack jump over the candlestick.  
Parents lift their children into the pool.

As soon as the children enter the pool, have parents turn them back toward the wall and help them grab the wall and climb out.

### Monkey, Monkey, Zookeeper T

Have parents say “Monkey, monkey, zookeeper!” On “monkey,” children grab the wall or do a monkey crawl. On “zookeeper,” children climb out of the pool using elbow, elbow, tummy, knee.

### Popcorn T

Have children enter the water one at a time, first holding both their parents’ hands, then one hand, then jumping into their parents’ arms, then slapping their parents’ hands (see “Give Me Five” activity), and, finally, without any contact. Each time, the class recites the following:

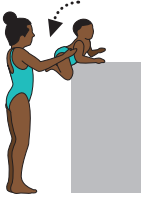
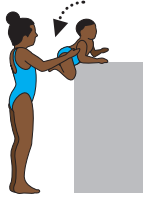
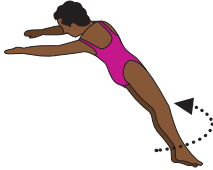
It’s getting hot! It’s getting hotter!  
It’s getting really hot! It’s going to POP!

After each entry, parents assist children back to the wall and encourage them to climb out.

### Wake-Up Shark T

Have the children stand by the wall with their parents. Pretend you are a fish or a shark. Ask parents and children what time they want the shark to wake up. If they say eleven o’clock, submerge and count to 11 while the children try to climb out of the pool before the shark “gets” them.

# Skill / Water Entry

PREREQUISITE	STAGE PROGRESSION	ADVANCED
 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1 Water entry, parent &amp; child together, partner entry</b> See A / Water Discovery.</li> <li><b>2 Water entry, parent &amp; child together, heartbeat hold</b> See A / Water Discovery.</li> <li><b>3 Water entry, parent &amp; child together, sitting</b> Parent and child sit together on side of pool. Parent puts far hand on child and uses near hand to turn and slip into pool. He or she lifts child into pool.</li> <li><b>4 Water entry, parent &amp; child together</b> Child sits on side of pool with feet in water. Parent cues "One, two, three, jump" and lifts child into pool. Encourage older children to stand and jump with parent help.</li> </ol>	 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1 Water entry, parent &amp; child together</b> Child sits on side of pool with feet in water. Parent cues "One, two, three, jump" and lifts child into pool. Encourage older children to stand and jump with parent help.</li> <li><b>2 Water entry, slide in from seated position, assisted</b> Parent sits child on wall and cues "One, two, three, go." Child rolls over and slides into pool on stomach.</li> <li><b>3 Water entry, slide in, independently</b> Child sits on wall. Parent cues "One, two, three, go." Child rolls over and slides into pool on stomach without assistance.</li> <li><b>4 Water entry, assisted</b> Child stands on edge of pool facing parent in water. Parent cues "One, two, three, jump." Parent catches child, turns child toward wall, and immediately cues "Find the wall" so child looks back toward wall. If child will voluntarily submerge, he or she does so and finds wall.</li> </ol>	 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1 Jump &amp; grab wall, assisted</b> See 1 / Water Acclimation.</li> <li><b>2 Jump, push off bottom, grab wall, assisted</b> See 1 / Water Acclimation.</li> <li><b>3 Jump, push, turn, assisted by guiding wrist, grab wall</b> Stand on edge of pool, jump in, submerge, and push off bottom. Instructor assists by turning toward wall with wrist. Grab wall and climb out.</li> <li><b>4 Jump, push, turn, grab, assisted</b> Same as progression 3, but instructor assists to wall.</li> </ol>

## Activities

I Infant  
T Toddler

### Chop, Chop, Timber T

Have children sit on the side of the pool and curl up in a little ball (like a seed). Have parents “water” the children with a watering can, or by sprinkling or splashing water on them. Encourage children to stand up and “grow” when they get wet. Have parents “chop” the children by lightly tapping at their shins and lifting them into the water.

### Give Me Five T

Have parents hold out their hands, palms up. Then have the children jump into the water, hitting their parents’ hands as they do so. This will slow down the children’s fall and keep their faces from getting too wet.

### Humpty Dumpty I T

Have children sit along the edge of the pool. Have parents stand in the pool face-to-face with their children and recite the following:

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.  
Parents lift their children into the pool.

### I’m a Little Rocket T

Have parents stand in the water and children stand on the edge of the pool. Sing the following to cue children to jump in the water:

I’m a little rocket, short and thin.  
Here is my nose cone; here are my fins.  
When it comes to blast off, then I zoom  
Off the launchpad, to the moon.  
Children jump into the pool with parent support.

### In & Out I T

With the help of their parents, have children get into and out of the pool in various ways (at wall, using stairs, walking if it’s a zero-depth pool, etc.).

### Jack & Jill I T

Have parents sit on the edge of the pool with their children. One at a time, as they say the following, parents enter the water, turn, and hold their children as they come in after. Parents then turn and go back to the wall.

(Parent’s name) and (child’s name) went up the hill  
To fetch a pail of water.  
(Parent’s name) fell down and broke (his/her) crown,  
Parent enters the water and makes a splash.  
And (child’s name) came tumbling after.

### Jack Be Nimble I T

Have children sit or stand on the edge of the pool, while parents recite the following:

Jack be nimble. Jack be quick.  
Jack jump over the candlestick.  
Parents lift their children into the pool.

### Little Speckled Frogs I T

Have the children sit on the edge of the pool pretending to eat bugs and singing the following:

Six little speckled frogs  
Sat on a speckled log,  
Eating the most delicious bugs.  
One jumped into the pool,  
Parents assist children into pool.  
Where it was nice and cool,  
Now there are five speckled frogs.  
Parents return children to the edge.

### Popcorn T

Have children enter the water one at a time, first holding both their parents’ hands, then one hand, then jumping into their parents’ arms, then slapping their parents’ hands (see “Give Me Five” activity), and, finally, without any contact. Each time, the class recites the following:

It’s getting hot! It’s getting hotter!  
It’s getting really hot! It’s going to POP!

# Skill / Back Float

## PREREQUISITE



### 1 Back float, assisted, head on shoulder

Parent holds child's head to his or her shoulder with their cheeks touching as child floats on back. Encourage parent to hold child in various ways and let water support child as much as possible.

## STAGE PROGRESSION



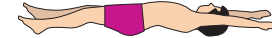
### 1 Back float, assisted, head on shoulder

Parent holds child's head to his or her shoulder with their cheeks touching as child floats on back. Encourage parent to hold child in various ways and let water support child as much as possible.

### 2 Back float, assisted, head on chest

Same as progression 1, but parent holds child's head to his or her chest with child's ears in the water.

## ADVANCED



### 1 Standing, head back, assisted

Stand facing wall, tilt head back, walk 5 ft. forward.

### 2 Standing, head back, on one foot, assisted

Same as progression 1, on one foot.

### 3 Back float, assisted, 10 secs.

Lie relaxed on back, level with water, head back, ears submerged, tummy above water. Attempt for 10 secs. Movement or travel OK. Use flotation device as needed. Instructor may stand by head to assist. Instructor assists back to a vertical position.

### 4 Back float, assisted, 10 secs., recover independently

Same as progression 3, build to 10 secs., recover independently.

## Activities

I Infant  
T Toddler

### Did You Ever See a Swimmer? I T

Have parents hold children in a back-float position. As a group, sing the following:

Did you ever see a swimmer, a swimmer, a swimmer?  
Did you ever see a swimmer go this way and that?  
Go this way and that way, go that way and this way,  
Did you ever see a swimmer go this way and that?

### My Bonnie Song I T

Have parents sing the following while holding their children in a back-float position and rocking them gently:

My Bonnie lies over the ocean.  
My Bonnie lies over the sea.  
My Bonnie lies over the ocean.  
Oh, bring back my Bonnie to me.

Bring back, bring back,  
Oh, bring back my Bonnie to me, to me.  
Bring back, bring back,  
Oh, bring back my Bonnie to me.

### Rock-a-Bye Baby I T

Have parents sing the following while holding their children in a back-float position and rocking them gently:

Rock-a-bye baby,  
On the treetop.

When the wind blows,  
The cradle will rock.  
When the bough breaks,  
The cradle will fall,  
And down will come baby, cradle and all.

### Sailing, Sailing I T

Have parents sing the following while holding their children in a back-float position:

Sailing, sailing, over the bounding main.  
For many a stormy wind shall blow  
'Til Jack comes home again.

Sailing, sailing, over the bounding main.  
For many a stormy wind shall blow  
'Til Jack comes home again.

### This Little Piggy I T

As children rest in a back-float position on the front of their parents' bodies, have parents wiggle each of the children's toes, moving from the big toe to the little toe, while saying the following:

This little piggy went to market,  
This little piggy stayed home,  
This little piggy had roast beef,  
This little piggy had none.  
This little piggy cried wee, wee, wee,  
All the way home.

### Tummy Ride T

Have children float on their backs with parents lightly supporting under their children's shoulder blades. Have parents cue their children to put their tummies up and their heads back. Ask parents to place a small toy on their children's stomachs and have children take it for a "ride."

### Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star I T

Have parents hold their children in a back-float position, with the children's heads resting on their parents' shoulders. If needed, parents can place one hand on their children's foreheads to gently keep their heads in place. Parents control the depth of the children's heads in the water. As a group, sing the following:

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
How I wonder what you are.  
Up above the world so high,  
Like a diamond in the sky.  
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
How I wonder what you are.

### Wave to the Fishies T

Have children rest in back-float position and pretend there are fishies at the bottom of the pool. Tell them to wave to the fishies with their hands at their hips and their palms facing toward the bottom. Parents may have to move their hands for them.

# Skill / Roll

## PREREQUISITE



### 1 Roll, assisted, back to front & front to back

Parent holds child as child kicks on front. Parent cues "One, two, three, roll" and rolls child onto the back. After a few seconds floating on back, parent cues again and rolls child back onto the front.

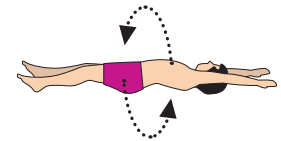
## STAGE PROGRESSION



### 1 Roll, assisted, back to front & front to back

Parent holds child as child kicks on front. Parent cues "One, two, three, roll" and rolls child onto the back. After a few seconds floating on back, parent cues again and rolls child back onto the front. Encourage child to blow bubbles or submerge chin when on front.

## ADVANCED



### 1 Roll, assisted, back to front & front to back

Float on front with face submerged. Instructor cues to turn on back. After two to three breaths on back, instructor cues again to turn on front. Instructor assists as needed.



## Activities

I Infant  
T Toddler

### Corkscrew I T

Have parents hold their children in a front-glide position and say "One, two, three, corkscrew." On "corkscrew," parents roll children onto their backs without submerging them and allow them to rest on the parents' chest. Have parents reverse the roll, saying "One, two, three, corkscrew" and rolling children back to their fronts.

### Five in the Pool I T

Have parents hold their children in a front-glide position. As a group, sing the following to the tune of "Five in the Bed." After each verse, parents roll the children, reversing the roll each time.

There were five in the pool and (child's name) said, roll over, roll over, so they all rolled over and floated around.

There were four in the pool and (different child's name) said, roll over, roll over, so they all rolled over and paddled their hands.

There were three in the pool and (different child's name) said, roll over, roll over, so they all rolled over and blew noisy bubbles.

There were two in the pool and (different child's name) said, roll over, roll over, so they all rolled over and kicked their legs.

There was one in the pool and (different child's name) said, roll over, roll over, so they all rolled over and splashed, splashed, splashed.

### Flip-Flop I T

Have parents face their children, with children in a front-glide position moving toward them. Use pool noodles, if needed. When the parent cues "Flip-flop," they help children flip from the front to the back. When parents cue "Flip-flop" again, they help children flip from the back to the front. Repeat several times.

### I'm a Little Pancake I T

Have parents hold their children in a back-float position as they sing the following to the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot":

I'm a little pancake on my back.

I'm a little pancake nice and flat.

I'm a little pancake on my back.

Flip me over, just like that.

After the last line has been sung, parents roll children to the front. Repeat.

### One, Two, Three, Four, Five I T

Have parents hold their children in a tight circle. Parents slowly move children onto their backs out of the circle as they say the following:

One, two, three, four, five, I caught a fish alive.

Parents return children to the circle in a front-float position as they say the following:

Six, seven, eight, nine, ten, I let it go again.

Repeat several times.

### Pass the Fishy I T

Hold one child at a time in a front-glide position. As you say "One, two, three, pass the fishy," pass the child to his or her parent and have the parent roll the child into a back-glide position. Encourage children to get their chins wet and kick as they are passed. If a child is ready, the parent can pass to you. When a child is passed to you, roll the child into a back-glide position. Repeat the same movement back to the parent. Remember to let children know what is going to happen before they are passed and ensure parents do the same.

### Roller Coaster Ride T

Have children float on their fronts in a face-to-face hold with their parents. When you say "Go!" parents roll their children, twisting and twirling them, pretending they are riding a roller coaster. When children get tired, they can rest on their backs. Repeat.

### Wake Up! T

Have parents hold their children in a front- or back-glide position and select a number between 1 and 12. Parents then count "One o'clock, two o'clock, three o'clock," etc., until they reach the number selected. Have parents exclaim "Wake up!" and gently roll the child over, then repeat and reverse the roll.

# Skill / Front Float

## PREREQUISITE



### 1 Front float, chin in water, assisted

Parent holds child as child floats on front. Parent submerges to the shoulders and maintains eye contact for best holding position. Parent gently dips child's chin in water. Encourage parent to hold child in various ways and let water support child as much as possible.

## STAGE PROGRESSION



### 1 Front float, chin in water, assisted

Parent holds child as child floats on front. Parent submerges to the shoulders and maintains eye contact for best holding position. Parent gently dips child's chin in water. Encourage parent to hold child in various ways and let water support child as much as possible.

### 2 Front float, blow bubbles, assisted

Same as progression 1, but child may face away from parent and blow bubbles.

## ADVANCED



### 1 Standing, face submerged, assisted

Stand 5 ft. from wall, submerge face (nose down), walk to wall. If hesitant, blow bubbles.

### 2 Standing, face submerged, on one foot, assisted

Same as progression 1, on one foot.

### 3 Front float, assisted, 10 secs.

Lie relaxed on stomach, level with water, face and ears submerged. Hold for 10 secs. Movement or travel OK. Instructor assists as needed.

### 4 Front float, assisted, 10 secs., recover independently

Same as progression 3, regain a vertical position independently.

## Activities

**I** Infant  
**T** Toddler

### Be Like **T**

Have parents hold their children in a front-float position. Ask children to pretend to be like the following as they float with their faces in the water:

- A cloud
- A feather
- An ice cube floating in water
- A letter "T"
- A napping puppy
- An airplane
- A rocket

### Bumper Fish **T**

Have children pretend to be a fish. Ask them to float on front with their parents and try to bump their parents in the tummy with their heads. As children build stamina, incorporate this activity into swim on front, with the parents moving back to promote endurance.

### Floating With Equipment **I T**

Have parents help their children float on their fronts using kickboards, barbells, and pool noodles for support. Young children can lie with their tummies on the kickboard; older children can place pool noodles or barbells under their armpits. Remind parents not to lose contact with their children.

### Pass the Fishy **I T**

Hold one child at a time in a front-float position. As you say "One, two, three, pass the fishy," pass the child to his or her parent. Encourage children to get their chins wet and kick as they are passed. If a child is ready, the parent can pass to you. Remember to let children know what is going to happen before they are passed and ensure parents do the same.

### Pop Goes the Weasel **I T**

Have parents form a circle, hold their children, and turn them back and forth (like a washing machine) as the group sings "Pop Goes the Weasel":

All around the cobbler's bench,  
The monkey chased the weasel.  
The monkey thought it was all in fun.  
Pop! Goes the weasel.  
Parents lift children into the air.

A penny for a spool of thread,  
A penny for a needle.  
That's the way the money goes.  
Pop! Goes the weasel.  
Parents lift children into the air.

I've no time to plead or pine,  
I've no time to wheedle.  
Kiss me quick, and then I'm gone.  
Pop! Goes the weasel.  
Parents lift children into the air.

### Row, Row, Row Your Boat **I T**

Have parents hold their children in a front-float position as they sing "Row, Row, Row Your Boat":

Row, row, row your boat, gently down the stream.  
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily, life is but a dream.

### Target Float **I T**

Place an object like a sinking toy on the bottom of the pool. As parents hold children in a front float, ask the children to keep their heads down and look at the target. They do not need to submerge.

### Ten Little Fishies **T**

Have parents hold their children in a front-float position. As a group, sing the following, with each line sung in a progressively higher pitch:

One little, two little, three little fishies,  
Parents hold children facing them and swish them side to side.

Four little, five little, six little fishies,  
Parents swish children forward and backward.

Seven little, eight little, nine little fishies,  
Parents swish children in a small circle.

Ten little swimming fishies.  
Parents hold children in a front-float position and turn around, encouraging kicks and scoops.

# Skill / Back Tow

## PREREQUISITE



### 1 Back tow, assisted, head on shoulder

Parent holds child's head to his or her shoulder, with child's weight supported by water's buoyancy. Parent cues child to push tummy to the sky. If needed, parent can place one hand on child's forehead to gently keep child's head on parent's shoulder. Parent can control depth of child's head in the water.

## STAGE PROGRESSION



### 1 Back tow, assisted, head on shoulder

Parent holds child's head to his or her shoulder, with child's weight supported by water's buoyancy. Parent cues child to push tummy to the sky. If needed, parent can place one hand on child's forehead to gently keep child's head on parent's shoulder. Parent can control depth of child's head in the water.

### 2 Back tow, assisted, head on chest

Parent gently holds relaxed child at the skull or base of the skull and drags child through the water. Child is entirely supported by the water; parent only minimally supports child's head. Child has ears in water.

## ADVANCED



### 1 Back walk, head back, away from wall, assisted

Facing wall, tilt head back, drop shoulders, push chest up, walk toward instructor, who is 5 ft. away.

### 2 Back glide, assisted, at wall, on one foot

Facing wall, tilt head back, drop shoulders, push chest up. Keep arms at side of body, feet on bottom. Slowly bring hips to surface by lifting one foot off bottom. Glide backward for 5 ft.

### 3 Back glide, assisted, at wall, 5 ft.

Same as progression 2, but both feet off bottom.

## Activities

I Infant  
T Toddler

### 3-2-1 Blastoff! T

Have parents hold their children in a back-float position. Ask children to pretend to be a rocket and kick as parents yell "Three, two, one, blastoff!" Have parents also cue "Kick, kick, kick" to get their children to kick in the water.

### Be Like T

Have parents hold their children in a back-float position. Ask children to pretend to be like the following:

- A cloud
- A feather
- An ice cube floating in water
- A letter "T"
- A napping puppy
- An airplane
- A rocket

### Did You Ever See a Swimmer? I T

Have parents tow children in a back-float position. As a group, sing the following:

Did you ever see a swimmer, a swimmer, a swimmer?  
Did you ever see a swimmer go this way and that?  
Go this way and that way, go that way and this way,  
Did you ever see a swimmer go this way and that?

### Kicking Race I T

Have parents hold their children in a back-float position. Cue them to kick; the faster the children kick, the faster their parents move. Have the parent and child pairs race each other to the other side of the pool.

### Motorboat I T

Have parents hold their children in a back-float position. Have children put their arms out like an airplane, while parents spin them slowly in a circle and say the following:

Motorboat, motorboat, go so slow.

Motorboat, motorboat, go so fast.

Parents pick up a little speed.

Motorboat, motorboat, step on the gas!

Parents cue children to "Kick, kick, kick" or "Swim, swim, swim."

### Rainbow Bridge I T

Use a pool noodle to make a bridge. Have parents hold their children in a back-float position. Have each parent and child pair swim under the bridge.

### Swim Little Fishies T

Have parents hold their children in a back-float position as they sing the following while moving their children backward toward the wall:

Swim little fishies,

Swim if you can.

And they swam and swam,  
Right over to the wall.

### Target Tow T

Have parents hold their children in a back-float position and tow them around the pool. Ask children to focus on a spot on the ceiling, keeping their chins back.

### Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star I T

Have parents hold their children in a back-float position, with the children's heads resting on their parents' shoulders. If needed, parents can place one hand on their children's foreheads to gently keep their heads in place. Parents control the depth of the children's heads in the water. As a group, sing the following:

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,

How I wonder what you are.

Up above the world so high,

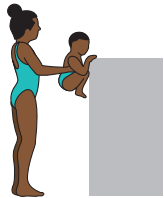
Like a diamond in the sky.

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,

How I wonder what you are.

# Skill / Monkey Crawl

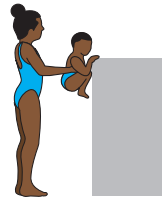
## PREREQUISITE



### 1 Wall grab, assisted

Parent holds child facing away. Parent places child's hand on the wall or asks child to grab for the wall and hold on. Parent may have to help young children hold on, but child's hand should be in contact with the side. Child's weight should be supported by water's buoyancy as much as possible.

## STAGE PROGRESSION



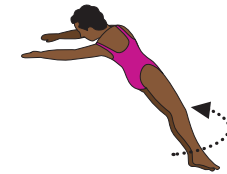
### 1 Wall grab, assisted

Parent holds child facing away. Parent places child's hand on the wall or asks child to grab for the wall and hold on. Parent may have to help young children hold on, but child's hand should be in contact with the side. Child's weight should be supported by water's buoyancy as much as possible.

### 2 Monkey crawl, assisted, on edge, 5 ft.

Same as progression 1, but have child crawl, hand over hand, for 5 ft. along the wall.

## ADVANCED



### 1 Jump & grab wall, assisted

See 1 / Water Acclimation.

### 2 Jump, push off bottom, grab wall, assisted

Stand on edge of pool, jump in, submerge, and push off bottom while holding instructor's hand. Grab wall and climb out.

### 3 Jump, push, turn, assisted by guiding wrist, grab wall

Stand on edge of pool, jump in, submerge, and push off bottom. Instructor assists by turning toward wall with wrist. Grab wall and climb out.

### 4 Jump, push, turn, grab, assisted

Same as progression 3, but instructor assists to wall.

## Activities

**I** Infant  
**T** Toddler

### Bridge Crawl **I T**

With parent support, have children grab the wall or monkey crawl under a pool noodle held as a bridge above them.

### Bubbles & Pop With Monkey Crawl **T**

Have children and parents put their faces and mouths in the water and blow bubbles together as the children monkey crawl with parent support. When the child stops blowing bubbles, his or her parent says "Pop," and both child and parent pop up together.

### Choo-Choo Train **T**

Have children pretend to be a train going around the edge of the pool. Parents support their children as they hold onto the edge of the pool and move themselves, hand over hand, around. To add more fun, pretend the following:

- The ladders are "gas-up" stations. Children can "gas up" by holding onto the ladder and kicking very fast.
- A person in the way is a cow on the track. Parents hold their children and have them swim around the other person.
- A rope or hoop is a tunnel to go under or through.
- An instructor pouring a cup of water slowly over the children is a waterfall to go under.

### Crawl & Exit **T**

Have children monkey crawl to the stairs and practice climbing out with parent support.

### Crawl to an Object **I T**

With parent support, have children grab the wall or monkey crawl to an object sitting on the edge of the pool.

### Hoop Crawl **T**

Have children monkey crawl through a hoop with parent support.

### Monkey, Monkey **I T**

Have children hold onto the side of the pool with parent support and say the following:

Monkey see, monkey do,  
Hand over hand is what we do.  
Monkey see, monkey do,  
I'm a happy monkey too.  
Children do monkey crawl.

### Monkey on the Wall **I T**

Have children hold onto the side of the pool with parent support and say the following:

Monkey, monkey, holding onto the wall,  
Monkey, monkey, crawl, crawl, crawl.  
Infants do a wall grab with parents; toddlers attempt to crawl along the wall with support.

Monkey see, monkey do,  
Push off the wall is what we do.  
Monkey see, monkey do,  
I'm a happy monkey too.  
Children push off the wall on their backs, with support.

Monkey see, monkey do,  
Look and see what I can do.  
Monkey see, monkey do,  
I'm a happy monkey too.  
Parents ask children what they want to do.

### What Do Monkeys Eat? **T**

Have children hold onto the side of the pool with parent support and pretend they are monkeys. Ask parents and children what monkeys like to eat (e.g., "Do monkeys eat crayons?" "Do monkeys eat paper?"). When you say something monkeys eat (e.g., "Do monkeys eat bananas?"), have the children make monkey noises and blow bubbles at the wall.

#### Variations:

- Play this game with a monkey crawl at the wall. Have children who are ready to submerge independently do so when you say something monkeys eat.
- Do the "Monkey, Monkey, Zookeeper" activity. Instead of getting out of the pool to escape, have children "hide" by blowing bubbles.

# Safety & Character 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 B.1	TOPIC B.2	TOPIC B.3	TOPIC B.4
<p><b>ASK PERMISSION</b></p> <p><b>Explain why it is important to always ask permission before getting into any water:</b></p> <p>Telling an adult you are entering the pool ensures someone is available to actively watch you and make sure you stay safe. To learn the habit of asking permission before getting into the water, repeat the following: “Before I get into the pool, I must always ask first.”</p> <p>You will need to ask permission from your parents to enter the pool before getting into the water at every lesson.</p>	<p><b>SWIM ATTIRE</b></p> <p><b>Explain how appropriate swim attire prevents contamination of pool water and the spread of disease:</b></p> <p>The contaminants (e.g., bacteria, viruses, parasites) found in fecal matter can be hazardous to participants. Infants must be clothed in appropriate attire to confine such matter. Plastic pants or other swimsuits that are lightweight and have snug, elastic-fitting legs and waistbands are best. It’s essential to monitor your children and remove them from the water should their clothing become soiled.</p>	<p><b>SAFE SWIM AREA</b></p> <p><b>Explain the characteristics of a safe swim area:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Properly trained lifeguards on duty who are alert and not distracted</li> <li>- Functional rescue equipment and a phone close by in case 911 needs to be called</li> <li>- Rules that are enforced uniformly, whether posted on walls, pool schedules, or entry tickets, or not posted</li> <li>- Safe, functional drain covers that are dome-shaped and have small openings and a large surface area, as opposed to drain covers that are flat; have large openings; or are damaged, loose, or missing</li> </ul>	<p><b>LIFE JACKETS</b></p> <p><b>Explain the importance of wearing life jackets and how to fit them properly:</b></p> <p>A traditional life jacket is often bright orange and built to flip a child onto his or her back during an emergency situation. Life vests or Jet Ski life jackets allow more unrestricted motion and are good for children who are comfortable swimming in the water independently, with supervision. Life jackets should fit snugly and not allow the child’s chin or ears to slip through. The Y recommends using only life jackets that are Coast Guard approved. If on a boat, the Y recommends that, for every nonswimmer, there be at least one swimmer on board.</p>



TOPIC B.5	TOPIC B.6	TOPIC B.7	TOPIC B.8
<p><b>REACH OR THROW, DON'T GO</b></p> <p><b>Explain why it's important not to jump in to save someone who is struggling in the water and what to do instead:</b></p> <p>A panicked person in the water can grab you and pull you under. Use an object to reach out to the person and pull him or her back to the shore, the bank, or the side of the pool. Use anything long enough to extend your reach or help the person float, such as a pool noodle.</p> <p><b>Have parents and children practice a reaching assist and a throwing assist using various objects. Make sure parents stay low to the ground and keep themselves safe.</b></p>	<p><b>HYPOTHERMIA</b></p> <p><b>Explain what hypothermia is:</b></p> <p>Hypothermia is when a person's body temperature becomes dangerously low, usually because of prolonged exposure to cold temperatures.</p> <p><b>Describe the signs of hypothermia:</b></p> <p>Blue lips, shivering, slurred speech or mumbling, clumsiness</p> <p><b>Explain how to prevent hypothermia:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cover all exposed areas of skin.</li> <li>- Keep moving in freezing temperatures, no matter how tired you are.</li> </ul>	<p><b>CHOKING</b></p> <p><b>Explain what to do if an infant is choking:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Assess.</b> If infant is silent; unable to cry; or has blue lips, nails, or skin, have someone else call 911 while you begin care.</li> <li>- <b>Give five back blows and chest thrusts.</b> Lay infant facedown, straddling your forearm, with the child's head tilted lower than his or her chest. Support infant's head by holding the jaw. Using heel of hand, give five back blows between shoulder blades. Flip infant over. Place two fingers on infant's breastbone, just below nipple line, and give five chest thrusts. Repeat until airway is clear.</li> </ul>	<p><b>BEACHES</b></p> <p><b>Explain how to stay safe at the beach:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be sure your children play in water near the lifeguard and in areas marked for swimmers to use.</li> <li>- Be aware of underwater conditions, such as weeds and marine life.</li> <li>- Watch for safety postings—flags may indicate a rip current, other dangerous currents, severe weather, or unsafe conditions.</li> <li>- Supervise your children closely, even if a lifeguard is present.</li> <li>- Bring a cell phone and make sure you have reception in case you need to call 911.</li> <li>- Don't allow your child to go into the water alone. Small children should always be within arm's reach of an adult.</li> </ul>