

# Introduction to Swimming



## What is swimming?

Swimming is the sport or activity of propelling oneself through water using the limbs. Swimming can be both an individual or team sport. There are a number of different Swimming styles including breaststroke, freestyle, backstroke and butterfly.

## Who is swimming for?

Swimming is for everyone no matter what age or level of fitness. Any age can learn to swim and there is no age limit on when you can no longer swim. Swimming is a lifelong skill that could save your or another's life. It is never too late to learn to swim. Swimming is an excellent way to keep fit and most swimming pools cater for all. Woman only, parent and toddler or senior classes amongst others.

A swimming costume is all you need to get started. You can also wear swimming tops or close fitting t-shirts until you feel more comfortable. We would also suggest goggles to protect eyes.

Most swimming pools have classes for all levels of ability, from adult only to toddler beginner's lessons.

## Costs

Price of lessons range from center to center. Costs can vary from £4 per 30 min session and most centers offer 10/12 week beginners sessions, which are paid in advance or monthly at a cost of around £50 adults and £30 minors/seniors. One to one sessions are also available, however this is reflected in the cost.

Local pools tend to follow the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) learn to swim framework. Instructors are ASA qualified and follow the ASA awards scheme and are also CRB checked. Most centers will allow you to watch a session before committing to a beginners swimming course.

## Facilities

All pools tend to have a shallow and deep end, some also have play/toddler areas. Changing rooms, shower areas and locker rooms. You will be required to bring your own towel and there tends to be a charge for lockers, some are refundable others are not. They tend to charge £1. You will be required to shower or use a foot pool before entering the main pool.

# Equipment

## Swimsuit

Men swim in briefs and jammers, bare-chested. Women swim in one or two-piece swimsuits. Competitors wear swimsuits to cover modesty, they seek to improve on bare skin to improve speed and reduce drag. Suits that go above the navel or below the knee for men are banned. Suits that go past the shoulders or cover the neck for women are also banned.

## Swim caps

Swim caps keep swimmers hair out of the water and reduce drag. Caps are made of latex, silicone, spandex or lycra.

## Goggles

Goggles protect the eyes from chlorine and keep the water out. Prescription goggles are also worn when required.

## Kickboards

A kickboard is a foam board that swimmers use to help build leg muscles.

Floating devices (armbands and kickboards) will be provided by the pool, however contact in advance of your first lesson to check.

## What are the benefits to swimming?

Swimming is used by many other sports people as it helps build endurance and cardiovascular fitness. Swimming builds muscle strength. Swimming is good for weight loss as part of a balanced diet. Swimming provides a good full body workout as you use nearly all your muscles. Swimming helps maintain a healthy heart and lungs. Swimming can reduce chronic illness, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and stroke. It can also boost your mood. Always see your GP if you have any underlying medical conditions.

# Introduction to Swimming Questions

## A. Find words in the text that mean:

1. a cupboard in which you can keep your possessions and leave them there for a period of time: \_\_\_\_\_
2. a young child, especially one that has recently learnt or is learning to walk: \_\_\_\_\_
3. an old person: \_\_\_\_\_
4. causing something to move forward: \_\_\_\_\_
5. forbidden: \_\_\_\_\_
6. having only a short distance from the top to the bottom: \_\_\_\_\_
7. having a long distance from the top to the bottom: \_\_\_\_\_
8. lasting for the whole of a person's life: \_\_\_\_\_
9. real but not immediately obvious: \_\_\_\_\_
10. someone who is too young to have the legal responsibilities of an adult: \_\_\_\_\_
11. the ability to keep doing something for a period of time: \_\_\_\_\_
12. to improve or increase something: \_\_\_\_\_
13. to make someone go where they don't want to go: \_\_\_\_\_
14. without any clothes or not covered by anything: \_\_\_\_\_

## B. Are the following statements True or False?

1. In swimming you move in the water using both your arms and legs.
2. Swimming or learning to swim at an old age is not possible.
3. You only need one piece of gear to do swimming.
4. Many swimming pools offer courses for starters that last around three months.
5. You can usually observe a class before joining a swimming course.
6. An extra pound is payable for using the towels at the swimming pool.
7. Women can wear swimsuits that cover their belly button, but men can't.
8. You can become stronger by swimming.
9. Swimming has an impact on your fitness level, but not on your emotional state.