

## Unit Five Swimming

**Swimming** describes how animals and humans move themselves through water without artificial assistance.

### History:

Drawings from the Stone Age were found in "the cave of swimmers" near Sura in the southwestern part of Egypt. Written references date back up to 2000 B.C.

### Goal:

The goal of competitive swimming is to be the fastest to swim a given distance. Competitive swimming became popular in the nineteenth century, and currently comprises 34 events - 17 male events and 17 female events. Swimming is a popular event at the Summer Olympic Games, where male and female athletes compete in 13 of the recognized events each. Olympic events are held in a 50 meter pool. The four competitive strokes are the butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle.



Breaststroke



Freestyle



Butterfly



Backstroke



**Types:**

The four competitive strokes are the butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle (front crawl). Also, there are different times to get to different levels in these strokes. These strokes can be swum individually or together in an individual medley (IM). The IM order is: 1) butterfly, 2) backstroke, 3) breaststroke, and 4) freestyle. There are two types of relays: medley and freestyle. The medley relay order is: 1) backstroke, 2) breaststroke, 3) butterfly, and 4) freestyle. Each of the four swimmers in the relay swims a predetermined distance, dependent on the overall length of the relay. The three relay lengths are 200 meters or yards, 400 meters or yards, and 800 meters or yards (which is only swum freestyle). In a 50 meter pool, each swimmer swims one length for the 200 relay, two lengths for the 400 relay, and four lengths for the 800 relay. In a 25 meter or yard pool, each swimmer swims two lengths for the 200 relay, four lengths for the 400 relay, and eight lengths for the 800 relay. Many full-size competition pools in the United States have a length of 50 meters and a width of 25 yards, allowing both short course (25 m or 25 yd pool) and long course (50 m pool) races to be held.

**Judge:**

There are a few types of judges: a starter sets off the swimmers; turn judges check that the swimmers' turns are within rules; swim judges check the swimmers' strokes; time keepers time the swims; and the referee checks that everything is running smoothly. If an official catches a swimmer breaking a rule concerning the stroke he or she is swimming, that swimmer is said to be disqualified (commonly referred to as "DQ'd" or "deaked") and the swim is not considered valid.

**Clothes:**

Men's swimsuits tend to be trunks, surf or board shorts, competition briefs, or more improvised cut-off shorts. Almost always, the upper body is left uncovered. However, in the early part of the 20th century, it was illegal for men to be topless in the USA.

Women's swimsuits are generally either one-piece swimsuits of traditional or competitive style (such as the racerback) or bikini. Another option would be a Tankini, more conservative than a bikini but still not a one-piece. Body skins are special whole body swimsuits for competitive swimming, designed to reduce skin drag. The most popular type of bodyskin is Speedo's.