



**Swim Basics Overview**  
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Swimming is awesome! It's a non-impact sport you can enjoy for a lifetime and provides a great workout for your total body.

Swimming is technical! It requires attention to many parts to do well.

Swimming requires practice! There is no substitute for swim practice. Get in the water and do it!

When you swim, think about 1 or 2 aspects of your form each lap. Vary that with relaxed swimming for a few hundred yards and alternate your focus. Don't think about all aspects at once. It will come together if you separate the elements. Thoughtful swimming brings faster success.

Swim Basics for Triathlon consists of 3 main elements:

1. Breathing
  - a. Exhale focused through nose and mouth
  - b. Continuous and complete
  - c. No holding breath during swim
2. Body Position
  - a. Buoyant – swimming at the top of the water
  - b. Streamlined – narrow profile and straight body line
  - c. Rotated – moving from side-to-side as you pull each arm through the water
3. Arm Position
  - a. Reaching long, pulling strong
  - b. Bent elbow pulling to utilize the core and back during each pull
  - c. Pulling in a straight line – not crossing body and diverting energy

Swim Practice Elements

- Bobs – immerse yourself under the water and focus on the exhale function of your breath. Experiment with time segments: 3 seconds, 5 seconds, etc. This will build both your lung capacity and the association with continuous, complete breathing. Don't hold your breath!
- Pull Buoy – use this tool to build core and focus attention on the pull-phase of your stroke. Limit buoy use to 25% of your swim practice as it is addictive for many!
- Straight Line Swimming – The shortest distance between two points is a straight line. Seems simple! Swimming straight is not natural and requires practice. In a pool, watch the bottom lane line for guidance. Pull your arms straight behind you rather than from side to side. Use bi-lateral breathing pattern while you alternate right and left side. This helps build balance as well as trains your body to swim straight. This is an important element in open water swimming too.

Swim 2-3 times each week for 30-45 minutes to start. Focused swimming is exhausting, but rewarding!