

Tips for Parents New To Swim Team

Swim meets can be a pretty scary place for un-initiated parents. Below are a few helpful hints – you will learn many others over time. First, we need to cover what you should bring to a swim meet. They are broken down into two categories: Essential Equipment and Optional Stuff.

Essential Equipment

- Your Swimmer – very important
- Team Swim Suit
- Team Swim Cap, if required
- Goggle
- Towel(s)

Optional Stuff

- Shorts or sweat suit
- T-Shirt(s)
- Tote-bag or duffle
- Sunscreen
- Bug-spray
- Water bottles
- Sharpie marker
- Lawn chairs(s)
- Tent
- Tent ground blanket
- Money for concessions
- Cooler with drinks/snacks (if you don't do concessions)

Night Before A Swim Meet.

Best to get everything laid out the night before. If you are going to drive to the Clubhouse, load the car and make certain you can carry everything you are taking. Even though you live in the neighborhood that does not mean you will necessarily get to park very close. Make certain you and your swimmer(s) get a good meal and plenty of rest the night before a swim meet. Swim meets start very early and can run as late as 4:00pm, depending on the number of swimmers on each team.

Morning of the Swim Meet

Get your swimmer to the pool on time! This is radically important. Once you get to the pool, locate the swimmer SIGN-IN sheets – this too is very important. You will want to sign-in your swimmer. There is a cut-off time for each meet. If your swimmer has not signed in the morning of the meet, they will get scratched from the meet – even if you are present. For our home meets, the sign-in sheets are always down by the diving board area. After your swimmer is signed in, find out what time your team will be in the pool for warm-up laps. Each team gets 30 minutes to take warm-up laps before the meet begins at 8:30am. You should take this time to find your team designated area and locate a spot for your gear. If you have never been to a swim meet, you will notice that there are many tents of all kinds. Each family is responsible for providing their own tent. In many cases, families group together and share a common tent and help watch over each others children. We do have team tents for our swimmers, but there is not enough room in them for parents and family members. We prefer that the swimmers under in age groups 11years old and younger utilize the team tents in order to make it easier to find the swimmers when its time for them to swim. This can be important since parents have volunteer duties during the meet. Sharks pitch their gear outside the pool fence in the back of the baseball field. There is a gate that opens up into the pool area from fields. Visitors at our pool pitch outside the concession area next to the entrance of the tennis courts. The last thing to do is to locate your swimmer(s) TEAM PARENT, if they have one. Swimmers age 10 and below have a team parent assigned that will look for them when it is time to get your child to the ready bench for their event. Find out who this parent is, get to know them, let them know where they should be able to find your child. Almost all swimmers write their event numbers somewhere on their body, usually their arm where they can see them. Starting at age 7, swimmers can be in as many as 5 events and the event numbers could change from meet to meet. Having a sharpie marker is handy for writing these on your child.

During the Swim Meet

If you are a volunteer during the meet, you should become familiar with where you are to be for the start of your shift. Timers, scribes, and meet officials are typically called together through the public address system, but other positions are not announced so formally. If you think you should be somewhere – start asking someone – or find a SCF Swim Team Board member. While it can be difficult to juggle all this, you need to also make certain your swimmer gets to the ready bench when it's time. The ready bench is located behind the starting blocks on the end farthest away from the diving boards. To the left of the ready bench area is a signage system which lets you know what event is at the ready bench and what event is in the pool. Try to keep up with your children as much as possible. Parents typically work in teams and usually within their own age groups. Bottom line

– it's okay to ask for some help if you need it. You will need to figure out when to feed your swimmer(s) during the meet. We highly recommend you use our concession stand for both breakfast and lunch. Monies raised from these sales help support our organization. The more concessions, the less fees we have to charge from year to year. Your swimmer(s) may require additional sunscreen during the course of a meet. Lastly, if your child has to leave the meet, please notify the team coaches or the team parent, especially if your child will not be returning to the meet. Relays are scheduled toward the end of the meet and we often have trouble locating swimmers because they have gone home or simply left. We encourage everyone to stay at the pool until your child has completed all their events.

After the Swim Meet

First, try not to schedule events after a swim meet. It's hard to predict when they will actually end and you and your swimmer(s) may be very exhausted, especially if you are not used to it. If it was an especially hot day, make sure everyone gets plenty of fluids and gets out of the hot and into an air conditioned environment. Talk to your child about their performance during the meet and provide any needed feedback and encouragement.

Other Notable Issues About a Swim Meet

Clubhouse. *The clubhouse is off limits to all parents and swimmers unless you have business there via your volunteer duty.* Volunteers scoring the meet, runners, and concession personnel are the only allowed person in this area.

First Aid. First Aid is either inside the clubhouse or at the announcers table. If someone is in need of first aid, please seek assistance before leaving the meet.

Playground. The playground is typically off-limits, although it is near impossible to enforce this rule with the visiting team. Most swimmers are swimming 5 events and there is little time during a meet to be going too far. Encourage your swimmer to stay close to the pool and pay attention to when they need to swim.

Entertainment. Bring something for your kids to do... Many kids bring books, cards, electronic games, etc. Discourage physical activities like footballs, baseballs, soccer balls, etc. The best activity is one which keeps swimmers sedentary until time to swim.

Heat Sheets. Heat sheets detail who is swimming in every event. The typical cost is \$2 and they can go quickly. You can purchase a heat sheet at our concession area at the start of the meet.

Bug Spray. It's helpful to have some around at a swim meet because we are typically in a grassy area. If there has been significant rain before a meet,

ants come up out of the ground. They can make for an unpleasant time. This can happen at both home and away meets.

The Pool. No one is allowed in the pool, including the baby pool, during an event unless they are swimming in an event sanctioned by the meet officials. Because there are no lifeguards on duty during a swim meet, getting into any part of the water can be a disqualifying offense. The most problematic area is while kids are waiting near the ready bench with little to do but grab some water and toss it at another swimmer. Please encourage your swimmer not to engage in this behavior at swim meets.

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