

Stroke Worksheet: Freestyle

Kick:

- Small, fast kicks
 - At all times throughout the stroke it is important to keep small fast kicks going
- Long legs
 - Helps them to understand not to bend too much in the middle (e.g. bicycle kicking)
- Floppy ankles
 - Keep ankles loose and not stiff
- Point your toes
 - If swimmers are having difficulty with keeping their legs straight, tell them to “point their toes”

Pull:

- Body midline
 - Imagine someone drove a post through the center of your skull, going straight through the middle of your body and coming out the other end. That is your MIDLINE, which is a line your arms are NEVER allowed to cross, because then we are pushing ourselves into ‘wobble swimming’ (a big no-no)
- Pull at 11 and 1
 - Imagine you are in the middle of a clock face. When reaching in freestyle and backstroke, you should not reach beyond 11pm and 1am for your pulls. Reaching beyond that will overextend your body and cause over-rotation
- Dry shoulders
 - When proper rotation is occurring, the entire body below the neck is rotating as ONE BLOCK. Therefore, when proper rotation is occurring, we see each shoulder pop out of the water on each stroke

Breathing:

- One-goggle breathing/ pirate breathing
 - The higher you pick up your head in breathing, the slower you go. Work on keeping one goggle in the water at all times when breathing.
 - This is REALLY HARD for a beginner to learn. There will be a lot of choking. It is helpful to teach them to sneak a breath, with half of the mouth closed.

Drills:

- Out-of-water kicking demonstration
 - Have swimmers lie on their backs with their hands under their rear end. Hold two kickboards around their legs: one below the knees and one over their ankles. Have them keep their legs straight and kick without hitting a board.
 - Helps teach the kicking shape
- Out-of-water pulling with resistance
 - Push back against palm of swimmer's hand when they're modeling the pull out of water
 - Helps teach the pulling pattern
- One-arm drill
 - One arm down at side, the other pulling. Make sure they are not wiggling down the lane—a wiggling swimmer is pulling left-and-right and not up-and-down, which is the point of the drill
 - Fix midline crossing problem
- Corkscrew drill
 - Arms at sides, kicking with rotation WHILE KEEPING HEAD STILL
 - Works on rotation
- Armpit-sniffing drill (12 kick/1 pull)
 - Swim freestyle, but 1 pull per 12 kicks, so that your head is buried in your armpit for each stroke
 - Work on keeping head down while body rotates
- Superman Catch-up
 - A delayed response drill—one hand is always out in front and it doesn't move until the other hand comes to meet it
 - The delay lets the swimmer SET THE CATCH
 - Work on the catch
- Stroke count drills
 - Exactly what it sounds like—counting strokes per lap
 - Work on reaching, work on EFFICIENCY
- Fists drill
 - Swim normal stroke but with fists
 - Work on forearm/catch
 - This will force the swimmer to use their entire arm rather than just their hand
- Zipper-switch drill
 - Drag thumb along your body as you recover the stroke, making sure to have a high elbow
 - Work on rotation and recovery