

2018 L.S.A. Start, Stroke & Turn Rules

APPENDIX E (rev. 4/10/2018)

SECTION 1 - STARTS AND FINISHES

- ART. 1.** At the discretion of the referee, the duties of the starter may be split between the referee and the starter.
- ART. 2.** For a forward start, after a series of short whistles, the swimmers shall line up near their respective starting areas. A long whistle by the starter directs the swimmers to set up to the pool, with at least one foot at the edge. When all swimmers are ready, the starter's command "TAKE YOUR MARK", will direct the swimmers to assume a starting position. When all swimmers are stationary, the starter shall activate the starting device.

***NOTE:** With starter permission, a swimmer may start in the water. The swimmer must be stationary and have at least one hand in contact with the end wall. A backstroke start is not permitted.*

- ART. 3** In the forward start, the starter may issue a "STAND UP" command, and swimmers may stand up or step away from the pool edge, but they shall not leave the starting area nor delay a new start.
- ART. 4** For the backstroke start, after a series of short whistles, the swimmers shall line up near their respective starting area. A long whistle by the starter shall direct the swimmers to enter the water and face the starting end with both hands in contact with the end wall of the pool. Standing on or in the gutter, or curling the toes over the lip of the gutter, before or immediately after the start, is not permitted. When all swimmers are in the water, the starter's command "TAKE YOUR MARK", will direct the swimmers to assume a stationary position. When all swimmers are stationary, the starter shall activate the starting device.
- ART. 5** In the backstroke start, the starter may issue a "STAND UP" command, and swimmers may release from the start end, but they shall not leave the starting area nor delay a new start.
- ART. 6** Subject to the discretion of the starter, a false start occurs when a swimmer obtains an unfair advantage at the start. **Do not recall the heat unless there are problems with the start that impact the entire field.**
Delay of meet disqualifications may be issued for:
a. Unnecessarily delays in assuming a starting position;
b. Does not remain stationary immediately prior to the start.
- ART. 7** To finish the race, the swimmer shall contact the finish end in the manner prescribed by the stroke and/or relay leg.

PENALTY FOR FALSE START / INFRACTION

For a false start in a heat, or delay of the meet, the swimmer will be disqualified.

SECTION 2 – UNIFORMS

The swimsuit shall be constructed so that the style/shape of the suit for males shall not extend above the waist nor below the top of the kneecap, and for females shall not extend beyond the shoulders nor below the top of the kneecap, nor cover the neck. **If the cap is a team cap**, logos, graphics, or text displayed on caps must represent the participant's LSA team and may not contain content or imagery of another team, league, organization or association (e.g. including but not limited to Team USA, high school, or college team names and logos).

PENALTY FOR UNIFORM VIOLATIONS – If identified prior to swim, athlete may change uniform/cap without penalty as long as they do not delay of meet. If identified during a swim, athlete shall be disqualified from the event.

2018 L.S.A. Start, Stroke & Turn Rules

APPENDIX E (rev. 4/10/2018)

SECTION 3 - INDIVIDUAL STROKES

ART. 1 BACKSTROKE

- a. The backstroke start shall be used;
- b. Any arm stroke is permitted. The body shall remain on the back (the shoulders should be oriented toward the back) except while executing turn.
- c. Standing in or on the gutter or curling the toes over the lip of the gutter immediately at or after the start is not permitted.
- d. Any kick is permitted.
- e. The swimmer may be completely submerged during the turn, or for a distance of not more than 16.4 yards (15 meters) after the start and each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface of the water;
- f. . After the swimmer's head has passed the backstroke flag, the swimmer may (but is not required to) rotate past the vertical toward the breast. After rotating to the breast, the swimmer may take a single arm pull or simultaneous double-arm pull. No additional arm pulls may be started; however, kicking and/or gliding to the wall is permitted. The turn requires that some part of the swimmer's body touch the end wall. The swimmer shall assume a position on the back before the feet leave the wall.
- g. At the finish, the swimmer cannot be completely submerged, must remain on or toward the back, and must contact the finish end by any part of the body.
- h. For swimmers competing in the **6 and under** age group, the swimmer's upper shoulder may (but is not required to) rotate past the vertical toward the breast within the last six feet of the race. For the **8 and under** age groups, kickboards, etc. may be used to protect the swimmers at the finish.

ART. 2 . . . BREASTSTROKE

- a. The forward start shall be used.
- b. The body shall remain on the breast except while executing a turn.
- c. After the start and after each turn, one arm stroke beyond the hipline followed by one breaststroke kick may be made while the swimmer is underwater. Before the breaststroke kick, a single butterfly kick is permitted (but not required). Some part of the head must break the surface before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke after the start and each turn.
Thereafter, hands shall not be brought back beyond the hipline;
- d. There shall be no sculling with the hands at the end of the 1st arm stroke following the start or turn.
- e. The stroke requires that the arms shall move simultaneously and in the same horizontal plane, without any alternating movement. Both hands shall be pushed forward from the breast simultaneously on, above or under the surface of the water. Elbows must remain under the water except for the last stroke at the finish of the prescribed distance (butterfly recovery is not permitted at any time).
- f. The kick requires the feet be drawn up with the knees bent. The feet must be turned outward during the propulsive part of the kick. All movement of the legs shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane. No scissors flutter, or butterfly kick is permitted.
- g. The turn requires a simultaneous touch with two hands, not necessarily on the same plane, after which the swimmer may turn any way. The shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the feet leave the wall.
- h. The finish requires completion of the required distance and contact finish end with both hands simultaneously, not necessarily on the same plane

2018 L.S.A. Start, Stroke & Turn Rules

APPENDIX E (rev. 4/10/2018)

ART. 3 BUTTERFLY

- a. The forward start shall be used;
- b. The body shall remain on the breast except during a turn.
- c. After the start and each the turn, the swimmer is allowed one or more leg kicks, but only one arm pull under water, which shall bring the swimmer's head to the surface by the 16.4 yards (15 meters).
- d. The stroke requires that both arms simultaneously pull backward under the water, and then simultaneously recover over the water.
- e. The kick requires that both legs and feet move up and down simultaneously in the vertical plane. Scissors, breaststroke and alternating up and down movements of the legs are not permitted;
- f. The turn requires a simultaneous touch with two hands, not necessarily on the same plane, after which they can turn in any way. The shoulders shall be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the feet leave the wall.
- g. The finish requires completion of the required distance and contact with the finish end with both hands simultaneously, not necessarily on the same plane.
- h. For swimmers competing in the **8 and under** age group, arm recovery must be over the surface of the water for at least ½ half of the prescribed distance.

ART. 4 FREESTYLE:

- a. The forward start shall be used.
- b. Any body position, stroke, or kick is permitted and any combination of styles may be used.
- c. The turn requires that some part of the swimmer's body contact the end wall.
- d. The swimmer may be completely submerged for a distance of not more than 16.4 yards (15 meters) after the start and each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface of the water.
- e. The finish requires completion of the required distance and contact with the finish pad or end of the pool.

ART. 5 . . . INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY

The individual medley begins with the forward start. Competitors shall swim the butterfly for the first quarter of the required distance of the complete race, the backstroke for the second quarter, the breaststroke for the third quarter and any stroke other than backstroke, breaststroke or butterfly for the last quarter. Competitors shall adhere during each quarter of the race to the position, stroke, kick turn, and finish rules governing the stroke being swum. Transition turns between strokes shall conform, to the finish rules for the stroke being completed and, after the touch, to the turn rules for the stroke about to be swum. **The final leg of the individual medley requires the swimmer to be at or past vertical toward the breast before any stroke, kick or propulsive motion.**

Special 8 and under exception (Art. 3h) for the butterfly **does not apply** for the Individual Medley.

ART. 6 . . . MISC

- a. If any nonparticipating team member enters the water during any swimmer's race, that swimmer is disqualified from the event.

PENALTY FOR Stroke / Turn VIOLATIONS: The swimmer is disqualified.

2018 L.S.A. Start, Stroke & Turn Rules

APPENDIX E (rev. 4/10/2018)

SECTION 4 - RELAY EVENTS

ART. 1 MEDLEY RELAY

The medley relay is swum by a team of four competitors, each swimming one quarter of the required distance of the race. The first shall use the backstroke start and swim backstroke; the second shall swim breaststroke; the third, butterfly; and the fourth shall swim any stroke other than a legal backstroke, breaststroke or butterfly. Each swimmer shall adhere to the position, stroke, kick, turn and finish rules governing the stroke being swum. [The final leg of the medley relay requires the swimmer to be at or past vertical toward the breast before any stroke, kick or propulsive motion.](#)

Special 8 and rule (Art. 3h) **does not apply** for the Medley Relay.

ART. 2 FREESTYLE RELAY

The freestyle relay is swim by a team of four competitors, each swimming one quarter of the required distance of the race in any style, adhering to the turn and finish rules of a freestyle event. The first swimmer of the relay team must use the forward start.

NOTE: *The all age relay shall be swum under the same rules as the freestyle relay except each swimmer shall swim one sixth of the total distance.*

ART. 3 Once the long whistle is issued by the starter, the order of the swimmers of the relay shall not change.

ART. 4 On the take off, the second, third and fourth swimmers on a relay team shall remain in contact with the pool deck until the previous swimmer has finished prescribed distance. The body may be in motion before the previous swimmer finishes but at least one foot must be at the edge of the deck or gutter and no forward movement of the feet is permitted.

ART. 5 The first three swimmers of a relay team must contact the finish end at the conclusion of his or her leg of the relay. The final swimmer is required to contact the finish pad (when automatic timing is used) or finish end by any part of the body.

ART. 6 The first three members of relay teams shall leave the water by the finish end promptly after finishing their prescribed distance of the race.

PENALTIES FOR RELAY VIOLATIONS:

1. For a violation by an individual member of the relay team, the relay team is disqualified from the event.
2. If any non-participating team member who enters the water during a relay race, or if a participating relay member enters the team at the incorrect time, the team is disqualified from the event..
3. A swimmer who enters the water without the prior swimmer completing his/her leg - team will be disqualified for relay early takeoff. If a swimmer re-enters the water - the team will be disqualified.

SECTION 5 – CONDUCT

ART. 1 UNSPORTING CONDUCT – Conduct that includes (but not limited to) taunting, derogatory remarks or gestures, throwing of equipment. showing disgust with officials or their decisions. Competitors will be DQ'ed from event and meet.

ART. 2 UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT – Conduct that includes (but not limited to) failure to follow direction of official, profanity, any action that would discredit to individual or team. Competitor will be DQ'ed from current or next event.

ART. 3 The referee may expel from the meet, anyone in attendance (parents, coaches, participants, etc.) who fails to show proper conduct during the meet.