



Frequently Asked Questions

What should I do if my child cries and is afraid at swimming lessons?

- Acknowledge that you understand your child is afraid.
- Tell the child that you know they can do the skills/techniques the instructor is asking them to try.
- Swim at the pool sometime other than swimming lessons, and even prior to the first day of class, so the environment will be familiar.
- Be persistent and don't give up! Crying is usually toughest on the parent. After the first couple of lessons, children usually become comfortable in the class.
- Be sure to share with the instructor if the child has had any negative experiences in an aquatic environment.
- Tell the child that you would really like to stay and watch the class, but you can only do so if the child is paying attention and doing what the instructor asks. Some children are crying for the benefit of Mom or Dad. If this is the case, it might be best for parents to stay somewhere where the child cannot see the parent, but the parent can still observe the lesson.
- Tips for at home: Stay positive and patient. Bring the child to the pool to swim with the family. Practice some of the skills they are learning at swimming lessons at home while in the bathtub. Talk with your child and be reassuring.

My child does not seem to be learning and progressing in the lessons as quickly as some of the other children. Why is this?

- Children progress at their own pace.
- Children sometimes reach developmental plateaus due to body type, a growth spurt, muscle development or the child's motivation to be in the class. Usually a little additional growth will help solve the problem.
- We encourage both the parent and the child to be patient, and to spend some time enjoying the skills the child has already mastered.
- In swimming lessons, we try to de-emphasize passing or failing and emphasize improvement. Each child will receive a progress card at the end of the session to let you know what your child has accomplished within the progression and what skills to practice. It is not uncommon for a child to repeat a level several times before moving on to the next level. It is important that your child is improving and having FUN! Remember to be positive!

Sometimes it seems like the instructor is playing a lot of silly games in the class. Why is that?

- Children learn through play.
- Games and songs are used to reinforce skills that have been taught to the children.

My child will not put his face in the water. What can I do?

- It is important to encourage children to put their face in the water as soon as possible. By allowing children to put off this skill makes a bigger deal out of it than it really should be. Work on humming, making a silly frog face or picking up/peering at "treasures" from the shallow end of the pool or tub.
- Buy a disposable underwater camera. You can use this to take the child's picture if they go underwater. It may also work to entice a reluctant child to put their face in the water.

My child is having difficulty floating on his back.

- Many children initially have difficulty with this skill due to lower body fat, or an inability to relax in the water. Practice this skill with your child by placing the child's head on your shoulder while in the water, and allowing the rest of his body to be supported by the water.
- Placing sunglasses on the child's eyes may make him/her more comfortable, thereby increasing their ability to relax. Some children will float better if they bend their knees slightly or place their arms overhead with the fingertips out of the water.

My child is working on rotary breathing. She lifts her head out of the water but seems unable to get a breath before returning her head to the water.

- Make sure your child is continuing to kick as she tries to get a breath. Encourage her to say a word, like her favorite food, as she lifts her head from the water. That way you will know that she has taken a breath.

Does repeating a level mean that my child will be learning the same things over?

- Swimming is a motor skill unique to all others because of the comfort required in the water environment. All levels build on previous skills. The quality of the execution of the skills determines passing. A big part of this is comfort in the water. So yes, the children must practice the same skills, repeatedly, from Floats & Strokes 1 through Floats & Strokes 6. As they progress, the strokes, and techniques should improve in speed, strength and consistency.

How many lessons is it going to take for my child to "swim"?

- Children vary widely when it comes to learning a skill. In general, each child's readiness is influenced by physical development, previous experiences, home environment, parental attitudes and individual preferences. For most skills, there are simple prerequisites, activities and lead-ups that can prepare the child to perform these skills. For example, before children are ready to put their entire face in the water, they may need to practice blowing bubbles, washing their face, splashing or putting parts of their face in the water. It will take many lessons for a child to swim independently and comfortably.

What if my child gets "stuck" in a certain level and does not seem to be making any progress?

- Plateaus are not uncommon while a child is learning to swim. Many times, the skills a child is struggling with are usually the skills that take endurance or coordination of multiple skills. We make every attempt to provide a variety of drills to help the child attain these skills, but it just takes time and patience. To prevent your child from becoming frustrated, please remain positive. We also recommend that families come to the pool for open swim for playtime. This reinforces the positive aspects of swimming that helps the child relax, which will make learning the skills easier during lessons. Also keep in mind, that children often need additional practice outside of lessons. Open swims would give the child that opportunity.

Learning to swim is FUN!

Regardless of your child's swimming ability, you can play a critical role in guiding, caring for, supervising, motivating and working with your child during their experience. The following are some suggestions to help you in providing the best experience for your child.

Prepare your child for this experience. Give your child the opportunity to visit the pool before the beginning of class. Describe what will be happening and perhaps talk to an instructor.

Be prompt. Children can be anxious if hurried. Allow plenty of time before and after class for showering, going to the bathroom and dressing.

Follow rules and regulations. You are responsible for your child's actions, not the instructor or lifeguard. Teach, talk about and review the pool rules with your child. Lead by example.

Attend every lesson. Frequent practice is the key to adjustment and learning. Children can regress quickly if not allowed to practice. It is a good idea to encourage a crying or hesitant child to continue attending the class. Just being around the pool and observing the activities can help your child adjust.

Complete all the levels. Make sure your child completes all the swim levels so that he or she truly has the skills to be safe in, on and around the water.

Encourage safe practices. Your children cannot be expected to exercise good judgment and caution. Children must be constantly reminded to walk slowly in the pool area and only enter the water with their instructor during the class and with you when coming to the facility during open swim.

Have patience. It is important not to pressure your child to perform before he or she is ready. Readiness results from maturity, experiences and other individual factors.

Avoid comparisons. No two children develop at the same rate. Each child learns at a different pace depending on factors such as physical growth, individual development, comfort, practice and previous experience. Respect your child's qualities and do not compare them to their siblings or other children.