

ORRVILLE YMCA



SWIM TEAM HANDBOOK



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Welcome

Welcome to the Orrville YMCA swim team and the great sport of competitive swimming! We are excited about the upcoming season! In addition, we are glad that you have chosen our team for your swimmer!

Through competitive swimming, many qualities will be developed such as the following: self-confidence, goal setting, responsibility, sportsmanship, character building and self-discipline. Our goal is to build each swimmer's character values through hard work and dedication.

This handbook's purpose is to set forth the expectations and give parents and caregivers a guide for the upcoming season.

YMCA Philosophy

Our Y mission statement is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all. Our three areas of focus are: youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. The YMCA's involvement in sports has been one means of teaching Christian ideas, values, and behavior based on this purpose. Sports in the YMCA have never been an end in itself, but rather a vehicle for achieving a much more global purpose, promoting character development through: Trustworthiness, Responsibility, Respect, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship.

Values

The Orrville YMCA swim team will help each swimmer develop the following values at all team activities:

- TRUSTWORTHINESS in all their actions by being honest, reliable, and loyal.
- RESPECT for themselves, their teammates, their coaches, and their opponents by treating others the way you would like to be treated.
- Taking RESPONSIBILITY for their actions, and learning the responsibilities they have to the team.
- Showing FAIRNESS to themselves and to others, especially their teammates by playing by the rules, sharing, and being open-minded.
- A CARING attitude for others around them by being kind and compassionate.
- CITIZENSHIP at all YMCA swimming activities.

Team Philosophy

The coaches of the Orrville YMCA swim team will focus on an individual's improvement. A swimmer's achievement is not measured by their finishing place at meets, but by an overall improvement of times, attitude, behavior, goal achievement, and sportsmanship. In joining the Orrville YMCA swim team, each swimmer will be embarking on a journey of self-improvement that will translate into future goals in life.

Team Goals

Have fun! This is probably the most important goal that all swimmers, parents, volunteers, and coaches should have. Swimmers will be challenged at each practice. The words "I can't" will not be a part of their vocabulary but the words "I will try and do my best" will be. Each swimmer will learn to challenge themselves. Goal setting is as much a part of swimming as it is a part of life. Everyone's hard work will pay off with personal and team improvements, and that is the fun part of swimming!

- Every swimmer will learn the correct technique of the four competitive strokes, turns, and starts
- Every swimmer will improve meet performance
- Every swimmer will improve practice performance
- Every swimmer will improve their knowledge of competitive swimming
- Every swimmer will learn goal setting
- Every swimmer will learn sportsmanship
- Every parent will support the team through volunteering
- Swimming has no bench sitters
- Swimming is healthy
- Swimming provides self-discipline
- Swimming teaches the relationship between team and the individual
- Swimming teaches organization

Swim Team Requirements

- Current membership in good standing at the Orrville YMCA.
- Registration on the Swim Team through the Orrville YMCA.
- An Emergency Medical Authorization Form on file with the Orrville YMCA.
- New swimmers must pass minimum swim requirements

Competition Guidelines

- Athletes in all groups will compete in the NEO Y Swim League (winter) and Mid-Ohio Swim League (MOSL) swim league (summer), dual and championship meets and selected intramural and invitational meets.
- Swimmers are expected to attend all dual and championship meets. If a swimmer cannot attend a meet, the coaching staff must be notified as soon as possible.
- Swimmers must participate in a minimum of three dual meets to qualify for the Championship Meets.
- Swimmers need to arrive at all meets on time for warm-ups. Upon arrival, the swimmer must check in with their coach prior to getting into the water. The team will warm-up as a team, not as individuals.
- Determination of relay members will be made by the coaches. Different combinations of relay members may be made throughout the swim season to find the best team.

If Your Child Cannot Attend a Meet

- Fill out a Hey Coach form, and turn it in as soon as possible, but no later than Monday before the meet. Hey Coach Forms will be located in a folder in the family mailboxes at the YMCA.
- Call the head coach, team manager, or the YMCA on the day of the meet when illness or an emergency occurs.

Swimmers Responsibilities

- Attend practice regularly
- Communicate effectively with the coaches
- Show support for your teammates – show good sportsmanship always!
- Show appreciation to your parents
- Behave in a manner to positively represent the YMCA
- Attend and participate in all meets and events in which you have been entered
- Attend the championship meets for which you qualify
- Participate in fund raisers
- Take home information to your parents
- Always show respect for coaches, teammates, YMCA staff, officials, etc.

What to Bring to Practice

- Practice suit
- Swim Cap
- Goggles
- Water Bottle (with water, no sports drinks)
- Positive attitude

Practice Guidelines

Emphasis is placed progressively on mastering the four competitive strokes and related techniques, increasing practice distance and intensity, instilling good practice habits and team involvement, building leadership skills and self-confidence.

Practice attendance is a major contributing factor to the outcome of a swimmer's progress. Swimmers are expected to be on time at as many practices as possible. Swimmers must be at a minimum of two practices per week to compete in the next meet.

Swimmers are placed into lanes with swimmers of similar abilities.

Lane assignment will be made in order to place swimmers in groups with others who are of similar age, commitment, stroke and endurance ability, and goals. Assignment to the lanes is done by the coaching staff.

Before Entering the Pool

- Follow all Orrville YMCA pool rules
- No cell phones are allowed on the pool deck
- No jewelry (watches, rings, earrings, etc.) during practice or meets. Leave them at home.
- All swimmers must take a shower before entering the pool.
- Use lavatory, prior to entering the pool.
- Good behavior at all times, especially in the locker rooms (the locker rooms are a privilege, not a right). Always remember – Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility.
- Swimmers should not leave the pool area without the coaches permission

Pool Etiquette

- Practices will start and end on time. Swimmers who are over 10 minutes late will be required to wait and/or perform a modified warm-up.
- No hanging on the lane markers.
- Do not throw kickboards, pull buoys, or other equipment
- The deck should be clear of kickboards, pull buoys, fins, etc. Use it, yours to put away!
- Starting blocks are to be used only when directed by a coach
- Every start, turn, and finish should be used as an opportunity to improve your skill

Etiquette for Coaching Staff

- If a swimmer needs to leave early, is ill, or has an injury, etc. you are required to let a coach know before practice starts!
- When the coach asks for your attention, give it.
- If there is a problem with another swimmer, please alert a coach immediately.
- Swimmers misbehaving may be excused from practice. If a swimmer is excused from practice, the coach will have the swimmer sit on a bench inside the pool area until practice is over. Parents will be notified.
- Swimmers should listen for announcements during practice, and report those announcements to their parents.
- When using the starting blocks, get onto the block only when a coach gives the "OK".

Etiquette for Fellow Swimmers and Other Facilities

- No degrading, abusive, or profane language will be tolerated.
- Support your teammates, do not belittle or degrade them.
- Allow other swimmers to practice without distraction.

Swimmers are expected to remember that we are guests at all facilities we travel to. Treat the Orrville YMCA and any other facility where you swim with respect.

Family Participation Requirements

As members of the Orrville YMCA Swim Team, parents are needed to serve on the Swim Team Parent Committee, coordinate special events like banquets, help with fundraising and, most importantly help at home swim meets. Our Swim Team is a very successful program due to the active participation from all of our parents. All parents are expected to and must perform jobs for the Orrville YMCA Swim Team. It is imperative that this is understood at the time of joining as parents have such a strong effect on the success of both the swimmers and their team.

The Otters host two to four swim meets each season. Each family is required to work AND donate food/beverage items for our Concession Stand at each home meet in which their child swims. If you have two parents working at the meet, then you are not obligated to donate. However, donating two items for the Concession Stand DOES NOT fulfill your work requirements. We need workers! Swim meets take many people to help run, unlike many other sports. There are a variety of different jobs for these meets and these meets are large sources of team income supporting our program. Workers can be parents, relatives or older children (12 and older). A complete list of descriptions of each job will be located on the SignUpGenius at the beginning of the season. The link to this will be sent to you via e-mail.

If something arises and you cannot attend, it is your responsibility to find someone to fill your spot. If a family does not sign up AND complete their requirements for each home meet, then there will be a \$25 "no show" fee per meet. Signing up to work at the meets is your responsibility and is on a first come-first serve basis. The Parent Committee, along with the coaching staff, may waive this fee if there are extenuating circumstances. Failure to show up due to parent negligence in reading e-mails, checking e-mail or otherwise neglecting to sign up, does not justify the waiving of this fee. It is imperative that you give an e-mail address that you check as all communications for meets will go to this address. If each family does their part, the meets flow smoothly. If there are needs that arise the week of a meet, the Parent Committee will be asking for more help. We can't run a meet without you!

On the day of a home meet, you should report to the Concession Stand and in the Swim Team binder you will need to sign your name by the positions you are working and donating for. This is the only way you will receive credit. If you do not sign in, you will be considered a no-show and will be assessed a fee. The Swim Team binder has detailed procedures for all the positions that involve set-up and clean-up. This way everyone knows what needs to be completed even if they are a new parent. Please make sure all is complete before you leave.

NOTE: Divisional and Championship Meets – if your swimmer is swimming in these meets, you will need to plan to work. You will be asked to sign up for any worker positions assigned to our swim team.

There are many veteran parents here to help our newer families. However, please feel free to reach out to a Parent Committee member or let a Coach know if you need any assistance. We welcome your participation and know that your child's success will be so much greater when the help and support from our very valuable parents. Working at meets gives you an opportunity to show your swimmers that you support them, learn about the sport, the other swimmers and meet other parents.

Parent – Swimmer – Coach Relationship

To have a successful program there must be complete understanding and cooperation among parents, swimmers, and coaches. The progress each swimmer makes depends on this triangular relationship. Consider this and read this section carefully, so that your swimmers can get the most out of their experience with our team.

Parent's guidelines: You have accomplished much to raise your child. You have created the environment in which they are growing up. Your child is a product of your values, the structure you have provided and the model you have been. Human nature, however, is such that a person loses some of his ability to remain detached and objective in matters concerning his/her children. The following guidelines will help you keep your child's development in the proper perspective.

- Every individual learns at a different rate and responds differently to various methods of presenting skills. Since the slower learner takes more time to master some skills, swimmers, parents and coaches must be a little more patient. Swimmers with lower learning skills have just as much potential as other swimmers on the team.
- Plateaus can occur at one time or another in every swimmers career. Plateaus can be both in competition and at practices. A plateau signifies the swimmer has mastered lower-order skills, but they are not yet sufficiently ready to put all of the skills together in order to produce improvement. It is important that swimmers and parents understand that plateaus occur in work and all fields of physical learning. The more successful athletes are those who work through this momentary delay in improvement, and go on to achieve greater performance and approach their personal potential.
- Ten and under swimmers are the most inconsistent swimmers, which can be frustrating for swimmers, parents, and coaches. Times at meets will often go up and down as they try to put together all of the elements of each stroke.
- Slow development of a competitive drive at an early age is normal, and perhaps more desirable than forced development of a competitive spirit. It is also important for young swimmers to learn to adapt to reasonable levels of emotional stress. It's the small disappointments they learn to handle as youngsters that prepare them for the larger ones they are certain to experience as adults.

- The coach's job is to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is the parent's job to supply love, recognition, and encouragement necessary to help the young athletes feel good about them. Make sure your swimmers know that you will love them just as much when they disqualify, as you do when they get first place.
- Parents' attitudes and models often indicate those of their children. A child might not be consciously aware of what is taking place, while subconsciously absorbing powerful messages about their parents' desires. For example, be enthusiastic about taking your swimmers to practice and meets, fund raising projects, meetings, etc. Do not look at these functions as chores.
- Criticizing the coach in front of the swimmers undermines the coach's authority and breaks the swimmer – coach relationship. Children model their parents' behavior.
- No parent should behave in such a way as to bring discredit to the child, the team, or competitive swimming. Any disagreement with a meet official should be brought to the attention of a coach, and handled by the coach.
- Be sure that youngsters swim because they want to. People tend to resist anything they "have to do." Self-motivation is the stimulus of all successful swimmers.
- Avoid playing your child against their nearest competitors, thereby creating vendettas within the team and the swimming community.
- The communication between the coach and swimmer is very important. A two-way relationship must exist daily at practice and at meets. It is imperative that the coach have the swimmers full attention at practices. For this reason parents are asked not to be on the pool deck during practices.

Remember, particularly with young swimmers, the attitude and behavior of the parents in regard to their outlook on the sport has an important effect on the child.

In swimming, as in life, nobody can win or succeed all of the time. There will always be some disappointments. Every child can gain something from every experience whether or not he/she ever wins a single race. The important thing is to keep on striving to do better next time.

What to bring to a Meet

- Suit, cap, goggle and extra towels (sweats, many pools are cold, even in the summer)
- Healthy snacks – cards, book, or quiet game – lock for locker room
- Please make sure that all personal possessions are labeled with swimmer's name.
- Swimmers are required to stay on the pool deck or designated area with the team at all times unless excused by the coach.
- Full water bottle
- Most meets have a concession stand (optional).
- A Sharpie to write down meet events.

Meet Entries

- The coaches are responsible for each swimmer's individual assignments at all meets.
- Swimmers are expected to swim all events in which they have been entered. No changes will be made after meet entries are posted.
- Swimmers will not be assigned to events which they are not physically ready to do. (Each swimmer will be challenged!!)
- Coaches are also responsible for assigning swimmers to relays. Relays will be determined based on past times. As the saying goes, times do not lie.

If Your Child Cannot Attend a Meet

- Fill out a Hey Coach form, and turn it in as soon as possible, but no later than Monday before the meet. Hey Coach Forms will be located in a folder in the family mailboxes at the YMCA.
- Call the head coach, team manager, or the YMCA on the day of the meet when illness or an emergency occurs.

Other Swim Meet Information

- Arrive at least half an hour before warm-up starts
- Swimmers should check in with their coach when they arrive at the pool
- Swimmers should remain in the designated areas
- Swimmers must warm up with the team
- If you leave before the meet is over, please let a coach know.
- Swimmers should always be aware of the event which is "in the water"
- Questions regarding an official's call or conduct of the meet should be referred to a coach. Coaches will then pursue the matter through proper channels.
- Transportation to and from meets is the responsibility of the swimmer and his/her family.
- Swimmers must see their coach immediately after they swim for critique and advice for next race
- Swimmer should rest and stay warm between events

Helpful Information

Rest & Nutrition

All swimmers should get at least eight hours of sleep every night. Swimmers should be fully hydrated before practice. Hydration before, during and after practice is the key. Swimmers should drink two quarts of water per day. Avoid drinks with caffeine. Make sure swimmers replace carbohydrates within 30 minutes of practice. The night before a meet, make sure all swimmers have a meal with protein and carbohydrates. The morning of a meet, have a healthy breakfast, like bananas, toast and juice. Avoid high sugar foods!

Remember, eat junk, and swim like junk!

Carbohydrates are found in:

- Grains
- Fruits
- Vegetables

Healthy snacks:

- Fruit
- Yogurt
- Bagels, Muffins, Crackers
- Popcorn
- Pretzels
- juice

A Rules Primer

The technical rules of swimming are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition and to promote uniformity in the sport. Each swimming stroke has specific rules designed to ensure that no swimmer gets an unfair competitive advantage over another swimmer.

Trained officials observe the swimmers during each event to ensure compliance with these technical rules. If a swimmer commits an infraction of the rules that is observed by an official, a disqualification (DQ) will result. This means that the swimmer will not receive an official time and will not be eligible for an award in that event. A disqualification may result from actions such as not getting to the starting blocks on time, false starting, performing strokes in an illegal manner, or unsportsmanlike conduct. DQs are also a result of technical rules violations. They include but are not limited to:

- **Freestyle:** Walking on the bottom, pulling on the lane rope, not touching the wall on a turn, or not completing the distance.
- **Backstroke:** Pulling or kicking into the wall once a swimmer has turned past the vertical onto the breast. Turning onto the breast before touching the wall with the hand at the finish of the race.
- **Breaststroke:** An illegal kick such as flutter (freestyle), dolphin (butterfly) or scissors (side stroke); not on the breast, alternating movements of the arms; taking two arm strokes or two leg kicks while the head is under water; touching with only one hand at the turns or finish.

- **Butterfly:** Alternating movements of the arms or legs; pushing the arms forward under instead of over the water surface (underwater recovery); a breaststroke style of kick; touching with only one hand at the turns or finish.

At the first couple of meets, the DQ technical rules are more lenient. However, as the season progresses and the older the swimmer, the officials will be more strict. For specific language on any technical rules consult the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations book. Violations of the rules are reported to the Referee. The rules require that every reasonable effort be made to notify the swimmer or his coach of the reason for the disqualification. If your child is disqualified in an event, be supportive rather than critical. For beginning swimmers, a disqualification should be treated as a learning experience, not as a punishment. A disqualification alerts the swimmer and coach to what portions of the swimmer's stroke needs to be corrected. They should be considered in the same light as an incorrect answer in schoolwork – they point out areas that need further practice. Disqualification are necessary to keep the competition fair and equitable for all competitors. A supported attitude on the part of the official, coach and parent can make a positive situation out of the disqualification.

Everything You Wanted to Know About Swim Meets but Were Afraid to Ask

(Excerpt from USA Swimming's Sample Club Handbook)

Swim meets are a great family experience! They're a place where the whole family can spend time together. Listed below are some very in-depth guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. It may seem a little overwhelming, but we tried to be as specific and as detailed as we possibly could. A well run dual meet lasts 2½ - 3 hours. If you have any questions, please ask your coach.

Before the Meet Starts:

1. Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins.
2. Upon arrival, find a place to put your swimmer's blankets, swim bags, cooler. Look for some familiar faces.
3. Make sure your swimmer checks in with his/her coach!
4. Look for posted "Heat Sheets" or ones that are being sold (usually \$1). A heat sheet is usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. It lists all swimmers in each event in order of their seed time. When the team entry is sent in, each swimmer and his/her previous best time (up to the date that the entry was submitted) in that event is listed. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a "no time" or "NT". A "no time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event. A Heat Sheet may be available

close to the start of the meet that lists the actual heat and lane a swimmer will be competing in.

5. Once "checked in", write or have the swimmers write each event information found in the Heat Sheet on his or her hand/arm in ink. This helps him/her remember what events he/she is swimming and what event number to listen or watch for.

- E=Event #; L=Lane; H=Heat; S=Stroke; L=Length (25, 50, 100, 200)
- Medley Relay (MR) - #1 swimmer is back; #2 swimmer is breast; #3 is Butterfly; #4 is Freestyle
- Individual Medley (IM) – stroke #1 fly, stroke #2 back, stroke #3 breast, stroke #4 freestyle
- Example of what a swimmer's arm would look like who is swimming 4 events:

| E | H | L | S | L |
|----|---|---|----------|----|
| 7 | 2 | 6 | MR-fly | 50 |
| 33 | 1 | 4 | Free | 50 |
| 43 | 3 | 3 | Back | 50 |
| 87 | 1 | 1 | Free-R#2 | 50 |

6. Your swimmer now gets his/her cap and goggles and reports to the pool and/or coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. A swimmer's body is like a car on a cold day – he/she needs to get the engine going and warmed-up before he/she can go all out.
7. After warm-up, your swimmer will go back to the area where his/her team is sitting and wait there until his first event is called. This is a good time to make sure he/she goes to the bathroom if necessary, gets a drink, or just gets settled in.
8. The meet will usually start about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups are over. All questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to a coach AFTER a meet. Please do not interrupt the coaches during a meet as they are watching and coaching all the swimmers!! He or she in turn, will pursue the matter through the proper channels.

During A Meet:

1. It is important for any swimmer to know what event numbers he/she is swimming (again, why they should have their event information on their hand/arm). He/she may swim right away after warm-up or they may have to wait a while.
2. Generally, girls events are odd-numbered and boys events are even-numbered. Example: Event #26, 10-under boys, 50 freestyle.
3. Most meets are computerized. A swimmer usually reports directly to his/her lane for competition a number of heats before he/she actually swims. This is usually called over the loud speaker. Swimmers should report with his/her cap and goggles. A coach or helper will usually line up all the swimmers. You can expect several heats of each event.
4. The swimmer swims their race.

5. After each swim: He/she is to ask the timers (parent volunteers behind the blocks at each lane) his/her time. The swimmer should then go immediately to his/her coach. The coach will discuss the swim with each swimmer.
6. Generally, the coach follows these guidelines when discussing swims: positive comments or praise, suggestions for improvement.
7. Things you, as a parent, can do after each swim: tell your child how great they did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with them. You need to tell your child how proud you are! Take him back to the team area and relax. This is another good time to check out the bathrooms, get a drink or something light to eat. The swimmer now waits until their next event is called and starts the procedure again.
8. When your swimmer has completed all of his/her events, they are able to go home. Make sure, however you have your child check with the coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included on a relay. It is not fair to other swimmers who may have stayed to swim on a relay where your swimmer is expected to be a member and is not there. In some cases, there might not be another swimmer who can take your child's place in the relay. This policy is also for safety reasons.
9. Results are compiled and sent out via e-mail to the team after a few days. Awards will be available in your family folder in the box by the vending machine at the Y.

What Happens if Your Child has a Disappointing Swim?

If your child has a poor race and comes out of it feeling badly, talk about the good things and encourage them to keep working hard to improve. Don't keep talking about the race. Drop it and get your child to focus on the next race or something enjoyable coming up after the meet. There is nothing wrong with a swimmer negatively evaluating a race. The important thing is for the child not to dwell on it. Acknowledge that they had a bad race but encourage them to think how they can do better next time. Immediately start talking about the positive things. As a child gets older, they might not want to discuss their performance at a meet, but wait until they are home. It is helpful to discuss with your child before a meet, how he/she would like to discuss results.

What to Take to A Meet:

1. Most important: Swim Suit, Team Cap and goggles
2. Baby or talcum powder – to "dust" the inside of a swim cap. This helps preserve the cap and makes it easier to put on.
3. Towels – Realize your swimmer will be there a while, so pack at least two.
4. Something to sit on. Often times the swimmer area may be located in a separate room/area. Example: old blanket, or anything that will be comfortable to sit on. The swimmers will be spending a lot of time on it.
5. Sweat suits/warm-ups/team t-shirts or robe. Each swimmer may want to bring two because they get wet and soggy and it will keep them warm between events.
6. Games – travel games, coloring books, books, anything to pass the time.

7. Food – Each swimmer is usually allowed to bring a small cooler. It is better to bring snacks. They usually have snack bars at the meet. Suggestions for items to bring:
 - a. Drinks – 100% fruit juice, Gatorade, water
 - b. Snacks – granola bars, fruit, yogurt, cereal, Jell-O cubes, sandwiches
 - c. Chocolate milk is a great recovery drink for after meets and practices.

Once you have attended one or two meets, this will all become very routine. Please do not hesitate to ask any other parent for help or information! These meets are a lot of fun for the swimmers! He/she gets to visit with his/her friends, play games, and meet kids from other teams. He/she also gets to race and see how much he/she has improved from all the hard work he/she has put in at practice.

Special Parent's Note

The pool area is usually very warm. Therefore, you need to make sure you dress appropriately. Nothing is worse than being hot at a swim meet. It makes the time pass very slowly. At some of the meets, the parents are allowed to sit with the swimmers at the blanket area. If you don't think that a gym floor is comfortable, feel free to bring folding chairs to sit on. Better yet, become an official and get involved! You get to be close to the action and take the focus off of your own child!

Glossary

The Language of Swimming – The following are some of the most common and important terms that go along with competitive swimming:

Anchor – The final swimmer in a relay and the point in the stroke pattern where the hand feels the most resistance and begins effective propulsive movement.

Bell Lap – The part of a freestyle distance race (400 meters or longer) when the swimmer has 2 lengths plus 5 yards to go. The starter fires a gun shot over the lane of the lead swimmer when swimmer is at the backstroke flags.

Bullpen – a staging area on or near the pool deck reserved as a gathering place for (usually young) swimmers before their swim event. By lining up children in the bullpen area according to heat and lane assignments, volunteer parents help minimize confusion and stress as the kids' transition to the starting blocks.

Bulkhead – a barrier wall fitted near the middle of a long course pool (or any pool longer than 25 yards) to convert one side into to a short course. Serves as a cat-walk for stroke & turn officials.

Circle Swim – When there are more than two swimmers in a lane during practice, swimmers swim up on the right hand side, staying close to the lane line, and return on the other side ensuring that there is 5 seconds apart between the swimmer in front. This eliminates the risk of swimmers crashing into each other.

Clinic - A scheduled meeting for the purpose of instruction. (i.e.) Official's clinic, Coaches clinic.

Cool-down - A slower, longer swim as an essential injury prevention technique, used by the swimmer after a race to rid the body of excess lactic acid.

Course - Designated distance (length of pool) for swimming competition. (i.e.) Long Course = 50 meters / Short Course = 25 yards or 25 meters.

Cut - A qualifying time for a competitive event.

DQ - disqualification.

Drill - broken stroke to work on a specific aspect of the stroke; SWIM SLOWLY.

Dry land - The exercises and various strength programs swimmers do out of the water.

False start- leaving the block early.

Flutter Kick - The alternating kick used in backstroke and front crawl, usually 6 kicks per cycle.

Heat - A division of an event used to cut the number of participants, when a single race to determine the winner would mean too many swimmers competing at the same time.

Heat Sheets - the pre-meet printed listings of swimmers' heat and lane assignments and seed times in the various events at a swim meet. These sheets vary in accuracy, since the coaches submit swimmers times many weeks before the meet. Heat sheets are sold at the admissions table and are used mainly to make sure the swimmer has been properly entered in all the events they signed up for. Parents enjoy looking at the seeding's prior to the race plus swimmers can tell the order the events will be conducted and get a rough idea how long the meet sessions will last.

High Elbow - Refers to the recovery phase of the front crawl, where keeping a high elbow encourages better balance and body roll. Also refers to the pull stage of the stroke, where the elbow remains in a higher position over the hand, giving the sensation of reaching over a barrel when pulling through the water.

Illegal - Doing something against the rules that is cause for disqualification.

Individual Medley (IM)- A combination of the four competitive swimming strokes swum in the following order; Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle (usually front crawl).

Interval - A specific elapsed time for swimming or rest used during swim practice.

Lap- two (2) lengths of the pool, 1 length equals 25 yards, 1 lap equals 50 yards.

Lap Counter- The large numbered cards (or the person turning the cards) used during the freestyle events 500 yards or longer. Counting is done from the end opposite the starting end. The numbers on the cards are "odd numbers "only with the final lap being designated by a bright orange card.

Lead-off - The swimmer to execute the first leg of the relay.

Leg - The part of a relay event swam by a single team member. A single stroke in the IM.

Length - A completed lap either up or down the pool. This may be a distance of 25y or 50m depending upon the size of the pool.

Medley- a race in which all four strokes are performed.

Negative Split - When the second half of the race is swum faster than the first half.

Pace - The speed that corresponds with a race distance, e.g. 1:20 (1 minute 20 seconds) per 100y.

Qualifying Time (QT) - A specified time that must be achieved for the swimmer to enter a competitive event.

Relay - a race with teams consisting of four swimmers, each of whom swims a different leg.

Scratch - To withdraw from an event after having declared an intention to participate. Some meets have scratch deadlines and specific scratch rules, and if not followed, swimmer can be disqualified from remaining events.

Seed - To assign a swimmer to a heat or lane according to their qualifying time.

Split - A portion of an event, shorter than the total distance, which is timed. (i.e.) A swimmer's first 50 yard time is taken as the swimmer swims the 100 yard race. It is common to take multiple splits for the longer distances.

Split Times - The times taken for each individual section of a race.

Start Position - The position taken by the swimmer at the beginning of the race. The swimmer is required to have at least one foot at the front of the starting block and remain motionless until the start signal sounds. The most common position has the swimmer bent over, knees bent and feet shoulder width apart. Some swimmers prefer a track start with one foot forward and one foot back.

Starter - the official in charge of signaling the beginning of a race and insuring that all swimmers have a fair takeoff.

Starting Blocks - the starting platforms located behind each lane. Pools normally have blocks installed at the deeper end of the pool, and some pools have blocks at both ends. Blocks have a variety of designs and can be permanent or removable. Most have bars near the base on the water side that swimmers use during backstroke starts.

Stations - Separate portions of a dry land or weight circuit.

Taper – Reducing the intensity of training just before a race so that the swimmer may be fresh and in peak condition for the event.

Touchpad – an electronically stimulated pad that hangs on the end of the pool.

Turnover – The number of times a swimmer completes one cycle of a stroke during a race.

Yardage – The distance a swimmer races or swims during the totality of their practice.

Swimming Events

Eight-and-under:

- 25-yard freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly
- 100-yard relay medley (25 yards of butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle, in that order)
- 100-yard freestyle relay

9-10 year olds:

- 50-yard freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly
- 100-yard IM, and sometimes the 200-yard IM
- 200-yard freestyle
- 200-yard freestyle or medley relay

11-12 year olds:

- 50-yard freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly
- 100-yard IM, 200-yard IM
- 200-yard freestyle

13 and over:

- 50-yard freestyle
- 100-yard freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly
- 200-yard IM
- 200-yard freestyle, 500-yard freestyle

Orrville YMCA Swim Team Swimmer's Agreement

I, _____ have read the Orrville YMCA swim team handbook. By signing, I agree to abide by the handbook.

I understand that violations of this handbook may jeopardize my team status and/or my participation in swim meets.

Swimmer Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____