American Red Cross

American Red Cross Swimming and Water Safety

The American Red Cross offers a comprehensive and developmentally appropriate swim program that teaches you, your child or other family members how to swim skillfully and safely. The prerequisite for each level is the successful demonstration of skills from the preceding level, except for Level 1, which has no prerequisites. Each level also includes lessons in water safety.

Parent and Child Aquatics

Level 1–
Provides experiences and activities for children to–

- *Learn to ask for permission before entering the water*
- *Learn how to enter and exit the water in a safe manner*
- *Feel comfortable in the water*
- *Explore submerging to the mouth, nose, eyes and completely*
- *Explore buoyancy on the front and back position*
- *Change body position in the water*
- *Learn how to play safely*
- *Experience wearing a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket*

Level 2–
Builds upon the skills learned in Level 1 and provides experiences and activities for children to–

- *Establish expectation for adult supervision*
- *Learn more ways to enter and exit the water in a safe manner*
- *Explore submerging in a rhythmic pattern*
- *Glide on the front and back with assistance*
- *Perform combined stroke on front and back with assistance*
- *Change body position in the water*
- *Experience wearing a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket in the water*

Preschool Aquatics

Level 1–
Orients children to the aquatic environment and helps them gain basic aquatic skills.

- *Enter and exit water using ladder, steps or side*
- *Blow bubbles through mouth and nose*
- *Submerge mouth, nose and eyes*
- *Open eyes under water and retrieve submerged objects*
- *Front and back glides and recover to a vertical position*
- *Back float and recover to a vertical position*
- *Roll from front to back and back to front*
- *Tread with arm and hand actions*
- *Alternating and simultaneous leg actions on front and back*
- *Alternating and simultaneous arm actions on front and back*
- *Combined arm and leg actions on front and back*

Level 2–
Helps children gain greater independence in their skills and develop more comfort in and around water.

- *Enter water by stepping in*
- *Exit water using ladder, steps or side*
- *Bobbing*
- *Open eyes under water and retrieve submerged objects*
- *Front and back floats and glides*
- *Recover from a front or back float or glide to a vertical position*
- *Roll from front to back and back to front*
- *Tread water using arm and leg actions*
- *Combined arm and leg actions on front and back*
- *Finning arm action on back*

Level 3–
Helps children start to gain basic swimming propulsive skills to be comfortable in and around water.

- *Enter water by jumping in*
- *Fully submerge and hold breath*
- *Bobbing*
- *Front, jellyfish and tuck floats*
- *Recover from a front or back float or glide to a vertical position*
- *Back float and glide*
- *Change direction of travel while swimming on front or back*
- *Tread water using arm and leg actions*
- *Combined arm and leg actions on front and back*
- *Finning arm action on back*

Learn-to-Swim

Level 1–Introduction to Water Skills

Helps participants feel comfortable in the water.

- *Enter and exit water using ladder, steps or side*
- *Blow bubbles through mouth and nose*
- *Bobbing*
- *Open eyes under water and retrieve submerged objects*
- *Front and back glides and floats*
- *Recover to vertical position*
- *Roll from front to back and back to front*
- *Tread water using arm and hand actions*
- *Alternating and simultaneous leg actions on front and back*
- *Alternating and simultaneous arm actions on front and back*
- *Combined arm and leg actions on front and back*

Level 2–Fundamental Aquatic Skills

Gives participants success with fundamental skills.

- *Enter and exit water by stepping or jumping from the side*
- *Fully submerge and hold breath*
- *Bobbing*
- *Open eyes under water and retrieve submerged objects*
- *Front, jellyfish and tuck floats*
- *Front and back glides and floats*
- *Recover to vertical position*
- *Roll from front to back and back to front*
- *Change direction of travel while swimming on front or back*
- *Tread water using arm and leg actions*
- *Combined arm and leg actions on front and back*
- *Finning arm action*

Level 3–Stroke Development

Builds on the skills in Level 2 through additional guided practice in deeper water.

- *Enter water by jumping from the side*
- *Headfirst entries from the side in sitting and kneeling positions*
- *Bobbing while moving toward safety*
- *Rotary breathing*
- *Survival float*
- *Back float*
- *Change from vertical to horizontal position on front and back*
- *Tread water*
- *Flutter, scissor, dolphin and breaststroke kicks on front*
- *Front crawl and elementary backstroke*

Level 4–Stroke Improvement

Develops confidence in the skills learned and improves other aquatic skills.

- *Headfirst entries from the side in compact and stride positions*
- *Swim under water*
- *Feetfirst surface dive*
- *Survival swimming*
- *Front crawl and backstroke open turns*
- *Tread water using 2 different kicks*
- *Front and back crawl, elementary backstroke, breaststroke, sidestroke and butterfly*
- *Flutter and dolphin kicks on back*

Level 5–Stroke Refinement

Provides further coordination and refinement of strokes.

- *Shallow-angle dive from the side then glide and begin a front stroke*
- *Tuck and pike surface dives, submerge completely*
- *Front flip turn and backstroke flip turn while swimming*
- *Front and back crawl, elementary backstroke, breaststroke, sidestroke and butterfly*
- *Sculling*

Level 6–Swimming and Skill Proficiency

Refines the strokes so participants swim them with ease, efficiency, power and smoothness over greater distances. Level 6 is designed with "menu" options that focus on preparing participants for more advanced courses, including the Water Safety Instructor, or other aquatic activities, such as competitive swimming or diving.

Options include:

- *Fitness Swimmer*
- *Personal Water Safety*
- *Fundamentals of Diving*

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