



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

SWIM LESSON LEVEL GUIDE

YMCA OF PIERCE AND KITSAP COUNTIES

WHAT AGE GROUP DOES THE STUDENT FALL INTO?



6 months–3 years
PARENT* & CHILD:
STAGES A–B



3 years–6 years
PRESCHOOL:
STAGES 1–4



6 years–12 years
SCHOOL AGE:
STAGES 1–6



12–17 years
TEEN
STAGES 1–6



18+ years
ADULT:
STAGES 1–6

All age groups are taught the same skills but divided according to their developmental milestones.

WHICH STAGE IS THE STUDENT READY FOR?

Can the student respond to verbal cues and jump on land?

NOT YET

**A / WATER
DISCOVERY**

Is the student comfortable working with an instructor without a parent in the water?

NOT YET

**B / WATER
EXPLORATION**

Will the student go underwater voluntarily?

NOT YET

**1 / WATER
ACCLIMATION**

Can the student do a front and back float on his or her own?

NOT YET

**2 / WATER
MOVEMENT**

Can the student swim 10–15 yards on his or her front and back?

NOT YET

**3 / WATER
STAMINA**

Can the student swim 15 yards of front and back crawl?

NOT YET

**4 / STROKE
INTRODUCTION**

Can the student swim front crawl, back crawl, and breaststroke across the pool?

NOT YET

**5 / STROKE
DEVELOPMENT**

Can the student swim front crawl, back crawl, and breaststroke across the pool and back?

NOT YET

**6 / STROKE
MECHANICS**

STAGE DESCRIPTIONS



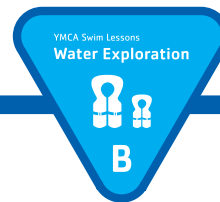
SWIM STARTERS

Accompanied by a parent, infants and toddlers learn to be comfortable in the water and develop swim readiness skills through fun and confidence-building experiences, while parents learn about water safety, drowning prevention, and the importance of supervision.



A / WATER DISCOVERY

Parents accompany children in stage A, which introduces infants and toddlers to the aquatic environment through exploration and encourages them to enjoy themselves while learning about the water.



B / WATER EXPLORATION

In stage B, parents work with their children to explore body positions, floating, blowing bubbles, and fundamental safety and aquatic skills.



1 / WATER ACCLIMATION

Students develop comfort with underwater exploration and learn to safely exit in the event of falling into a body of water in stage 1. This stage lays the foundation that allows for a student's future progress in swimming.



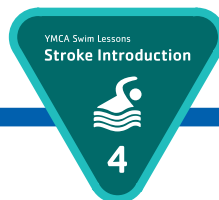
2 / WATER MOVEMENT

In stage 2, students focus on body position and control, directional change, and forward movement in the water while also continuing to practice how to safely exit in the event of falling into a body of water.



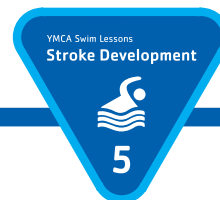
3 / WATER STAMINA

In stage 3, students learn how to swim to safety from a longer distance than in previous stages in the event of falling into a body of water. This stage also introduces rhythmic breathing and integrated arm and leg action.



4 / STROKE INTRODUCTION

Students in stage 4 develop stroke technique in front crawl and back crawl and learn the breaststroke kick and butterfly kick. Water safety is reinforced through treading water and elementary backstroke.



5 / STROKE DEVELOPMENT

Students in stage 5 work on stroke technique and learn all major competitive strokes. The emphasis on water safety continues through treading water and sidestroke.



6 / STROKE MECHANICS

In stage 6, students refine stroke technique on all major competitive strokes, learn about competitive swimming, and discover how to incorporate swimming into a healthy lifestyle.

SWIM BASICS

Students learn personal water safety and achieve basic swimming competency by learning two benchmark skills:

- Swim, float, swim—sequencing front glide, roll, back float, roll, front glide, and exit
- Jump, push, turn, grab

SWIM STROKES



Having mastered the fundamentals, students learn additional water safety skills and build stroke technique, developing skills that prevent chronic disease, increase social-emotional and cognitive well-being, and foster a lifetime of physical activity.