

Swimming With The Manatee Aquatic Masters

Our pool is often filled to capacity, with swimmers ranging in ability and experience. Follow these guidelines to avoid conflict and ensure everyone has a safe and enjoyable swimming experience.

1. Lane designations. Always try to swim with swimmers of a comparable speed. We usually have two lanes each designated as slower, medium, and fast. These are relative terms. Ask the coach or other swimmers if you are unsure which lane to join. The coach may reshuffle lane assignments after warm-up, depending on how crowded the lanes are. Arrive before the 10-minute warmup ends so that the coach can reorganize the lanes and start the workout on time.

2. Joining a workout. After a ten minute warm-up period, the coach will begin explaining the workout. Pay attention to the clock while you are warming up so that you will be ready to stop at 10 minutes after the workout start time. Be quiet and listen to the coach's instructions so that you and your teammates will understand the upcoming set. Then quietly discuss how to implement that set in your lane so that the coach can be heard by adjoining lanes.

Please be on time. If there is a workout set already in progress when you arrive, it is the coach's discretion to determine if you may join the workout or not. Please respect the coach's decision. Enter the pool safely and join the set in progress. If you arrive early before the prior workout has completed, ask the coach for permission before entering the pool during that workout.

If you decide to stay longer than a single workout session, swim the workout assigned to your lane unless you coordinate with the other swimmers in your lane to depart from the assigned workout.

3. Entering the pool. For the first workout of the morning, wait until the lifeguard gives permission to enter the pool. Never dive into the pool; always enter feet first. If a swimmer is at the flags approaching the wall, wait on deck before entering the pool. Before jumping in behind another swimmer, wait until they have moved past the flags. Do not assume they have seen you.

4. Swimming pattern. Because we typically have three or more swimmers in a lane, we must circle swim, which is done in a counterclockwise direction. If there are two swimmers per lane, especially if they are of different speeds, the coach may suggest that they split the lane so that each person swims up and back on one pre-determined side.

When circle swimming, push off the wall 5 seconds after the prior swimmer. ***Do not swim closely to the person in front of you*** as it may interfere or hinder their flip turns. When there are only two or three swimmers in a lane, and the workout consists of shorter swims (200 yards or less), you can push off the wall 10 seconds after the prior swimmer. If you are catching up to the person in front of you and able to tap their feet, discuss changing positions with them or allow more time before pushing off the wall (if your lane is not too crowded).

Push off underwater. This will reduce the waves encountered by oncoming swimmers (and give you more distance off your start).

Whenever a swimmer is circle swimming behind you in the lane, be sure to execute your turn by crossing to the left side of the lane so your feet push off between the cross and the left lane line. Otherwise you push off partly in the lane of the swimmer coming up after you, compromising safety and taking up their space to come into the wall for a good turn. If the swimmer behind is too fast, ask them to give you more space at the start, or switch places with them.

5. Speed. Slower swimmers must yield to faster swimmers. Faster swimmers should lead the lane, but must confer with lane mates about specific send-off intervals. Do this at each practice because send-off intervals may differ at each practice and with different lane-mates.

The coach often varies the speed (e.g., fast, moderate, smooth) and the rest intervals to accomplish different goals (e.g., aerobic or anaerobic conditioning). Follow the coach's instructions; don't just race through each set at the same pace. If you are leading your lane, wait for the appropriate interval to begin swimming.

6. Passing. Do not pass. The lanes are too narrow. If you are being overtaken, stop at a turn on the wall only (by staying to the right of the lane), and continue 5 seconds after the other swimmer has pushed off in front of you.

7. Standing at the wall. Stay out of the way of swimmers coming to the wall and pushing off the wall for the next interval. Swimmers come off the wall with a lot of momentum, and should finish into the wall with a lot of momentum. Talk with your lane-mates to organize yourselves during sets so that swimmers finish into the wall and then move to the center of the lane. This allows each swimmer to come into the wall with a strong finish and also avoid those coming off the wall for the next swim.

When standing, do not block other swimmers' ability to see the clocks.

Do not stand in the lane except at the wall in the right corner facing the coach. Always finish swimming to the wall, turn at the wall, and push off from the wall, unless a set is specified otherwise by a coach.

If you need to rest, wait in the corner to the right of the lane, facing the coach, and rejoin the set only after the other swimmers in your lane have pushed off the wall a second time (i.e., after they have completed 50 yards).

Be respectful of swimmers attending the next workout session by leaving the pool when your workout is over. Save discussions for the deck or the locker rooms.

8. General Courtesies. Be aware of what is going on in your lane to help make everyone's experience enjoyable and safe. Welcome new swimmers. Try not to kick or swing your arms into another lane, especially if using paddles. Keep your toenails and fingernails trimmed, and do not wear fragrances in the pool.

If you have questions or concerns, talk with the coach on deck.