

PROPER LANE ETIQUETTE FOR GROUP SWIM TRAINING

Swimmers come from all walks of life, backgrounds, experience and ability. It is very possible that the lane mate you think is a little “rude” simply does not know proper lane etiquette. With that in mind, and in an attempt to avoid navigational, comprehension and crowding problems, we are distributing this little review of proper lane etiquette to remind or educate you.

1. **Get into the Correct Lane!** Learn and know your practice times and pace and try to swim with others who are the same speed as you. If you are unsure of which lane to swim in, ask the coach. Sometimes the coach will move swimmers around to facilitate large numbers of swimmers or pool lane restrictions. The coaches are trying to provide a pleasant workout environment and one that is conducive for optimal learning and training for everyone. Don't take anything personally; speak up; go with the flow.
2. **What?!?** As a common courtesy, swimmers should look at the coach or instructor during instruction, workout set explanation or stroke technique critique. All pools have terrible acoustics and personal conversations among workout attendees just add to the difficulty of hearing what the coach or instructor is saying.
3. **Don't be a Leach!** It is not nice to push off right on the feet of the swimmer in front of you, or to catch up to that swimmer and swim right on their heels lap after lap. And it is dangerous to draft, especially at turns where swimmers are pushing off the wall into potential head-on collisions. If you feel particularly fast or are consistently swimming on the feet of the swimmer in front of you, ask to go ahead on the next set or repeat. A good rule of thumb: If you can smell their feet, you're a leach.
4. **Don't be a Lane Leader Hog!** Even if you always go first in your lane because you are the fastest swimmer, it is often fun to rotate leaders. If you find that your lane mate is right on your feet, it's probably a good time to rotate the lead for that set. Healthy competition in practice enhances performance for each swimmer. Lane mates should challenge and encourage each other to bring out the best in each other.
5. **Avoid the Draft!** Standard swimming protocol is to give the person in front of you at least **FIVE** seconds lead time before you push off. In long course swimming (50 meters) or when there are only two or three swimmers in a lane, try giving the person in front of you ten or 15 seconds. By allowing more lead time, you'll avoid the draft of the swimmer in front of you, and build better personal aerobic endurance and proper pace capabilities. Also, your turns will be faster and unhindered because you won't have to spend your energy dodging lane mates who are still perfecting their turns or who have “navigational” problems.
6. **The Golden Rule.** Circle swimming is a group training method requiring the swimmer to stay on the **RIGHT** side of the lane going in both directions. When approaching the wall for your turn (about 5-10 feet away), start moving to your left to hit the **CENTER** of the wall. When you push off, do so angling to the right so that you are once again on the correct side of the lane.
7. **Get Out of My Way!** Common problems when passing is that the faster swimmer does not necessarily warn the slower swimmer in front that he/she is there. If you would like to pass the person ahead of you, lightly tap their feet once or twice so that this person knows you are there and want to pass. The second common problem when passing is that the swimmer in front/being passed attempts to temporarily speed up leaving the faster swimmer in the middle of the lane facing oncoming traffic. If you feel a tap on your feet, move as far right up against the lane line as possible, slightly slow your speed and allow the person behind you to pass on your left. Passing can be a very dangerous thing; the passing swimmer must swim in the middle of the lane possibly dodging oncoming swimmers from the other direction. Passing should be done as quickly as possible. Another passing option, especially if you are close to the wall, is to simply stop in the corner and let the passing swimmer turn past you. Then, get in behind the swimmer who went by. Be observant and aware of the other swimmers in your lane. If you know passing is inevitable, time your turn so the faster swimmer can pass at the wall.
8. **Let Me Finish!** When finishing a swim or repeat, immediately move to the right/start side of the lane so that the swimmers behind you can finish at the wall, get their time and prepare for the next swim or repeat. Don't hog the wall space and let everyone finish the full swim distance at the wall.
9. **Stick to the Workout!** Try to stick to the set as given. It can be frustrating to your lane mates if you deviate drastically from the given set. Secondly, it's difficult for the coaches to track your times and progress when they don't know what you are doing. Communicate with the coach, let them know either what you would like to do or ask for suggested options if you can not do the set as specified. If you can not make a time interval, reduce the swim distance and stay on the interval for your lane. If you don't know how to use or read the pacerlock, ask for help.
10. **Express Yourself!** It is very common for swimmers to have varying abilities between pulling, swimming and kicking. For this reason, lane mates should talk to one another and be ready to change the lane order for different sets. Also, if some people plan to swim stroke specialties while others are swimming freestyle during a specific set or workout, discuss this with each other before the set begins to avoid confusion.
11. **Share the Pain, Feel the Love!** Sometimes having a great workout sets the tone for the rest of your day. Sometimes it can be the best thing that happens to you all day. Let's all try to create and foster an environment of love, camaraderie, encouragement, mutual support and motivation so that we make the workout a great part of everyone's day!

Translating the Coach's Lingo: Workout Glossary - A Guide for the Perplexed

Swimming, like every other sport and specialized subject, has its own jargon, its own lingo. If you've been swimming for years, that jargon has become second nature to you. For the newbie, however, it is a bewildering maze of esoteric jargon, a kabalistic mystery beyond the ken of normal human beings. It might as well be Sanskrit. The following glossary should help you along the path to aquatic enlightenment.

Aerobic Training: Swimming that utilizes energy systems that require oxygen. Typically, aerobic training is low- to moderate-effort swimming over longer distances with minimal rest.

Anaerobic Training: Swimming that utilizes energy systems in the absence of oxygen. Also implies training at high intensity with longer recovery periods, which can increase one's ability to tolerate and remove lactic acid.

Ascending Interval: A set during which the interval (time within which to complete swim distance) increases with each repeat, thereby providing swimmer with more and more rest throughout set.

Bilateral Breathing: The process of breathing on alternate sides during freestyle, such as breathing every third or fifth strokes.

Bottom: Pace clock reading that corresponds to a seconds reading of "30." Typically a coach will instruct swimmers to leave (begin) "on the bottom" or "off the 30."

Build Swims: Specific distances over which the rate of speed or exertion is gradually intensified, nearing maximum speed by the end of the swim distance.

Circle Swimming: Group training method whereby each swimmer within a lane proceeds down each length of the pool staying to the right side of the lane, at all times proceeding in a counter-clockwise direction.

Descending Interval: A set during which the interval (time within which to complete swim distance) decreases with each repeat, thereby providing swimmer with less and less rest during set.

Descend: A set objective for the swimmers to attempt to descend each successive repeat time. In other words, to make each timed repeat swim faster than the previous one.

Drafting: Swimming in the wake of or close behind the swimmer in front. Beneficial during a race; very annoying workout tactic that will not win you points with your teammates in a popularity contest.

Drill: An exercise designed to improve stroke technique.

Even-Split: The practice of swimming the second half of a race or swim distance in workout at the same pace as the first half.

Fartlek: A Swedish term meaning "speed play," or the alternating of sprint or high-intensity efforts with easy swimming/active recovery.

Hypoxic: An outdated training philosophy without scientific basis whereby coaches have swimmers limit the number of breaths taken during training to induce oxygen debt.

Interval: A specific time period that includes both the active swimming and subsequent rest during a set of repeats. The faster a swimmer goes, the more rest he or she will have before beginning next repeat within the set.

Kicking: Propelling oneself forward by use of the legs only. May include use of a kickboard, fins, zoomers, or no equipment at all.

Lactate Tolerance Training: Training during which the body experiences a lack of oxygen, resulting in the production of lactic acid buildup in the muscles. During lactic acid buildup, the swimmer typically experiences a burning or aching sensation.

Lap/Length: Distance from one end of the pool to the other, typically either 25 yards or 25 meters or 50 meters.

Negative Split: A swim during which the second half of the distance is completed faster than the first half.

Pulling: Using only the arms to propel oneself forward. Typically implies use of a buoy (usually a styrofoam flotation device placed between the upper thighs); also may include use of paddles on the hands and/or a small pulling inner tube around the ankles.

Race-Pace Training: Workout swimming that simulates the speed at which a swimmer will compete. Typically involves the practice of "breaking" a competitive swim distance into separate segments with rest between each portion, i.e. a broken 200 freestyle swim with 15 seconds rest at the 100 (halfway) mark, with the swimmer attempting to even-split distance at race-pace speed.

Rep or Repeat or Repetition: A single swim with a set of multiple swims.

Send-Off: Similar to interval, a send-off is the start time for the next set or swim or repeat.

Set: A number of repetitive swims (repeats) at specific distances typically involving designated interval(s).

Split: The time for a portion of a race or workout swim.

Streamlining: The method of aligning the body in a position to enhance reducing resistance.

Taper: Training period designed to produce peak performance for the athlete. Taper involves more rest, reduced workload, fine-tuning, and recovery.

Top: Pace clock reading that corresponds to a seconds reading of "60" or "0." Typically a coach will instruct swimmers to leave (begin) "on the top" or "off the 60."

Warm Down or Cool Down: Easy to moderate swimming following an intense workout effort or race to promote loosening up, removal of lactic acid from the muscles, and to reduce heart rate and respiration. May also be referred to as "recovery swimming" or active rest.

Warmup: A period of swimming designed to prepare the swimmer for a workout or for a race. Purpose is to warm up muscles and elevate heart rate and respiration, along with familiarizing one with race or workout venue.