

What is SwimAmerica?

SwimAmerica is a **national** learn to swim program operated by the **American Swimming Coaches Association** through over 500 Program Directors at over 900 sites across the USA . It's the state of the art learn to swim program in the world today. Brought to you by the same people who have brought you the most successful sport team on the planet... the USA Olympic Swimming Team. What we learn teaching people to set world records, we use to teach new swimmers to enjoy swimming with the best techniques in the world... just like the development of great cars and trucks from the NASCAR and INDY car races. We learn from and teach the elite athlete AND the new child!

When should my child learn to swim?

As soon as your child is capable of independent motion, they are capable of getting into water and drowning. Therefore, swim lessons should begin as soon after 6 months of age as possible. Initially, they will not learn to swim per se. They will be learning: "ROLL OVER, FLOAT, YELL FOR HELP." Young children, because of the weight of their head and body proportions, can't readily "learn to swim." What you want, is to keep them SAFE. We do that by teaching them to surface when underwater, roll onto their backs, maintain themselves and breathe and YELL FOR HELP! History shows that this response SAVES LIVES because it "buys time" for the caregiver to realize that the child can float and yell. Tragedies occur when the child can't perform that skill. Once they have mastered ROLL OVER, FLOAT, YELL FOR HELP! Then we begin teaching "real swimming."

How do I know when my child knows how to swim?

In SwimAmerica, we use a high standard. We are in business to save lives. That means a person can maintain themselves indefinitely in the water. To do so, requires the ability to exhale used air and inhale new air. That's called Aerobic Swimming. (just like being able to talk while you jog!) Our standard is that a person should be able to swim 300 yards non-stop, and swim 6 different styles of swimming, to be considered a "swimmer." 300 yards is important. Scientists have found that humans can swim 200 yards without being able to breathe effectively. But without the ability to breathe effectively, eventually that person will get in trouble, and possibly endanger their life. We went 1/3 beyond that point to set our standard of 300 yards of non-stop swimming. That goal won't be quickly achieved. It takes time. But it can save your child's life. That's worth the investment of time. After all, learning to swim is a LIFETIME GIFT.

Why SwimAmerica for my child?

Lots of organizations and individuals teach swimming lessons. And you can pay less than you will pay at SwimAmerica. We don't teach lessons. We teach PEOPLE HOW TO SWIM. So what do you want to purchase? Swim lessons or having your child learn to swim? SwimAmerica Programs are all taught by members of the **American Swimming Coaches Association** who are certified in the teaching of swimming and experts in the proper development of stroke technique. We're the best in the world. Does your child deserve less than the best? You'll find two critically important features in SwimAmerica Learn to Swim... First, we're technique oriented. We teach your child to swim like a pro with expert technique from the very first day in the water. They'll start with learning how to exhale underwater... and progress through every skill that an Olympic Swimmer will learn when they learned to swim. Second, we're goal-directed. Our coaches (in-water instructors) focus on the critical skills to achieve to move your child through the teaching progression as rapidly as they can do so. All learning is individually based... your child will learn as fast as they are able to do so, no waiting for those "slower in development." That's crucial when your child's safety is at stake. SwimAmerica is run by the pros. And your child's progress will prove it. (Ask your Program Director how long it will take your child to reach any of our skill levels and they will tell you. Then go compare that answer to the same question to our competitors. Ask for details, for statistics on improvement... be an educated consumer!)

Finding a SwimAmerica location near me!

In the [SwimAmerica Locations](#) section of this website, you'll find the locations of SwimAmerica programs. You can also email Julie Nitti at jnitti@swimamerica.org for phone number or more specific information on the site near you. Also, you'll most likely find SwimAmerica in your local Yellow Pages!

There is no SwimAmerica program near me. How can I select the best available learn to swim program?

SwimAmerica programs are not everywhere. If you don't have one near you, we want you to be prepared to be the best possible consumer. Here's what we recommend you ask every program in your area that you will consider attending:

- 1. What is the typical teacher-student ratio?** *(In SwimAmerica, it's one teacher to five students. More than that, it's hard to picture enough attention taking place to benefit the student very much.)*
- 2. Who's teaching my child? What is their level of expertise? How long have they been teaching?**
- 3. Will my child progress at her own rate, or will she wait for the group to learn a particular skill before she moves onward?**
- 4. What skills are taught and in what order?** *(In SwimAmerica, safety skills come first, then "real swimming." Safety skills are Roll over, float, yell for help. Beware of a child being taught to "swim to the wall" first. Many accidents happen in settings where there is either no pool wall - because they are not in pools - or a pool wall that is high with no "gutter" to grab. Swimming to a flat wall pool with nothing to grasp and hold is clearly not a safety skill!)*
- 5. What is your definition of "knowing how to swim?"** *(Beware of those who tell you that your child will learn to swim underwater! It sounds nice but it's the opposite of a safety skill!)*
- 6. Insist on looking at products of the swim school in terms of children swimming. Are the children breathing to the side when they swim, exhaling air underwater and swimming smoothly and easily?** *Swimmers "breathing to the front" is a sure sign of incompetent teaching.*
- 7. What are the safety measures in place during lessons?**

Many places have excellent lessons that are not SwimAmerica. Unfortunately, there are equal numbers of places that sell swimming lessons that are extremely poor at teaching as well as dangerous. Be a wary consumer. And a final word - "Mommy and Me" and similar classes that purport to make the water attractive and fun for the child may well achieve that. And the LAST thing you want is for your infant or preschooler to think that the water is a wonderful and fascinating place, WITHOUT the skill of "Roll over, float, Yell for help." There will be some tears in the beginning of any lesson program. The effect disappears as soon as they learn competence in the water and the joy and fascination of the aquatic environment asserts itself as they learn to swim. Accept the tears. It's the cost of learning to save their lives.

At what age should children begin swim lessons?

Many children begin swimming as infants and there is no doubt the water provides a very special experience for the young child. SwimAmerica programs typically begin offering lessons at 6-9 months of age.

How frequently should my child take swim lessons?

At SwimAmerica we recommend swim lessons once a week for the following reasons:

- Once a week swim lessons are easy on the family budget and schedule.
- Easy on the child
- Easy way to ensure your child learns to swim

Should my child take group or private lessons?

At SwimAmerica we favor group swim lessons for children who are ready to learn in a small group setting. Small groups of five children or less provide instruction, practice and the opportunity to watch other children perform the skill. However not all children learn best in group lessons. Parents must take into account their child's temperament and learning style. Private or semi-private lessons are also available at most SwimAmerica Swim Schools.

What about the cost of SwimAmerica swim lessons?

You will find SwimAmerica swim lessons are priced comparable to other outstanding children's lessons in your area. Swimming lessons are the most important lessons purchase you will ever make for your child.

What can my child expect the first day of SwimAmerica swim lessons?

At SwimAmerica you will find our swim coaches take a caring approach to teaching children to swim. Coaches are trained to help reluctant children to adapt to the learn to swim environment.