

American Red Cross Learn-to-Swim Program

Level	Description	Safety Topics Introduced	Exit Skills - Must be able to complete to progress to the next level
1	Introduction to Water Skills - Level 1 will orient participants to the aquatic environment and will help them gain basic aquatic skills. It will also help participants begin to develop positive attitudes and safe practices around the water. Instructors will teach the following skills: blowing bubbles, exiting the pool from pool side, front glide, back glide, back float, rolling from front to back and back to front, and proper arm and leg action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking permission • staying safe around water • recognizing lifeguards • wearing lifejackets • recognizing an emergency • how to call for help • sun safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter independently, using either the ramp, steps or side, travel at least 5 yards, bobs 5 times, then safely exit the water. (Participant can walk, move along the gutter or "swim.") • Glide on front at least 2 body lengths, roll to a back float for 5 seconds and recover to a vertical position. (This part of the assessment can be performed with assistance.)
2	Fundamental Aquatic Skills - Level 2 will build upon the skills learned in Level 1 Aquatic Skills and learn water safety skills and concepts. Focus will be on body position, control, directional change and forward movement in the water. Instructors will teach the following skills: entering water from pool side (jumping or stepping), exiting the pool from pool side, submersion, rotary breathing, front glide, back glide, floats (front, back, jellyfish float, tuck float), rolling from front to back and back to front, proper arm and leg action and treading water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking permission • staying safe around water • wearing lifejackets • recognizing an emergency & how to call for help • sun safety • looking before you jump • reach/throw/never go • drain safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step from side into chest-deep water, push off the bottom, move into a treading or floating position for at least 15 seconds, swim on front and/or back for 5 body lengths, then exit the water. • Move into a back float for 15 seconds, roll to front, then recover to a vertical position. • Push off and swim using combined arm and leg actions on front for 5 body lengths, roll to back, float for 15 seconds, roll to the front, then continue swimming for 5 body lengths.
3	Stroke Development - Level 3 will build upon the skills learned in Levels 1 and 2 to help participants achieve basic water competency in a pool environment. Instructors will teach the following skills: entering water by jumping from side, submersion, moving bobs, rotary breathing, back float, front float, rolling from front to back and back to front, diving from sitting position, treading water, streamlines off wall, front crawl (freestyle), breaststroke kick, elementary backstroke, and scissor kick.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking permission • reach/throw/never go • thinking twice before going near cold water/ice • looking before you jump • breath control safety • making good decisions around a body of water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jump into deep water from the side, recover to the surface, maintain position by treading or floating for 1 minute, rotate one full turn then turn as necessary to orient to the exit point, level off, swim front crawl and/or elementary backstroke for 25 yards, then exit the water. • Push off in a streamlined position then swim front crawl for 15 yards, change position and direction as necessary, swim elementary backstroke for 15 yards, then exit the water.
4	Stroke Improvement - Level 4 will help improve participants' proficiency in performing the strokes introduced in Level 3. Instructors will teach the following skills: diving into water from kneeling position, underwater swimming, surface dives, open turns, treading water, front crawl (freestyle), breaststroke, butterfly, streamlines, dolphin kick, elementary backstroke, back crawl (backstroke), and sidestroke.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking permission • reach/throw/never go • looking before you jump • think - so you don't sink 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a feet-first entry into deep water, swim front crawl for 25 yards, change direction and position as necessary and swim elementary backstroke for 25 yards. • Swim breaststroke for 15 yards, change direction and position as necessary and swim back crawl for 15 yards. • Submerge and swim a distance of 3 to 5 body lengths underwater without hyperventilating, return to the surface, then exit the water.
5	Stroke Refinement - Level 5 will help participants refine their performance of all six strokes (freestyle, backstroke, butterfly, breaststroke, elementary backstroke and sidestroke). Instructors will teach the following skills: standing dive, surface dives, flip turns (freestyle and backstroke), treading water, front crawl (freestyle), breaststroke, butterfly, elementary backstroke, back crawl (backstroke), and sidestroke.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking permission • how to call for help & the importance of knowing first aid and CPR • Reach/throw/never go • looking before you jump • think twice before going near cold water/ice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a shallow-angle dive into water at least 9 feet deep, swim front crawl for 50 yards, then swim elementary backstroke 50 yards using appropriate and efficient turning styles throughout. • Swim breaststroke for 25 yards, change direction of travel and then swim back crawl for 25 yards using appropriate and efficient turning styles throughout.
6	Swimming and Skill Proficiency - Fitness Swimmer - Level 6 will refine strokes so participants swim with greater efficiency and effectiveness over greater and longer distances. Instructors will teach the following skills: front crawl (freestyle), elementary backstroke, back crawl (backstroke), breaststroke, sidestroke, butterfly, open turns, flip turns, surface dives retrieving objects, circle swimming, how to read a pace clock, using pull buoys and fins etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking permission • looking before you jump • know about boating before you go floating • think - so you don't sink • swim as a pair near a lifeguard's chair • the dangers of drains • breath control safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swim 500 yards continuously using any 3 strokes, swimming at least 50 yards of each stroke. • Once swimmers complete level 6, they can be evaluated to join our swim team.