American Red Cross

Learn-to-Swim

COURSE FACT SHEET

Course	Purpose	Prerequisites
Learn-to-Swim Level 1: Introduction to Water Skills	• Orient participants to the aquatic environment and help them gain basic aquatic skills. • Help participants begin to develop positive attitudes and safe practices around water	• No skill prerequisites • Participants usually start at about 6 years of age
Learn-to-Swim Level 2: Fundamental Aquatic Skills	• Build on the basic aquatic skills and water safety skills and concepts learned in Level 1	• Successful demonstration of the Learn-to-Swim Level 1 exit skills assessment
Learn-to-Swim Level 3: Stroke Development	• Build on the skills learned in Levels 1 and 2 to help participants achieve basic water competency in a pool environment	• Successful demonstration of the Learn-to-Swim Level 2 exit skills assessment
Learn-to-Swim Level 4: Stroke Improvement	• Improve participants' proficiency in performing the swimming strokes that were introduced in Level 3	• Successful demonstration of the Learn-to-Swim Level 3 exit skills assessment
Learn-to-Swim Level 5: Stroke Refinement	• Help participants refine their performance of all six swimming strokes (i.e., front crawl, back crawl, butterfly, breaststroke, elementary backstroke and sidestroke)	• Successful demonstration of the Learn-to-Swim Level 4 exit skills assessment
Learn-to-Swim Level 6: Swimming and Skill Proficiency—Personal Water Safety	• Refine strokes so participants swim them with greater efficiency and effectiveness over longer distances • Teach participants how to prevent aquatic emergencies in various aquatic environments and to introduce and practice self-rescue techniques	• Successful demonstration of the Learn-to-Swim Level 5 exit skills assessment
Learn-to-Swim Level 6: Swimming and Skill Proficiency—Fundamentals of Diving	• Refine strokes so participants swim them with greater efficiency and effectiveness over longer distances • Teach participants fundamental springboard diving skills	• Successful demonstration of the Learn-to-Swim Level 5 exit skills assessment
Learn-to-Swim Level 6: Swimming and Skill Proficiency—Fitness Swimmer	• Refine strokes so participants swim them with greater efficiency and effectiveness over longer distances	• Successful demonstration of the Learn-to-Swim Level 5 exit skills assessment

Learning Objectives
• See Learn-to-Swim Skills Chart
Length
• No minimum number of hours suggested
Instructor
• Currently authorized Water Safety (r. 14) instructor
Course Completion Requirements
• Demonstrate competency in all required skills and activities, including in-water skills • Successfully complete the level's exit skills assessment (see Learn-to-Swim Skills Chart)
Course Completion Cards Issued and Validity Period
• Learn-to-Swim—No validity period
Participant Materials
• American Red Cross Swim app • *Swim Lessons Achievement Booklet* • *Swimming and Water Safety* (Level 6; recommended) • *Swimming and Diving Skills* DVD (Level 6; recommended)

- Learn-to-Swim Level 1 skills may be performed with assistance.
- If water depth is not at least 9 feet, instructors SHOULD NOT teach headfirst entries from poolside; if water depth is not at least 11½ feet (or deeper if state or local regulations require), instructors SHOULD NOT teach diving from a diving board.

SKILLS CHART

Learn-to-Swim Level 1: Introduction to Aquatic Skills	Learn-to-Swim Level 2: Fundamental Aquatic Skills
Water Adjustment, Entry and Exit	
• Enter water using ramp, steps or side • Exit water using ladder, steps or side	• Enter by stepping or jumping from the side into shoulder-deep water • Exit using ladder, steps or side from chest-deep water
Breath Control and Submerging	
• Blow bubbles, 3 seconds • Bobbing, 5 times • Open eyes underwater and retrieve submerged objects in shallow water, 2 times	• Fully submerge and hold breath, 10 seconds • Bobbing, 10 times • Open eyes underwater and retrieve submerged objects in chest-deep water, 3 times • Rotary breathing, 5 times
Buoyancy	

• Front glide, 2 body lengths
• Recover from a front glide to a vertical position
• Back glide, 2 body lengths
• Back float, 5 seconds
• Recover from a back float or glide to a vertical position
	• Front glide, 2 body lengths
	• Float in a face-down position, 10 seconds
	  ○ Front float
	  ○ Jellyfish float
	  ○ Tuck float
	• Recover from a front float or glide to a vertical position
	• Back glide, 2 body lengths
	• Back float, 15 seconds
	• Recover from a back float or glide to a vertical position

Changing Direction and Position and Treading	
• Roll from front to back • Roll from back to front • Arm and hand treading actions, in chest-deep water	• Roll from front to back • Roll from back to front • Change direction of travel while swimming on front or back • Tread water using arm and leg actions, 15 seconds in shoulder-deep water
Swim on Front	
All—2 body lengths • Alternating leg action • Simultaneous leg action • Alternating arm action • Simultaneous arm action • Combined arm and leg actions on front	• Combined arm and leg actions on front, 5 body lengths

Learn-to-Swim Level 1: Introduction to Aquatic Skills	Learn-to-Swim Level 2: Fundamental Aquatic Skills
Swim on Back	
All—2 body lengths • Alternating leg action • Simultaneous leg action • Alternating arm action • Simultaneous arm action • Combined arm and leg actions on back	• Finning arm action, 5 body lengths • Combined arm and leg actions on back, 5 body lengths
Water Safety	
• Staying safe around water • Recognizing the lifeguards • Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket—demonstrate • Recognizing an emergency • How to call for help—demonstrate • Too Much Sun Is No Fun	• Staying safe around water • Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket—demonstrate • Recognizing an emergency • How to call for help—demonstrate • Too Much Sun Is No Fun • Look Before You Leap • Think So You Don't Sink • Reach or Throw, Don't Go • The danger of drains
Exit Skills Assessment	
1. Enter independently, using either the ramp, steps or side, travel at least 5 yards, bob 5 times, then safely exit the water. (Participants can walk, move along the gutter or "swim.") 2. Glide on front at least 2 body lengths, roll to a back float for 5 seconds, then recover to a vertical position. (This part of the assessment can be performed with assistance.)	1. Step from the 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. 2. Move into a back float for 15 seconds, roll to front, then recover to a vertical position. 3. 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 at least 5 body lengths.

Learn-to-Swim Level 3: Stroke Development	Learn-to-Swim Level 4: Stroke Improvement	Learn-to-Swim Level 5: Stroke Refinement
Water Entry and Exit		
• Enter water by jumping from the side, fully submerge, then recover to the surface and return to the side • Headfirst entry from the side in a sitting and kneeling position	• Headfirst entry from the side in a compact position • Headfirst entry from the side in a stride position	• Shallow-angle dive from the side • Shallow-angle dive, glide 2 to 3 body lengths and begin any front stroke
Breath Control and Submerging		
• Bobbing while moving toward safety, 15 times • Rotary breathing, 15 times	• Swim underwater, 3 to 5 body lengths, without hyperventilating • Feetfirst surface dive	• Tuck surface dive • Pike surface dive
Buoyancy		
• Survival float, 30 seconds • Back float, 1 minute	• Survival swimming, 1 minute	
Changing Direction and Position and Treading		
• Change from vertical to horizontal position on front • Change from vertical to horizontal position on back • While in a vertical position, rotate one full turn • Tread water, 1 minute	• Front crawl open turn • Back crawl open turn • Tread water using 2 different kicks (modified scissors, modified breaststroke or rotary), 2 minutes	• Front flip turn while swimming • Backstroke flip turn while swimming • Tread water, 5 minutes • Tread water, using legs only, 2 minutes
Swim on Front		
• Push off in a streamlined position, then begin flutter kicking, 3 to 5 body lengths • Push off in a streamlined position, then begin dolphin kicking • Front crawl, 15 yards • Breaststroke kick, 15 yards	• Front crawl, 25 yards • Breaststroke, 15 yards • Butterfly, 15 yards	• Front crawl, 50 yards • Breaststroke, 25 yards • Butterfly, 25 yards
Swim on Back		
• Elementary backstroke, 15 yards	• Push off in a streamlined position and begin flutter kicking, 3 to 5 body lengths • Push off in a streamlined position and begin dolphin kicking, 3 to 5 body lengths • Elementary backstroke, 25 yards • Back crawl, 15 yards	• Elementary backstroke, 50 yards • Back crawl, 25 yards • Standard (back) scull, 30 seconds

Learn-to-Swim Level 3: Stroke Development	Learn-to-Swim Level 4: Stroke Improvement	Learn-to-Swim Level 5: Stroke Refinement
Swim on Side		
• Scissors kick, 15 yards	• Sidestroke, 15 yards	• Sidestroke, 25 yards
Water Safety		

• Reach or Throw, Don't Go—demonstrate
• Think Twice Before Going Near Cold Water or Ice
• Look Before You Leap
• Developing breath control safely
• Making good decisions—choosing an exit point
	• Reach or Throw, Don't Go—demonstrate
	  ○ Reaching assist
	  ○ Throwing assist
	• Recreational water illnesses
	• Think So You Don't Sink—demonstrate
	• Look Before You Leap
		• How to call for help and the importance of knowing first aid and CPR
		• Recreational water illnesses
		• Reach or Throw, Don't Go—demonstrate
		• Look Before You Leap—demonstrate
		• Think So You Don't Sink
		• Think Twice Before Going Near Cold Water or Ice
		• Wave, Tide or Ride, Follow the Guide

Exit Skills Assessment		
1. 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. 2. 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.	1. Perform a feetfirst entry into deep water, swim front crawl for 25 yards, change direction and position as necessary and swim elementary backstroke for 25 yards. 2. Swim breaststroke for 15 yards, change direction and position as necessary and swim back crawl for 15 yards. 3. Submerge and swim a distance of 3 to 5 body lengths underwater without hyperventilating, return to the surface, then exit the water.	1. Perform a shallow-angle dive into deep water at least 9 feet deep, swim front crawl for 50 yards, then swim elementary backstroke for 50 yards using appropriate and efficient turning styles throughout. 2. Swim breaststroke for 25 yards, change direction of travel as necessary and then swim back crawl for 25 yards using appropriate and efficient turning styles throughout.

Learn-to-Swim Level 6: Skill Proficiency—Personal Water Safety	Learn-to-Swim Level 6: Skill Proficiency—Fundamentals of Diving	Learn-to-Swim Level 6: Skill Proficiency—Fitness Swimmer
Swim on Front, Back and Side		
• Front crawl, 100 yards • Elementary backstroke, 100 yards • Back crawl, 50 yards • Breaststroke, 50 yards • Sidestroke, 50 yards • Butterfly, 50 yards	• Front crawl, 100 yards • Elementary backstroke, 100 yards • Back crawl, 50 yards • Breaststroke, 50 yards • Sidestroke, 50 yards • Butterfly, 50 yards	• Front crawl, 100 yards • Elementary backstroke, 100 yards • Back crawl, 50 yards • Breaststroke, 50 yards • Sidestroke, 50 yards • Butterfly, 50 yards
Turns		
• Front crawl open turn • Back crawl open turn • Front flip turn • Backstroke flip turn • Sidestroke open turn • Butterfly turn • Breaststroke turn	• Front crawl open turn • Back crawl open turn • Front flip turn • Backstroke flip turn • Sidestroke open turn • Butterfly turn • Breaststroke turn	• Front crawl open turn • Back crawl open turn • Front flip turn • Backstroke flip turn • Sidestroke open turn • Butterfly turn • Breaststroke turn
Specialty Knowledge and Skills		

• HELP position, 2 minutes
• Huddle position, 2 minutes
• Feetfirst surface dive
• Tuck surface dive
• Pike surface dive
• Back float, 5 minutes
• Survival float, 5 minutes
• Survival swimming, 10 minutes
• Tread water, using legs only, 2 minutes
• Surface dive and retrieve an object from the bottom
	• Basic stretching exercises
	• Body alignment and control
	• Surface dive and retrieve an object from the bottom
	• Diving from poolside
	  ○ Kneeling position
	  ○ Forward dive fall-in
	  ○ Standing dive
	• Diving from the diving board
	  ○ Kneeling position
	  ○ Forward dive fall-in
	  ○ Standing dive
	• Takeoff from the deck
	  ○ One- and two-part takeoff
	• Takeoff from poolside
	  ○ One-part takeoff
	• Takeoff from the Diving Board
	  ○ One- and two-part takeoff
	• Forward jump, tuck position
	  ○ Tuck position
	  ○ With one-part takeoff from poolside
	  ○ With one- and two-part takeoff from the diving board
		• Surface dive and retrieve an object from the bottom
		• Circle swimming
		• Using a pace clock
		• Swimming using equipment, 25 yards
		  ○ Pull buoys
		  ○ Fins
		  ○ Paddles
		• Describe how to set up an exercise program
		• Demonstrate various training techniques
		• Calculate target heart rate
		• Demonstrate aquatic exercise

Learn-to-Swim Level 6: Skill Proficiency—Personal Water Safety	Learn-to-Swim Level 6: Skill Proficiency—Fundamentals of Diving	Learn-to-Swim Level 6: Skill Proficiency—Fitness Swimmer
Specialty Knowledge and Skills		

	• Forward dive, tuck position
	  ○ With one-part takeoff from poolside
	  ○ With one- and two-part takeoff from the diving board
	• Forward jump, pike position
	  ○ Pike position
	  ○ With one- and two-part takeoff from the diving board
	• Forward dive, pike position
	  ○ With one- and two-part takeoff from the diving board	

Water Safety		
• Think So You Don't Sink • Swim as a Pair Near a Lifeguard's Chair • Know About Boating Before You Go Floating • Look Before You Leap • The danger of drains • The dangers of hyperventilation and extended breath-holding	• Look Before You Leap • The danger of drains • 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 hyperventilation and extended breath-holding	• Look Before You Leap • Know About Boating Before You Go Floating • Think So You Don't Sink • Swim as a Pair Near a Lifeguard's Chair • The danger of drains • The dangers of hyperventilation and extended breath-holding
Exit Skills Assessment		
1. Swim 500 yards continuously using any 3 strokes, swimming at least 50 yards of each stroke. 2. Jump into deep water, perform a survival float for 5 minutes, roll onto back and perform a back float for 5 minutes. 3. Perform a feetfirst surface dive, retrieve an object from the bottom of the pool at a depth of 7 to 10 feet, return to surface and return to starting point.	1. Swim 500 yards continuously using any 3 strokes, swimming at least 50 yards of each stroke. 2. Perform a two-part takeoff with a feetfirst entry from a 1-meter diving board. 3. Perform a two-part takeoff with a headfirst entry from a 1-meter diving board.	1. Swim 500 yards continuously using any 3 strokes, swimming at least 50 yards of each stroke. 2. Perform the Cooper 12-minute swim test and compare results with the pre-assessment results.