



Freestyle Swimming Drills

Drills: Most drills are to be used to tailor to the individual swimmer. Give each swimmer a drill which can help them improve their own stroke. For beginner swimmers you can have them use fins on many drills.

EXTENSION-DRILLS

STICK DRILL: Hand entry drill; emphasizes reaching and alleviates crossing over at the top of the stroke. Bring a short wooden/PVC piping approximately 30cm long to the pool. Place the stick in the right hand vertically and kick on your side; making yourself as tall as possible in the water. Kick on your side for 6 kicks. With an **accelerated stroke** grab the stick and push the stick forward as you switch the stick from the right hand to the left hand. Again kick for 6 beats on the opposite side. Repeat. Common mistakes: stopping at the top of the stroke to switch hands with the stick. This must be done as fast as possible to eliminate a pause or “catch up” in the stroke.

6 BEAT KICK SWITCH: Same as the stick drill except there is no stick in your hands.
<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5533/freestyle---6-kick-switch.html>

LONG DOGGIE PADDLE: Use a pull buoy or fins for this drill if you have a weak body position. Keep head out of the water and focused on one spot. As you start each pull emphasize “stretching, rolling and finishing each stroke.” Position your “paddle” in order to maximize your force of your pull with deep hand and forearm accelerations under the water. Recover under the water and repeat several meters.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hocP5YYZx2o>

SNORKEL FREE: Purchase a snorkel and swim freestyle. Many swimmers can not concentrate on a certain part of the free stroke because they are too busy concentrating on getting air. This drill allows you to breathe the whole time while you can fully bring your attention to your problem of your stroke. Before you push off the wall, save as much air as possible and slowly exhale while you are swimming full stroke free on top of the water. Pick a part your stroke you needs to concentrate on. For example: Rotation. Incorporate the snorkel drill into weekly or daily sets. You will see a difference.

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/3136/freestyle---finis-center-mount-snorkel.html>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3-9Le8N7Fg>

BALANCE-DRILLS

SHARK DRILL:

Kick on side on side. Have the bottom arm extended similar to sidekick. Your upper arm moves into a shark fin position and back down. This drill works on your proper body position while engaging your core.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwQ3l5YloQ>

SAILBOAT DRILL:

This drill is similar to the shark drill with the difference that the upper arm will be fully extended and stands in the air like a sailboat mast.

KICK BOARD DRILL: Place a kick board in between your thighs (the majority of the board should stick up out of the water) and with every freestyle stroke (after the finish of the stroke), touch or tap the board. This lengthens your stroke and forces you to extend your stroke all the way through to the finish of the stroke.

BALANCED BREATHING:

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/2910/freestyle---balanced-breath.html>

RECOVERY-DRILLS

ZIPPER CATCH-UP DRILL: High elbow drill with proper body rotation: Take your thumb and pretend your thumb is a zipper. Zip all the way from your thigh up your body to your arm pit. Place your other arm down at your side. Switch arms. A variation to this drill is 3 strokes with your right arm and then 3 with your left arm. Always keep your opposite arm at your side.

Catch-up:

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5834/freestyle---catch-up-catch.html>

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5943/freestyle---mega-catch-up-drill.html>

FINGER TIP DRAG:

The fingertip drag teaches your arm to recover with a high elbow without “wind milling” your arms. This drill also incorporates elements like rolling. Throughout the recovery phase drag your fingertips along the surface close by your body and extend your arm as much as possible.

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5058/freestyle---fingertip-drag.html>

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5647/freestyle---wrist-drag.html>

CATCH-DRILLS

UNDERWATER FREESTYLE:

Pushing off under the water, swim freestyle under-the-water with long strokes. Have swimmers recover under the water like in doogie paddle. Swim as many long strokes as possible and then come up to breath. Dolphin dive back down and continue to the end of the length. This drill works on the power strokes, high elbows, extension and a strong catch.

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5676/freestyle---underwater-freestyle.html>

FISTS WITH BALLS: Suggested balls: 2 tennis balls or 2 racquetballs. Place one ball in each hand. Swim freestyle and emphasize trying to feel the water with your full arm rather than relying on only your palm of your hands. This drill is great for beginners and experienced athletes.

SNORKEL FIST FREE WITH BALL: Using a front snorkel and one ball in each hand. Swim fist freestyle. Emphasize the “feel” of the water.

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/6009/freestyle---ball-catch.html>

EARLY CATCH-DRILLS

SKULLING DRILLS

Doggie Paddle:

This drill is for strengthening your arms and works on extending, reaching forward and developing a feel for the water.

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/3107/freestyle---doggie-dig-with-two-beat-kick.html>

SINGLE ARM FREE:

These drills will help you to focus on maintaining balancing and working on rotation and an early catch.

Start swimming with one arm out front and extend as much as possible and swim with the other arm only through the stroke phases. You can practice breathing to either side (stroke arm or extended arm). Your focus should be on a controlled rotation leading from your core and hips and an early catch and high elbow under the surface.

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/6082/freestyle---single-arm-trailing.html>

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5847/freestyle---single-arm-breath.html>

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/2528/freestyle---single-arm-freestyle.html>

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/4056/freestyle---313r-single-arm.html>

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5632/freestyle---single-arm-variations.html>

CATCH BEFORE SHOULDER:

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5818/freestyle---shoulder-catch.html>

HIGH ELBOW CATCH:

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5906/freestyle---high-elbow-catch.html>

5-COUNT SWITCH:

This is a single arm variation. Switch after 5-strokes your leading and stroke arm.

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5281/freestyle---5-count-switch.html>

PULL-DRILLS

PULL BUOY:

This drill shows you how to use a pull buoy properly.

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/3006/freestyle---how-to-use-a-pull-buoy.html>

BAND PULL FREE: Place your rubber band at ankle level so you cannot kick. Swim freestyle, engage your core and maintain a proper high hip body position in the water.

POWER/SPEED-DRILLS

RUNNING SHOES: This is a swim specific strengthening drill for your legs. It helps you feel the water with your feet. Place an old pair of running shoes on each foot and start kicking. You can use a board or no board. You can kick on your side or on your back in streamline position.

TARZAN DRILL or HEAD-UP FREESTYLE: This drill forces you to kick fast and feel the “catch” of your hands. This drill is great to use towards the end of a long set or at the end of practice to incorporate speed work into the workout. Push off the wall and swim freestyle like you normally would except raise your head out of the water so your chin rests on the waters edge. Keep your head steady and do not look side to side. Increase your stroke turnover. You may need to have a wider water entry with your hands. Focus on fast feet, high arm turnover while keeping your head still. Swim 10 strokes Tarzan, 10 easy long free. This is an intense drill.

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/3802/freestyle---head-up-swimming.html>

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/2891/freestyle---head-up-quick-catch.html>

KICK-DRILLS

BAND KICK FREE: This drill is used for swimmers who kick out of their knees or scissor kick with one or both legs and cannot keep their legs in a proper flutter kick using their hips. Place a rubber band around the middle of your lower leg (middle of the calf

muscle). Swim freestyle and promote kicking while you have the band in place. Switch between a few length with and without the band.

Kick with Band:

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/2218/freestyle---band-kick.html>

KICK WITH TEMPO TRAINER:

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5439/freeback---tempo-trainer-flutter-kick.html>

OPEN WATER-DRILLS

OPEN WATER BREATHING:

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5326/freestyle---open-water-breathing.html>

OPEN WATER TIPS:

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5753/welcome-to-the-open-water---part-1.html>

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5757/welcome-to-the-open-water---part-2.html>

<http://www.goswim.tv/entries/5762/welcome-to-the-open-water---part-3.html>