

PAWS FOR WATER

ELECTIVE ADVENTURE



SNAPSHOT OF ADVENTURE



Swimming is a great way to stay healthy. In this Adventure, you will have a chance to get wet while you learn the rules to swimming safely.

To earn this Adventure, you may enroll in and complete a swimming instruction program offered by an accredited instructor OR pass the BSA swimmer test OR complete the requirements below.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Learn about the swimming safety rules that you need to follow.
2. Demonstrate how to enter the swimming area properly.
3. Using the buddy system and staying within your ability group, go swimming with your den or family for 30 minutes.
4. Attempt at least one swimming stroke: front crawl, restful backstroke, or breaststroke.
5. Jump feet first into water that is chest high or deeper.
6. Demonstrate how to exit the swimming area properly.



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REQUIREMENT 1

Learn about the swimming safety rules that you need to follow.

When going on a Scouting adventure, always stay with your buddy, even when in the water. You and your buddy will swim together and will be there for each other in case something happens. Remember that the buddy system makes swimming safer.

When you swim with your den, pack, or any Cub Scout event, there will be a buddy check. When you hear "buddy check," stop where you are, join and raise hands with your buddy, and wait quietly. Leaders will count pairs to make sure everyone is safe and with their buddy.



Date

Adult's Signature

REQUIREMENT 2

Demonstrate how to enter the swimming area properly.

Before you enter a swimming area, you need to have a buddy. It is best that your buddy is in the same ability group as you are, but if they are not, both of you must stay in the lower swimming ability group area.



Buddy boards are the way to keep track of everyone in the swimming area. Buddy boards are located at the entrance area of the swimming area. Each swimmer is given a buddy tag with their name and swimming ability. The board is separated by swimming ability and has a place for everyone to hang their buddy tag. By looking at the buddy board, adult leaders and lifeguards will know who is in the swimming area. Place your buddy tag on the buddy board next to your buddy's tag in the right swimming ability group.



Confirm with the adult leader or lifeguard that it is OK to enter the swimming area.

Wait for the adult leader or lifeguard to give you permission for you and your buddy to enter the water.

If there are stairs that lead into the swimming area, use the stairs. If you have passed the BSA swimmer test and are a swimmer, you may choose to jump in if that is allowed. Check the area, do not run, and jump in feet first.



Date

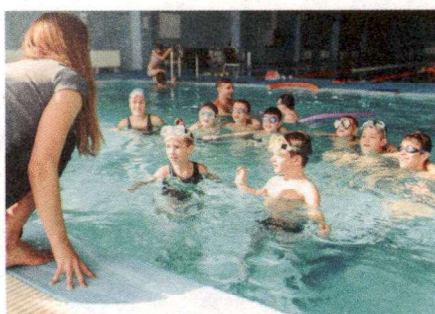
Adult's Signature

REQUIREMENT 3

Using the buddy system and staying within your ability group, go swimming with your den or family for at least 30 minutes.

Before you go swimming with your den or pack, there must be an adult who is 21 years of age or older, is a registered leader with the BSA, and has completed the Safe Swim Defense training.

That adult leader has agreed to serve as the qualified supervision for the swimming activity. There also must be qualified lifeguards and lookouts. The trained adult leader for the swimming activity will make sure that the Safe Swim Defense is followed.



SAFE SWIM DEFENSE

1. Qualified Supervision

All swimming activity must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult age 21 or older who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of those in their care, and who is trained in and committed to compliance with the eight points of BSA Safe Swim Defense. It is strongly recommended that all units have at least one adult or older youth member currently trained in BSA Aquatics Supervision: Swimming and Water Rescue or BSA Lifeguard to assist in planning and conducting all swimming activities.

2. Personal Health Review

A complete health history is required of all participants as evidence of fitness for swimming activities. Forms for minors must be signed by a parent or legal guardian. Participants should be asked to relate any recent incidents of illness or injury just prior to the activity. Supervision and protection should be adjusted to anticipate any potential risks associated with individual health conditions. For significant health conditions, the adult supervisor should require an examination by a physician and consult with the parent, legal guardian, or caregiver for appropriate precautions.

3. Safe Area

All swimming areas must be carefully inspected and prepared for safety prior to each activity. Water depth, quality, temperature, movement, and clarity are important considerations. Hazards must be eliminated or isolated by conspicuous markings and discussed with participants.

Controlled Access: There must be safe areas for all participating ability groups to enter and leave the water. Swimming areas of appropriate depth must be defined for each ability group. The entire area must be within easy reach of designated rescue personnel. The area must be clear of boat traffic, surfing, or other non swimming activities.

Bottom Conditions and Depth: The bottom must be clear of trees and debris. Abrupt changes in depth are not allowed in the nonswimmer area. Isolated underwater hazards should be marked with floats. Rescue personnel must be able to easily reach the bottom. Maximum recommended water depth in clear water is 12 feet. Maximum water depth in turbid water is 8 feet.

Visibility: Underwater swimming and diving are prohibited in turbid water. Turbid water exists when a swimmer treading water cannot see their feet. Swimming at night is allowed only in areas with water clarity and lighting sufficient for good visibility both above and below the surface.

Diving and Elevated Entry: Diving is permitted only into clear, unobstructed water from heights no greater than 40 inches. Water depth must be at least 7 feet. Bottom depth contours below diving boards and elevated surfaces require greater water depths and must conform to state regulations. Persons should not jump into water from heights greater than they are tall, and should jump only into water chest deep or greater with minimal risk from contact with the bottom. No elevated entry is permitted where the person must clear any obstacle, including land.

Water Temperature: Comfortable water temperature for swimming is near 80 degrees. Activity in water at 70 degrees or less should be of limited duration and closely monitored for negative effects of chilling.

Water Quality: Bodies of stagnant, foul water, areas with significant algae or foam, or areas polluted by livestock or waterfowl should be avoided. Comply with any signs posted by local health authorities. Swimming is not allowed in swimming pools with green, murky, or cloudy water.

Moving Water: Participants should be able to easily regain and maintain their footing in currents or waves. Areas with large waves, swiftly flowing currents, or moderate currents that flow toward the open sea or into areas of danger should be avoided.

Weather: Participants should be moved from the water to a position of safety whenever lightning or thunder threatens. Wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash or thunder before leaving shelter. Take precautions to prevent sunburn, dehydration, and hypothermia.

Life Jacket Use: Swimming in clear water over 12 feet deep, in turbid water over 8 feet deep, or in flowing water may be allowed if all participants wear properly fitted, Coast Guard–approved life jackets and the supervisor determines that swimming with life jackets is safe under the circumstances.

4. Response Personnel (Lifeguards)

Every swimming activity must be closely and continuously monitored by a trained rescue team on the alert for and ready to respond during emergencies. Professionally trained lifeguards satisfy this need when provided by a regulated facility or tour operator. When lifeguards are not provided by others, the adult supervisor must assign at least two rescue personnel, with additional numbers to maintain a ratio of one rescuer to every five Cub Scouts. The supervisor must provide instruction and rescue equipment and assign areas of responsibility as outlined in **Aquatics Supervision**. The qualified supervisor, the designated response personnel, and the lookout work together as a safety team. An emergency action plan should be formulated and shared with participants as appropriate.

5. Lookout

The lookout continuously monitors the conduct of the swim, identifies any departures from Safe Swim Defense guidelines, alerts rescue personnel as needed, and monitors the weather and environment. The lookout should have a clear view of the entire area but be close enough for easy verbal communication. The lookout must have a sound

understanding of Safe Swim Defense but is not required to perform rescues. The adult supervisor may serve simultaneously as the lookout but must assign the task to someone else if engaged in activities that preclude focused observation.

6. Ability Groups

All youth and adult participants are designated as swimmers, beginners, or nonswimmers based on swimming ability confirmed by standardized BSA swim classification tests. Each group is assigned a specific swimming area with depths consistent with those abilities. The classification tests must be renewed annually, preferably at the beginning of the season, even if the youth has earned the Swimming merit badge.

Swimmers pass this test: Jump feet first into water over the head in depth. Level off and swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be completed in one swim without stops and must include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating.

Beginners pass this test: Jump feet first into water over the head in depth, level off, and swim 25 feet on the surface. Stop, turn sharply, resume swimming, and return to the starting place.

Anyone who has not completed either the beginner or swimmer tests is classified as a **nonswimmer**.

The nonswimmer area should be no more than waist to chest deep and should be enclosed by physical boundaries such as the shore, a pier, or lines. The enclosed beginner area should contain water of standing depth and may

extend to depths just over the head. The swimmer area may be up to 12 feet in depth in clear water and should be defined by floats or other markers.

7. Buddy System

Every participant is paired with another. Buddies stay together, monitor each other, and alert the safety team if either needs assistance or is missing.

Buddies check into and out of the area together. Buddies are normally in the same ability group and remain in their assigned area. If they are not of the same ability group, then they swim in the area assigned to the buddy with the lesser ability.

A buddy check reminds participants of their obligation to monitor their buddies and indicates how closely the buddies are keeping track of each other. Roughly every 10 minutes, or as needed to keep the buddies together, the lookout, or other person designated by the supervisor, gives an audible signal, such as a single whistle blast, and a call for "Buddies." Buddies are expected to raise each other's hand before completion of a slow, audible count to 10. Buddies who take longer to find each other should be reminded of their responsibility for the other's safety.

Once everyone has a buddy, a count is made by area and compared with the total number known to be in the water. After the count is confirmed, a signal is given to resume swimming.

8. Discipline

Rules are effective only when followed. All participants should know, understand, and respect the rules and procedures for safe swimming provided by Safe Swim Defense guidelines. Applicable rules should be discussed prior to the outing and reviewed for all participants at the water's edge just before the swimming activity begins.

People are more likely to follow directions when they know the reasons for rules and procedures. Consistent, impartially applied rules supported by skill and good judgment provide steppingstones to a safe, enjoyable outing.

During your time swimming, you may want to try to complete the other requirements for this Adventure.



Date

Adult's Signature

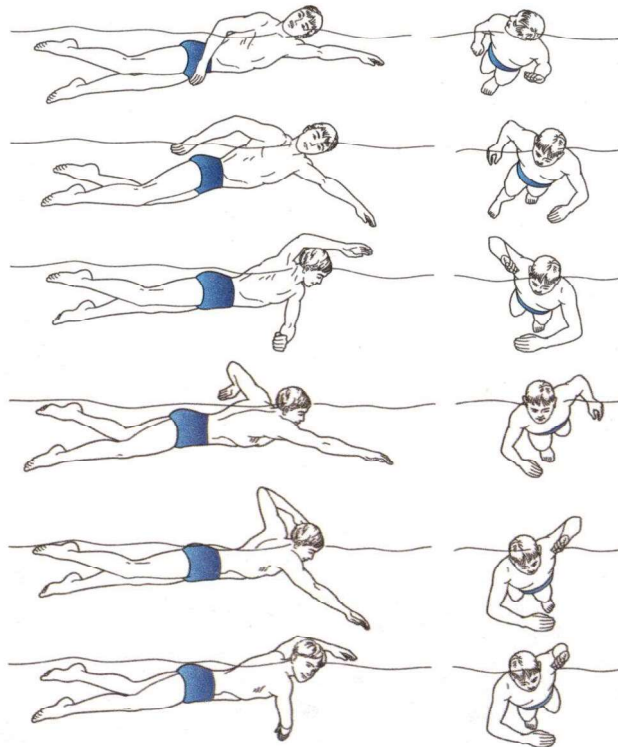
REQUIREMENT 4

Attempt at least one swimming stroke:
front crawl, restful backstroke, or breaststroke.

Once you are in the water, do your best to swim at least 25 feet. Swimming is a lot like other sports: When you practice it, you get better and faster.

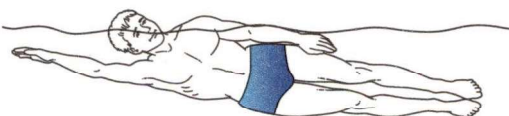
Front Crawl

One stroke you can use is the front crawl. To do the front crawl, lie on your stomach in the water, kick your feet behind you, and paddle forward with your arms. If you are unsure how to do a front crawl, ask an adult for help.



Sidestroke

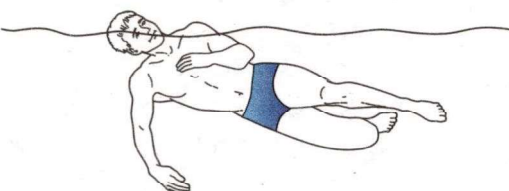
Lie on your side with one ear in the water. Stretch your bottom arm out ahead of you.



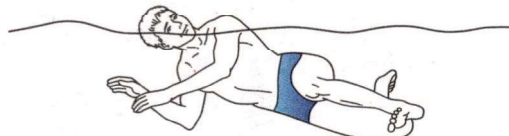
Your top arm is at your side, along your leg. Start with your feet together, and then bend your knees,



pulling your heels toward your hips. Cup your reaching hand a little. Sweep it down in front of your chest.



Move your feet apart by moving your top leg forward and your bottom leg backward.



Notice the hand and arm movement. As your lower hand sweeps water toward your feet, your upper hand moves toward your chest. They nearly meet.



When your legs are as far

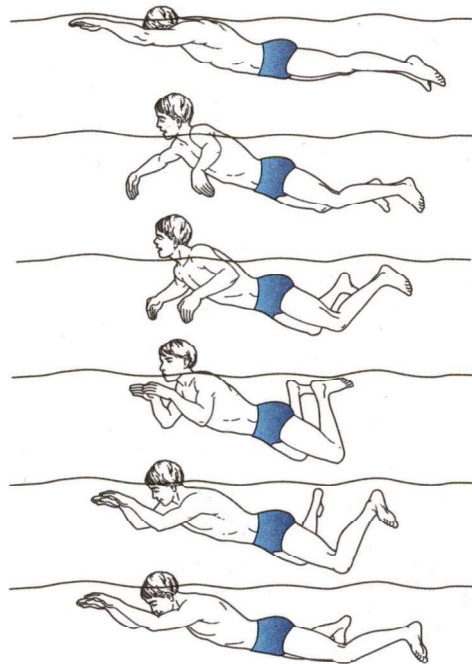


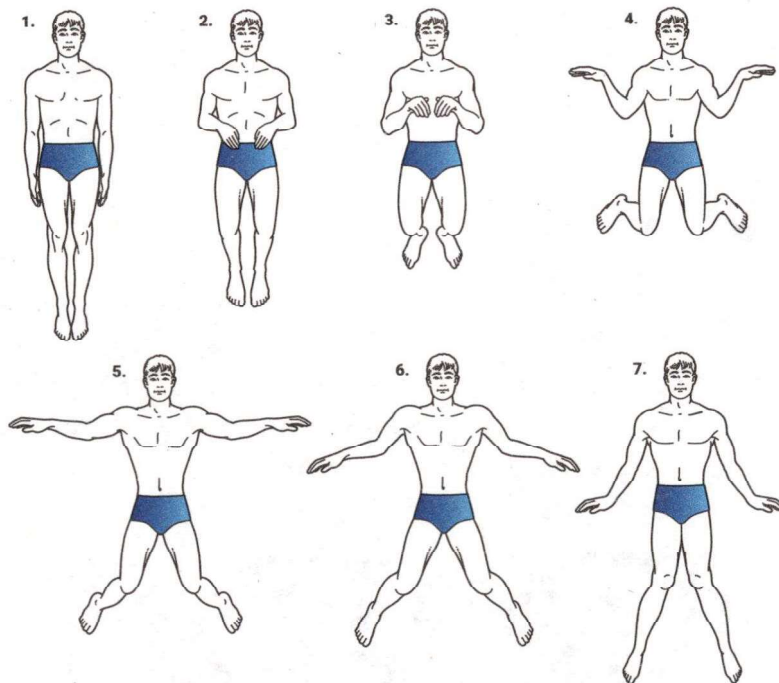
apart as possible, snap them together quickly the way you close a pair of scissors. Your upper hand sweeps water toward your feet. Your lower hand reaches out ahead of you, returning to its starting position. Stop your feet as they come together. Repeat the arm and leg movements.

Breaststroke

Float face down in the water with your arms and legs stretched out. Spread your arms out so they are diagonal from your body. Your elbows should be straight, and your palms should be facing slightly out. Pull your elbows toward your sides and then bring your hands together in front of your chest as if you're trying to scoop the water toward you. Quickly push your hands back to where they started. (Your hands should trace the shape of an upside-down heart.)

As you start the arm stroke, bend your knees so your heels are close to your hips and your ankles are spread out. Make a quick circular motion outward and backward until your legs are fully extended. Just before you push your hands forward and your legs backward, lift your head and upper chest out of the water and take a breath. Glide for a second or two, then repeat the arm and leg movements.





Elementary Backstroke

Start by floating on your back, arms at your sides. Bring your cupped hands up over your chest to your shoulders. At the same time, drop your heels downward. They should be beneath your knees.

Turn your toes outward and swing your feet outward in a circular motion without stopping. At the same time, reach your arms straight out. Then sweep them down to your sides as your legs come together in a straight-out position, with your toes pointed. The arm pull and leg kick happen at the same time. You should end up the same way you were at the start, and then glide.



Date _____

Adult's Signature _____

REQUIREMENT 5

Jump feet first into water that is chest high or deeper.

Now it's time to practice your skills at the pool. First, practice blowing bubbles out of your nose in the water. This skill will keep the water from going up your nose when you jump in. Next, learn how to safely jump feet first into water. The best way to jump is with your arms forward and legs slightly apart, one in front of the other. Lifeguards, scuba divers, and Scouts like you enter the water this way to avoid dangers beneath the water.



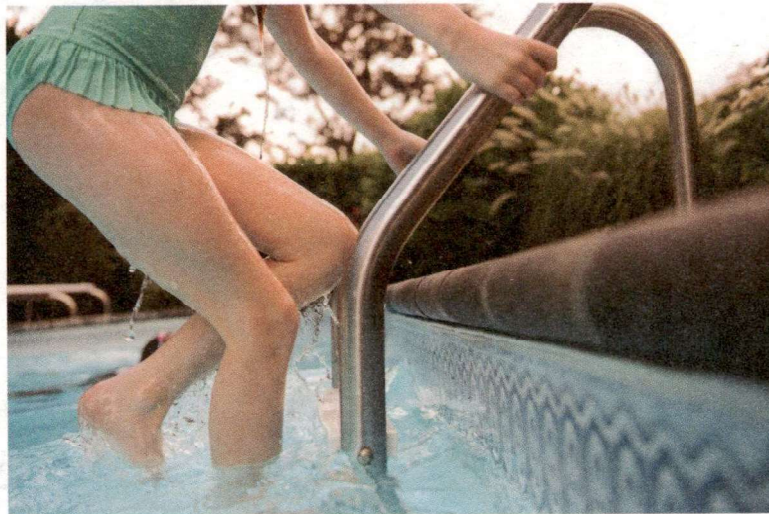
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REQUIREMENT 6

Demonstrate how to exit the swimming area properly.

When you are done swimming, you and your buddy exit the water together. If there are stairs or a ladder, use them.



Grab your towel and other items you may have brought with you into the swimming area.

Put your shoes on.

When you exit the swimming area with your buddy, go to the buddy board together and retrieve your buddy tag from the person managing the buddy board. Give your buddy tags to the designated adult leader.



Date

Adult's Signature