



Popular Swim Drills

K.O.S. or KICK ON SIDE

Purpose: To learn how to balance on side in the water; to learn streamline positioning on side; to learn proper head and body position when breathing.

Description: One arm up and one arm relaxed at side of body; body is on side, at 90 degree angle to bottom of pool; bottom arm....arm in the water, is extended straight toward the opposite end of the pool; face is turned up and parallel to surface of water, so that the back of the head appears to be laying on the extended arm. Head can be swiveled down to look at bottom of pool when not breathing, with extended arm and ear together. Extended arm should be completely relaxed and "weight" of the body should be centered between armpit and ribs on side that is in the water.

KICK-PULL-ROLL or Six Kick Switch

Purpose: To learn rotation, how to balance in water with arms extended and proper head and body position for breathing. This is a more advanced version of K.O.S. that incorporates rotation into the drill.

Description: Start out in K.O.S. position and when ready, rotate face into water, pull extended arm down and bring arm that was resting at side up and over the water as you extend that arm and rotate to the opposite side; pause as you balance and kick on opposite side and repeat down the pool. Once you get the proper technique, switch sides every 6 kicks (hence 6 kick switch)

WALL PUSH-OFFS

Purpose: To learn proper balance and streamlined body position; to make swimmer aware of required pressure thru chest area and sternum to hold body in parallel position to surface of water.

Description: Drop under the water very close to wall and push off about a foot under the water; keep arms locked overhead in streamlined position, squeezing head just behind ears, and while keeping straight spine, push down thru chest and sternum enough to have bottom and hips surface at the same time as the head. Practice until swimmer can repeatedly rise to the surface of water, completely parallel to surface.

ZIPPER/FINGERTIP DRAG DRILL

Purpose: To work on recovery arm position and hand entry; to correct windmill and water slapping hand entries; to keep recovery arm compact and close to surface of water.

Description: During arm recovery part of stroke, either take thumb and "zip" up the side of body until armpit, or drag tips of fingers thru surface of water close to side of body, to armpit, and then slide hand into water and forward to opposite wall. Elbow should be very high and hand very close to side of body.

ONE ARM DRILL

Purpose: To work on balance, rotation and dynamics of underwater arm position and pull; to have the ability to focus on one arm at a time and work on arm imbalances and awareness levels.

Description: With one arm extended, use only the other arm to stroke down the pool. Be aware of balance, breathing, body position and swimmer watches the arm as it moves beneath the body. Keep rotation.

Advanced form of this drill keeps one arm at side and more focus is placed on rotation occurring equally on both sides as swimmer moves down pool; breathing for advanced drill is on OPPOSITE side from arm that is stroking.

FIST

Purpose: To work on the power of the forearm in the stroke and develop the “catch” at the beginning of the stroke. This catch begins at the beginning of stroke, right at entry, which is necessary for the momentum for the back half of the stroke.

Description: Hold hand in tight fist throughout entire drill. Never open hand. Feel the forearm, therefore, having to engage in the stroke in order to pull through the water.

SHARK

Purpose: To work on the full arm pull, extending the arm completely to push through the last half of the stroke. Hitting the board with each stroke requires the swimmer to truly feel how much extension they need to have and can have with each arm pull.

Description: Hold kickboard between legs at upper thigh. Don't kick, relax legs and keep board between thighs. Hit board with each hand at the end of each stroke.

EMPTY THE POOL

Purpose: To work on the power of the rear extension of the stroke/arm pull. After the momentum is generated from the catch and beginning of stroke, the latter half of the stroke is the most crucial part of propelling through the water.

Description: Maintain first half of stroke as usual. Then, try to “scoop out” behind you as much water as you can from the pool. Create a splash behind you. How much water can you scoop out at the end of each arm pull?

CATCH UP

Purpose: To determine where in the stroke there are weak spots. This drill is absolutely perfect to determine strength of the whole stroke. The idea is that each arm stroke, individually, should be able to generate enough momentum with the complete stroke to propel your body forward, without slowing down, until the next arm stroke begins. Any jerking motion, sinking, or slowing down will determine an inefficiency or weakness therein.

Description: One hand is always extended above head, and waits until the other hand has completed the stroke revolution and joins that hand before the next hand begins stroke. Be sure to “tap” hand, or exchange small stick (example), to ensure you're not taking the next stroke too soon. There should be a definite ‘glide’ in the scenario, moments when neither arm is pulling through the water. Here's the critical part: NO KICKING during drill. Keep legs still. Purpose here is to generate the momentum using just your upper body and efficiency in pulling.