

This list of rules is not exhaustive but are the most common things that the judges will look for.

The swimmers are taught starts, strokes and turns with the rules of the ASA as a normal part of their lessons. However, as we are a teaching club, not a competitive club, we ask the ASA judges who help us out at the gala to be a little lenient with our swimmers, particularly the younger ones!

Having said that we do expect some basic rules to be obeyed, because these are points that are reinforced week on week. The judges may disqualify swimmers if the rules are broken. Here is an outline of the things that the judges look for:

Breaststroke

- v Breaststroke start and turn (in event of 50m or more) only one complete stroke may be swum before the head breaks the surface
- v Two hand touch at both ends if it is a 50m race
- v Correct touch is with two hands at, on or below the water surface
- v Swimmers must not roll over onto the back at any time
- v Breaststroke no simultaneous (flutter) kick is allowed
- v Arm and leg movement shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movement
- v Screw kicks (where the legs do not follow the same path on the same horizontal plane) are technically not allowed
- v The feet must be turned outwards during the propulsive part of the kick. A scissors, flutter or downward dolphin kick is not permitted

Backstroke

- v Swimmers must not turn onto their front at any time if swimming a 25m backstroke race
- v Back tumble turns are acceptable in a backstroke event of 50m or more, but the swimmer must turn onto the front and use only one arm stroke to pull into the turn and come off the wall on their back or side
- v Correct touch at the end of the length (if not using a tumble at the half way) is to remain on their back, up to an angle of 90 degrees at all times, including the finish
- v Some part of the swimmer must break the surface at all times, except when turning, and for 15 metres after the start and each turn
- v Swimmers may be under the water for a maximum of 15m at the start and turn of a backstroke race

Butterfly

- v Two hand touch at both ends if it is a 50m race
- v Correct touch is with two hands at, on or below the water surface
- v A breaststroke leg kick is not allowed
- v Swimmers must not roll onto their back at any time
- v Arms must be brought forward together over the water and brought backward together
- v Up and down movement of the legs and feet must be together

Front crawl

- v No other rule than that the swimmer must not put their foot/feet on the floor at any time during the race

Freestyle

- v These races may be swum in the stroke of the swimmers choice (normally their fastest)
- v Some part of the swimmer must touch the wall at each turn and at the finish
- v Some part of the swimmer must break the surface at all times, except for when turning, and for 15 metres after the start and each turn
- v Whichever stroke they choose, they must adhere to the rules of that stroke

Starts

- v Starting positions may be from the side, the block or in the water
- v Competitors in backstroke events must always start in the water facing the block
- v Notification of the start of the race is by 3 short blasts on a whistle, followed by a longer blast, when the swimmers should get into their starting position (in the water, on the block or on poolside)
- v The starter will then call 'Take your marks'
- v The starter will not continue to the 'Go' command unless all swimmers are still
- v The 'Go' signal is a single sharp blast on the whistle
- v Once in the 'Take your marks' position, if a swimmer knows that he or she is not ready, the swimmer should raise an arm and the starter will command all the swimmers to stand up. The notification process will begin again
- v If a swimmer moves while being on the block, he will be instantly disqualified. **There is only one start.** If the swimmer moved while on the block, he will be notified at the end of the race about his/her disqualification.

Finishes

- v All touches at the end of an event must be correct for that stroke
- v Swimmers must not leave the water until all other swimmers in their event have finished and the Referee tells them to come out
- v If the judges decide to disqualify a swimmer, that swimmer will be told that they have been disqualified straight after the race. ASA rules state that Judges do not have to give a reason for disqualification

Relays

- v The whole relay team will be disqualified if a swimmer takes a 'flyer', leaving the block before the incoming swimmer has touched or if other event rules have been broken
- v Swimmers entering the water at a handover from the previous swimmer must still have contact with the block when the incoming swimmer touches the wall
- v Each lane may only have 2 swimmers at any time in the water. More than this will render the team liable to disqualification
- v Swimmers must leave the water after their relay leg without causing any disruption to teams in other lanes

Medley Turns

- v Individual Medleys are swum as butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle
- v Turning from butterfly to back - two hand touch coming into the wall, pushing off the wall on the back or side into backstroke
- v Backstroke to breaststroke : one hand touch, swimmer must remain on their back into the wall and must be on their front coming off the wall. A back tumble into breaststroke on a medley race is not allowed
- v Breaststroke to freestyle : two hand touch at the end of the breaststroke length, pushing off the wall on side or front
- v Freestyle : one hand touch