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Swimming Level

Each swimmer is assessed by one of the HHAC coaches and then placed into a suitable swimming category. HHAC offers swimming programs largely based on swimming ability and endurance. The swim season runs from September to April for Category 1, 2 and Category 3, 4, and 5 will finish their season in late June. HHAC may offer a second session if there is enough interest for swimmers who wish to continue practicing until Provincials and Provincials Open Water, typically held in July.

Category 1, Pre-Competitive


Category 1 program is for children who are interested in being introduced to the technical aspects of the sport of competitive swimming while having fun. This beginner program is designed to teach swimmers to be comfortable in the water, and move effectively. It focuses on basic body position, kick and arm movements for swimming competitive strokes such as Freestyle, Backstroke, Breaststroke and dolphin kick. As well as the basics of turns and dives, practices are 1 hour in length, once a week. Swimmers must be able to complete 50 meters of a recognizable stroke to be accepted into this program, and be able to tread water for 1:00 minute or have completed level 4 of the lifesaving society program.

A swim test is mandatory for swimmers 6 – 10 years of age or at Lifeguard's discretion done during swim assessments.

Category 2, Pre-Competitive

Category 2 is designed for swimmers who are ready to build their technical skills having already learned basic technique. Practices consist of working on technique as well as increasing endurance work for conditioning and speed. All four competitive strokes (freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly) are taught at this level, as well as turns and dives Practices are 90 minutes in length, up-to two times a week. Swimmers must be able to complete 50 meters of recognizable Freestyle and Backcrawl, and have whipkick technique awareness, with a goal of completing 200-400 metres continuously by the end of the season.

A swim test is mandatory for swimmers 6 – 10 years of age or at Lifeguard's discretion done during swim assessments.

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Category 2, Competitive

Category 2 Competitive is designed for swimmers who are ready to build on their technical skills having already learned basic technique and are ready to begin competing. Practices consist of working on technique to ensure proper stroke as well as endurance work for conditioning and speed. All four competitive strokes (freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly) are taught at this level as well as turns and dives. Practices are 90 minutes, up-to two times a week. Swimmers must be able to complete 50 meters legal freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, and dives, as well as technical awareness of turns, and must be able to swim 200 meters continuously. This Category is for swimmers who have the basic technical ability to race, but are still learning.

A swim test is mandatory for swimmers 6 – 10 years of age or at Lifeguard’s discretion done during swim assessments.

Category 3

Category 3 is for competitive swimmers ready to fine tune their skills by focusing on drills to improve their technique. Practices are geared to train the aerobic and anaerobic cardiovascular systems. Practices are 2 hours in length, up-to three times a week. Swimmers must be able to perform freestyle, backstroke, and breaststroke, and dolphin kick at a legal capacity, as well as legal turns and dives and complete 400 meters continuously.

Category 4


Category 4 is for competitive swimmers focused on technique, and racing. Practices are 2 hours in length, four times a week. Swimmers must be at least 12 years old with a goal of Regionals and above.

Category 5

Category 5 is for competitive swimmers focused on perfecting technique, training and mental preparedness. Practices are 2 hours in length, five times a week. Swimmers must be at least 13 years old with a goal of Regionals and above.

Moving Program Levels

Depending on your child’s progress throughout the swim season, you may be asked to consider moving your child to another swim category. Movements of this nature are typically suggested

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because your child's coach has determined that all of the basics from the current category level have been mastered.

The coach will consult parents before any swimmer moves to another category. The club Treasurer will assess fee changes for the balance of the season and inform the parents accordingly. HHAC Executive will update registration information.