

UCSC Age Group Program



Group Descriptions

The following are the general group descriptions and determining criteria for placing swimmers into groups. Group placement has typically occurred at the end of a season in order to best place swimmers for the upcoming season. Swimmers may change groups within a season based on the criteria below and in combination with a coach recommendation. We will start the season with these group placements and use the first 6-8 weeks of the season to best determine the needs of each swimmer in relation to their group placement. Additional group movement may occur at the end of December, March and again in the summer.

Once swimmers have been selected for a group, coaches may use the fall to best determine if there are any additional movements that need to occur.

Four Pillars of Group Placement

| Performance | Training | Attitude | Commitment |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>As swimmers progress through the program performances are often a determining factor in how training is planned and designed. This is based primarily on the designated competitions they attend.</p> <p>Early in the sport it is our goal that swimmers train for and compete in a 'multi event' compliment of races. As swimmers mature their key competitions within each cycle will be at varying dates and locations. Having swimmers grouped together who follow a similar plan and preparation timeline is important for helping each athlete achieve optimal performances.</p> | <p>It is our assertion at UCSC that swimmers should first and foremost develop technical skills prior to the age of roughly 13 years old. The Development, TREX and 12 Stream programs are all orientated to build on each other in progressing technical ability.</p> <p>Once swimmers move into the Regional, Provincial and National Streams swimmers will then have the added layer of physical demands while adhering to quality technical skills. Training time over a swimmers' career should follow a pattern of 'Stimulation and Adaptation', where swimmers are challenged by a new 'Stream' then allowed to master skills taught within that Stream before moving on.</p> | <p>Key components that compliment both training and performance throughout a swimmers' career is their ability to adapt to change. Changes will be sought after in technical skills, coping with stress and challenges, working with coaches and within a team environment. Swimmers must develop an understanding of the value of daily training and be fully engaged in providing their best efforts at all times.</p> <p>Maturity in these areas develop at different times for all individuals and as such we have a scaled approach to allow for these differences.</p> | <p>Recognizing that a swimming career can span well over a decade, at UCSC we believe that young swimmers should have the time and energy to pursue additional activities.</p> <p>Conversely, as swimmers move through the ranks in their sport the need to commit to a full training and competition program will be paramount in maintaining and improving technical, tactical, physical and mental skills.</p> <p>Therefore their ability to 'shift' their lifestyle towards a more committed approach to swimming will be key to future success. This shift usually occurs in the early teenage years and is progressive through to adulthood.</p> |

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| 13 & Over | Performance | Training | Attitude | Commitment |
|-----------------|---|--|--|--|
| Senior National | | | | |
| National | Performing at SNC Designated Competitions and National Junior and Senior selection opportunities. | Swimmers who have shown excellent training competencies, multi stroke technique, kicking, pulling. Both endurance and speed work have been well developed. | Swimmers who have shown in past seasons their ability to adapt to difficult situations, work enthusiastically with their coaches and teammates and have a willingness to embrace challenges. | All swimmers in this stream have shown a year over year high level of attendance at training, dryland competitions and camps. |
| Provincial | Performing at Swim Alberta Spring and Summer Championships | Swimmers who have shown strong competencies in training and technique across multi strokes and various modes of training. Continuing to develop both endurance and speed in training | Swimmers who have shown an ability to develop skills such as 'embracing challenges' and intrinsic motivation. A willingness to work well with coaches and teammates. | Swimmers have shown a reliable level of commitment to training, dryland and competitions scheduled within each season. |
| Regional | Performing at Alberta Provincial and Regional Invitationals | Working to develop technique at various training loads. | Swimmers have shown a consistent desire to seek improvement and a willingness to develop new skills for adapting to training. | Swimmers continue to develop strategies to improve overall commitment to both training and competing throughout an entire swimming season. |

If swimmers are not able to maintain expectations of their designated training group they may be required to move to a group more accommodating their capacities.

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| 12 STREAM | Performance | Training | Attitude | Commitment |
|-----------|---|--|--|--|
| | Through this stream swimmers will strive to improve from Regional to Provincial to Championship level performances and competitions | Primary focus for these swimmers will be improving technical competencies on all four strokes and skills. Increased training duration will have a positive effect on endurance. However specific endurance training is not the overriding outcome goal at the 12 Stream stage. | Swimmers should enjoy being challenged in training and learn to embrace technical feedback as a means to improve in the sport. Developing strong bonds with teammates and coaches is an important part of long term success in swimming. | At this stage swimmers should learn to balance school, other activities and swimming commitments. Long term improvement will come with understanding an increased level of commitment will be required at each successive stage. |

| TREX | Performance | Training | Attitude | Commitment |
|------|---|---|--|---|
| | Goal of competitions is to enjoy challenging themselves, seeking improvement and developing all four strokes. | Primary focus for these swimmers will be improving technical competencies on all four strokes and skills. | Swimmers should learn to accept and understand technical feedback and practice implementing change often. Swimmers at this stage will begin to identify themselves as “swimmers” and should have a healthy enjoyment of their sport. | Swimmers are encouraged to continue with other activities and communicate with coaches on conflicts that may arise from multi sport activity. Swimmers will begin to understand that improvements in technique require ongoing reliable commitment. |