

PART ONE - TECHNICAL RULES

The Metro Swim League follows US Swimming Technical rules for individual strokes and relay events.

The rules below have been copied from US Swimming Technical Rules. [Click here](#) for a direct link to US Swimming Rules.

101.2 BREASTSTROKE

.1 Start —

- The forward start shall be used.

.2 Stroke —

- After the start and after each turn when the swimmer leaves the wall, the body shall be kept on the breast.
- It is not permitted to roll onto the back at any time.
- Throughout the race the stroke cycle must be one arm stroke and one leg kick in that order.
- All movements of the arms shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.
- The hands shall be pushed forward together from the breast on, under, or over the water.
- The elbows shall be under water except for the final stroke before the turn, during the turn and for the final stroke at the finish.
- The hands shall be brought back on or under the surface of the water.
- The hands shall not be brought back beyond the hip line, except during the first stroke after the start and each turn.
- During each complete cycle, some part of the swimmer's head shall break the surface of the water.
- After the start and after each turn, the swimmer may take one arm stroke completely back to the legs.
- The head must break the surface of the water before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke.

.3 Kick —

- After the start and each turn, a single butterfly kick, which must be followed by a breaststroke kick, is permitted during or at the completion of the first arm pull.
- Following which, all movements of the legs shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.
- The feet must be turned outwards during the propulsive part of the kick.
- A scissors, flutter or downward butterfly kick is not permitted except as provided herein.
- Breaking the surface of the water with the feet is allowed unless followed by a downward butterfly kick.

.4 Turns and Finish —

- At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water level.
- The head may be submerged after the last arm pull prior to the touch, provided it breaks the surface of the water at some point during the last complete or incomplete cycle preceding the touch.

101.3 BUTTERFLY

.1 Start —

- The forward start shall be used.

.2 Stroke —

- After the start and after each turn, the swimmer's shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast.
- The swimmer is permitted one or more leg kicks, but only one arm pull under water, which must bring the swimmer to the surface.
- It shall be permissible for a swimmer to be completely submerged for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and after each turn.
- By that point, the head must have broken the surface. The swimmer must remain on the surface until the next turn or finish.
- From the beginning of the first arm pull, the body shall be kept on the breast.
- Both arms must be brought forward over the water and pulled back simultaneously.

.3 Kick —

- All up and down movements of the legs and feet must be simultaneous.
- The position of the legs or the feet need not be on the same level, but they shall not alternate in relation to each other.
- A scissors or breaststroke kicking movement is not permitted.

.4 Turns —

- At each turn the body shall be on the breast.
- The touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface.
- Once a touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner desired.
- The shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the swimmer leaves the wall.

.5 Finish —

- At the finish, the body shall be on the breast and the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface.

101.4 BACKSTROKE

.1 Start —

- The swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end, with both hands placed on the gutter or on the starting grips.
- Standing in or on the gutter, placing the toes above the lip of the gutter, or bending the toes over the lip of the gutter, before or after the start, is prohibited.

.2 Stroke —

- The swimmer shall push off on his back and continue swimming on the back throughout the race.
- Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it is permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn, at the finish and for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and after each turn.
- By that point, the head must have broken the surface of the water.

.3 Turns —

- Upon completion of each length, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall.
- During the turn the shoulders may be turned past the vertical toward the breast after which a continuous single arm pull or a continuous simultaneous double arm pull may be used to initiate the turn.
- The swimmer must have returned to a position on the back upon leaving the wall.

.4 Finish —

- Upon the finish of the race, the swimmer must touch the wall while on the back.

101.5 FREESTYLE

.1 Start —

- The forward start shall be used.

.2 Stroke —

- In an event designated freestyle, the swimmer may swim any style, except that in a medley relay or an individual medley event, freestyle means any style other than butterfly, breaststroke or backstroke.
- Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it shall be permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and each turn.
- By that point the head must have broken the surface.

.3 Turns —

- Upon completion of each length the swimmer must touch the wall.

.4 Finish —

- The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his person touches the wall after completing the prescribed distance.

101.6 INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY — The swimmer shall swim the prescribed distance in the following order: the first one-fourth, butterfly; the second one-fourth, backstroke; the third one-fourth, breaststroke; and the last one-fourth, freestyle.

.1 Start —

- The forward start shall be used.

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.2 Stroke —

- The stroke for each one-fourth of the designated distance shall follow the prescribed rules for that stroke.

.3 Turns

A Intermediate turns within each stroke shall conform to the turn rules for that stroke.

B The turns when changing from one stroke to another shall conform to the finish rules for the stroke just completed, and shall be as follows:

(1) Butterfly to backstroke — The swimmer must touch as described in 101.3.5. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner, but the shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the back when the swimmer leaves the wall.

(2) Backstroke to breaststroke — The swimmer must touch the wall while on the back. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner but the shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the swimmer leaves the wall and the prescribed breaststroke form must be attained prior to the first arm stroke.

(3) Breaststroke to freestyle — The swimmer must touch as described in 101.2.4. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner.

.4 Finish —

- The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his/her person touches the wall after the prescribed distance.

101.7 RELAYS

.1 Freestyle Relay —

- Four swimmers on each team, each to swim one-fourth of the prescribed distance using any desired stroke(s). Freestyle finish rules apply.

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.2 Medley Relay —

- Four swimmers on each team, each to swim one-fourth of the prescribed distance in the following order: first, backstroke; second, breaststroke; third, butterfly; and fourth, freestyle.
- Rules pertaining to each stroke used shall govern where applicable.
- At the end of each leg, the finish rule for each stroke applies in each case.

.3 Rules Pertaining to Relay Races

- A. No swimmer shall swim more than one leg in any relay event.
- B. When automatic relay take-off judging is used, each swimmer must touch the touchplate or pad in his/her lane at the end of the course to have finished his/her leg of the relay race.
- C. In relay races a swimmer other than the first swimmer shall not start until his/her teammate has concluded his/her leg.
- D. Any relay team member and his/her relay team shall be disqualified from a race if a team member other than the swimmer designated to swim that leg enters the pool in the area where the race is being conducted before all swimmers of all teams have finished the race. Exception: When an in-the-water start is required or such start is approved by the Referee.
- E. Each relay team member shall leave the water immediately upon finishing his/her leg, except the last member.
- F. In relay races the team of a swimmer whose feet have lost touch with the starting platform (ground or deck) before his/her preceding teammate touches the wall shall be disqualified.
- G. In relay races involving in-the-water starts, the team of a swimmer who has lost touch with the end of the course before his/her preceding teammate touches the wall shall be disqualified, unless the swimmer in default returns to the original starting point at the wall.

102.10 DISQUALIFICATIONS

- .1 A disqualification can be made only by the official within whose jurisdiction the infraction has been committed.
- .2 The Referee or designated official making a disqualification shall make every reasonable effort to seek out the swimmer and inform him/her as to the reason for the disqualification.
- .4 A swimmer must start and finish the race in the same lane.
- .5 Standing on the bottom during a freestyle race shall not disqualify a swimmer, but a swimmer must not leave the pool, or walk, or spring from the bottom. Standing on the bottom during any other stroke shall result in disqualification.
- .6 Obstructing another swimmer by swimming across or otherwise interfering shall disqualify the offender, subject to the discretion of the Referee.
- .8 Dipping goggles in the water or splashing water on the competitor's face or body prior to an event shall not be considered as entering the pool unless the Referee finds that such action is interfering with the competition.
- .9 Should a foul endanger the chance of success of a swimmer(s), the Referee may allow the affected competitor(s) to reswim the event. In case of collusion to foul another

swimmer, the Referee may, at his/her discretion, disqualify the swimmer for whose aid the foul was committed, as well as the swimmer committing the foul.

.10 No swimmer is permitted to wear or use any device or substance to help his/her speed, pace or buoyancy during a race. Goggles may be worn, and rubdown oil applied if not considered excessive by the Referee.

.11 Grasping lane dividers to assist forward motion is not permitted.

.12 For relay disqualifications, refer to 101.7.3.

102.15 JUDGES —

- Shall have jurisdiction over the swimmers immediately after the race has begun.

.3 Stroke Judge — Shall operate on both sides of the pool, preferably walking abreast of the swimmers during all strokes except freestyle, during which events they may leave poolside, at the Referee's discretion; shall ensure that the rules relating to the style of swimming designated for the event are being observed; and shall report any violations to the Referee on signed slips detailing the event, the heat number, the lane number and the infraction.

.4 Turn Judge — Shall operate on both ends of the pool; shall ensure that when turning or finishing the swimmer complies with the turning and finishing rules applicable to the stroke used; and shall report any violations to the Referee on signed slips detailing the event, the heat number, lane number and infraction observed.

.5 Jurisdiction of Stroke and Turn Judges — Before the competition begins, the Referee shall determine the respective areas of stroke and turn responsibility and jurisdiction, which may include joint, concurrent, and coordinated responsibility and jurisdiction. The Referee shall insure that all swimmers shall have fair, equitable, and uniform conditions of judging.

.6 Relay Take-Off Judges —

- A. Relay take-off judges shall be assigned by the Referee and shall stand so that they can clearly see both the touch of the incoming swimmer(s) and the feet of the departing swimmer(s) as they leave the starting platform, and shall judge whether the swimmer is in contact with the platform when the incoming swimmer touches the end of the pool.
- B. If dual relay take-off judging is used, the lane and side take-off judges shall independently report infractions in writing without the use of the infraction hand signal. A relay will be disqualified only if the lane take-off judge has reported an infraction and the assigned side take-off judge has confirmed the same infraction.