

The Parent's Guide to Swim Meets

What Each Swimmer Needs to Bring for the Meet:

Make sure your swimmer has their backpack with their suit, towels (bring extra), sandals, goggles, and cap. Invest in a good pair of quality goggles, having a few pairs is best, they tend to get lost and/or broken. You can consider upgrading them with a [bungee strap](#) to make them easier to get on and off. Personalized bathing caps are only available twice during the year during a special order. Notification that ordering is open will be sent via email. Silicone caps are usually preferred over latex caps and swimmers may choose to use a cap of their liking. If the meet is a weekend meet be sure to bring extra towels. Shampoo and conditioner will help with "swimmer hair". Remind your swimmer to rinse out their suit after they swim. Chlorine eats at the material and rinsing helps lengthen the life of a suit! It is a good idea to have an extra suit, cap, and goggles in your bag in case of an emergency. Swimmers are asked to wear their team suit, team cap, and team t-shirt at all meets if they have them.

Where to buy a team suit:

To order swimsuits visit our team store at

<https://www.swimoutlet.com/collections/benningtonmarauders?frm=fyt>

Your swimmer will need at least one practice suit, two is even better, the chlorine is hard on them. For girls you'll want [competition suits](#), they'll stay on well and are made from thicker material than your typical swimsuit. For boys you have 2 choices- Jammers- they're tight and go to their knees, like bike shorts (this is what most younger boys prefer) Briefs- These are the wee tiny ones you see on the Olympic swimmers, some high school kids wear these, but most younger swimmers shy away from them.

Swimmer's ear can become a problem. An inexpensive remedy is to make a solution of 50% rubbing alcohol and 50% white vinegar. A couple of drops in each ear will help to kill some of the bacteria and help dry out the ear. Do not use this if your child has tubes or holes in their eardrums.

Swimmers, please bring your enthusiasm and cheer for your teammates!

What Parents Need to Bring to a Swim Meet:

Most parents bring chairs to the meet. Some meets may have bleachers and some will not. We usually keep the chairs in our car...just in case! Be sure to bring a highlighter and a black sharpie. These will be helpful when you are locating your child's events in the heat sheet.

Our Team Colors are Black and Red. Marauders parents love to show team spirit by wearing black and red. We also try to sit together as a team when possible. Depending on the meet, the swimmers may sit with us or in a group together. The coaches will make this decision.

Register for meets on the Commit Website. After logging in click check your dashboard for upcoming meets and information.

Most meets have a concession stand – selling bagels, power bars, and a variety of snacks and drinks. Many parents choose to bring their snacks. Fruit, granola bars, crackers, bagels, and LOTS of WATER are excellent choices. Coaches do not want the swimmers to have lots of sugar during a meet. Caffeinated beverages or energy drinks should be avoided.

Swimmers are responsible for paying attention to their coaches and for knowing when it is their time to swim.

In the beginning, you may need to help them learn this process. The coaches work hard to do this – but

remember it is ultimately the swimmer's responsibility to be at the blocks at the proper time.

Before and After each Event, Swimmers are to talk to their coach! Immediately after a swim, they are to find their coach for personal feedback.

Cameras/Videotaping – Be careful that you do not take pictures during the start of an event. There is a flash that goes off at the start of the race that all the timers are watching. Your flash could cause the timers to start timing at the wrong times. Officials will talk to you if this happens. My suggestion is to take pictures once your swimmer is in the water. Pictures are also not permitted if you are standing behind the blocks.

Younger Siblings that are not swimming – Bring a bag with some toys/snacks/drawing pad/markers for your child during a meet. Swim meets can be long and this will help younger children pass the time!

WHAT IS A HEAT SHEET?

A heat sheet is the schedule of the events for the entire meet. Some teams will sell individual day heat sheets and some will only sell a weekend heat sheet. A heat sheet can cost \$5 to \$12 depending on the length of the meet. Most people purchase their own heat sheet so that they can keep up with the fast-moving events. Another option is to download an app called Meet Mobile. Most fall and winter meets can be found on this app and you will be able to see what events your child is in and results. There is a fee to use this app but it will be cheaper over time than purchasing heat sheets.

Many parents use the sharpie to write the events on their swimmer's leg or arm. For example:

| | | |
|----|---|------------|
| E | H | L |
| 71 | 3 | 7 – 200 IM |

The “E” stands for the event number. “H” stands for the heat number and “L” stands for the lane number. All of this is listed on the heat sheet. The 200 IM (individual medley) is the actual event they are swimming. This helps the swimmer stay organized and independent.

A heat sheet lists all the events organized by age group. Your child’s name and what heat and lane he/she is in will be listed. The lanes are numbered. The number of participants at the meet will determine how many heats there will be. The first heat starts with the slower times or NT’s (no time) and progresses to the last heat with the fastest times. Next to each swimmer’s name is their “seed time”. This is the swimmer’s best time in that event. If you see NT, which means “NO TIME”, this indicates that the swimmer has never been timed in this event at a meet.

What is Your Responsibility During a Swim Meet?

Be On Time Make sure your swimmer arrives on deck at the designated time. This is typically 15 minutes prior to warm-up time.

Cheer for your swimmer!

No coaching from the sidelines - leave that to the coaches and just be an encouraging parent!

An Idea: Swimming is a team and individual sport. While your swimmer is learning, instead of comparing him/her to other swimmers, get a notebook for your child, and help them keep track of their times, and their personal bests and help them see their individual improvement. You can also keep track of skills they are trying to learn for meets (flip turns, breathing patterns, etc.) This will encourage them to keep working hard. Once again, swimming is a team and individual sport, so focus on individual progress versus if they “win” or “lose”.

Parents are expected to help time during a meet. Timing is easy and needs no special experience. During each meet, all parents should expect to help time at some point. I know...I know...YOU want to watch your child swim...well, being a timer gives you the best seat in the house! We all want to watch our children swim – so please remember to do your part! If you are unsure how to help, please ask another parent and they will help you find your place.

Swimming Vocabulary Sheet:

Age Group: Swimmers are divided into groups by age. The swimming age groups are 8 and under, 10 and Under, 11/12, 13/14, 15-18.

DQ: Disqualification – a swim is nullified due to the swimmer committing an infraction of a rule. Your coach can explain the reason for the DQ. (i.e. touching the wall with one hand on breaststroke)

Dryland Training: Exercises performed outside of the pool to improve overall fitness and enhance swimming performance.

False Start: A swimmer moves forward or dives before the horn or beep is sounded to start a race.

Flip Turn– If your child is swimming freestyle or backstroke they'll learn to perform a flip turn at the end of each lap. Rather than coming up they'll flip forward and kick off the wall.

Fly-Over Starts– During a meet to make things go quickly they'll often do fly-over starts. What that means is that the swimmers who have just finished their race will stay in the water, while the swimmers getting ready to race step up on the block, and start their race "flying over" the swimmers still in the water. This helps keep the meet moving along and the swimmers have less time waiting for their events.

Heat Sheet: A listing of swimmers in each event, divided into heats and lanes. Heat sheets may be purchased at each meet.

IM: Individual Medley – An event that involves all four competitive strokes. An individual medley is swum by one person; a medley relay has 4 swimmers –one per stroke.

Seed Time: The best time that a swimmer has in each event is listed on the heat sheet.

Short Course: Season beginning in September – April, with meets held in a 25-yard pool.

Strokes – There are four main strokes your child will learn as a swimmer. The freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly. These are often shortened to free, back, breast, and fly.

Qualifying Time: The minimum time needed to swim a particular event in a particular meet.

USA Swimming: The national governing body for swimming.