



# Corrective Tips for Swimming Skills

## DEVELOPING SWIMMER: Shallow Water Orientation

<i>Desired Outcomes</i>	<i>Common Errors/Challenges</i>	<i>Correctional Tips and Drills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enter/exit the water.</li> <li>• Move through the water.</li> <li>• Feel comfortable in the water.</li> <li>• Move water in different directions.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Swimmer is afraid to enter the water.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow the swimmer to sit and watch the rest of the class. Occasionally, ask the swimmer to join in the fun, but don't pressure the swimmer. Use a very gradual approach, and praise the swimmer for even small accomplishments such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• entering the change room;</li> <li>• entering the swimming area;</li> <li>• sitting at a distance and watching;</li> <li>• moving closer to the water;</li> <li>• sitting at the edge of the water;</li> <li>• getting toes wet;</li> <li>• getting ankles wet; and,</li> <li>• getting legs wet.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Play orientation games so that the swimmer is involved in the game rather than focused on his or her fear.</li> <li>• Find out why the swimmer is afraid. It may lead to a solution.</li> <li>• Use flotation aids such as a PFD/lifejacket or barbells to give the swimmer self-confidence.</li> <li>• Consider obtaining a small plastic pool to use on the deck or beach. This may help introduce the frightened swimmer to the water environment.</li> <li>• Have toys available that will lead the swimmer to the water. For example, use kickboards, a watering can, or pails.</li> <li>• Ask your swimmers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prompt: Why is it harder to move through water than air?</li> <li>Prompt: What happens when you push to the left?</li> <li>Prompt: What makes it easier to move through water? (streamlining)</li> <li>Prompt: How does a fish move through water?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ol>

## DEVELOPING SWIMMER: Submersion and Breathing

<i>Desired Outcomes</i>	<i>Common Errors/Challenges</i>	<i>Correctional Tips and Drills</i>
<p>Exhale through mouth and nose.</p> <p>Submerge face.</p> <p>Submerge head.</p> <p>Open eyes underwater.</p> <p>Perform rhythmic breathing.</p> <p>Perform rhythmic breathing in different positions.</p>	<p>1. Swimmer will not submerge head.</p>	<p>1. • Encourage gentle splashing through games and play.</p> <p>• Have swimmers wash their face (with young swimmers you can play “This is the way we wash our face”).</p> <p>• Have swimmers submerge their chin.</p> <p>• Have swimmers submerge their mouth, then their ears, then their entire head while exhaling their breath.</p> <p>• Have swimmers pick up “treats” or objects from the bottom.</p>
	<p>2. Swimmer will not open eyes underwater.</p>	<p>2. • Ask swimmers to submerge and look at one another, count fingers, or pick up objects from the bottom.</p> <p>• For young children, try the Birthday Cake Game. Pretend your fingers are candles, and have the children go underwater, count the candles, then blow them out.</p>

## DEVELOPING SWIMMER: Front Floats

<i>Desired Outcomes</i>	<i>Common Errors/Challenges</i>	<i>Correctional Tips and Drills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recover from a front float.</li> <li>• Experiment with buoyancy—mushroom, star, pencil.</li> <li>• Weight transfer.</li> </ul>	<p>1. Lower body sinks (cause: head held too high, body not fully extended).</p>	<p>1. • Encourage swimmers to look at bottom.</p> <p>• Tell swimmers to feel their forehead get wet.</p> <p>• Tell swimmers to feel their ears get wet.</p> <p>• Encourage swimmers to relax.</p> <p>• Encourage swimmers to stretch.</p>
	<p>2. Having difficulty recovering to a standing position (cause: not bringing both knees to chest simultaneously, not using arms, lifting head too early).</p>	<p>2. • Prompt swimmers to tuck their knees to their chest.</p> <p>• Prompt swimmers to sweep their arms downward and back.</p> <p>• Encourage swimmers to wait to lift head up until hands have completed the downward push, knees are tucked, and body begins to assume vertical position.</p>

## Corrective Tips for Swimming Skills

### DEVELOPING SWIMMER: Back Floats

<i>Desired Outcomes</i>	<i>Common Errors/Challenges</i>	<i>Correctional Tips and Drills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recover from back float.</li> <li>Keep ears in water, tummy at surface of water.</li> <li>Keep ears in, tummy up.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lower body sinks (cause: head held too high, body not fully extended).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage swimmers to place their head back.</li> <li>Encourage swimmers to feel their ears get wet.</li> <li>Encourage swimmers to stretch.</li> <li>Tell swimmers to bring their tummy to the ceiling.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase time on float.</li> <li>Roll over from back to front.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has difficulty recovering to a standing position (cause: not bringing both knees to chest simultaneously, not using arms, lifting head too early).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage swimmers to tuck their knees to chest.</li> <li>Encourage swimmers to sweep arms downward and back.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

### DEVELOPING SWIMMER: Front Glides with Kick

<i>Desired Outcomes</i>	<i>Common Errors/Challenges</i>	<i>Correctional Tips and Drills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep face in, arms extended forward.</li> <li>Perform roll-over glides.</li> <li>Perform glides with kick.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moving backwards (cause: extreme knee bend with feet "hooked" [flexed]).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage swimmers to point their toes like a ballet dancer.</li> <li>Place the swimmer's foot in the proper position so he or she feels the difference.</li> <li>Encourage swimmers to straighten their knees.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very little progress (cause: bending at waist and bicycling).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Same as above.</li> <li>Emphasize tiny kick.</li> <li>Have swimmers splash water with feet.</li> <li>Encourage swimmers to stretch out like Superman.</li> <li>Tell swimmers to imagine riding a motorboat, not a bicycle.</li> <li>Have swimmers practise kick action with kickboard.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legs and lower body sink (cause: kick too wide and slow).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage swimmers to kick faster.</li> <li>Encourage swimmers to perform tiny kicks.</li> <li>Tell swimmers to "tickle" the surface.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

### DEVELOPING SWIMMER: Back Glides with Kick

<i>Desired Outcomes</i>	<i>Common Errors/Challenges</i>	<i>Correctional Tips and Drills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep shoulders, back of head, and ears in the water.</li> <li>• Increase power of push.</li> <li>• Perform roll-over glide from back to front.</li> <li>• Add kick to glide.</li> </ul>	1. Head goes underwater (cause: back arched too much).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage swimmers to flatten back.</li> <li>• Encourage swimmers to tuck chin.</li> <li>• Encourage swimmers to look up (not back).</li> <li>• Encourage swimmers to slow down.</li> <li>• Encourage swimmers to imagine lying on a bed.</li> <li>• Review body position for back glide.</li> </ol>
	2. Moving feet first (cause: over-flexing at hips and knees).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasize tiny kick.</li> <li>• Have swimmers splash water with feet.</li> <li>• Encourage swimmers to stretch out like Superman.</li> <li>• Have swimmers practise kick action with kickboard.</li> </ol>
	3. Hips sinking so body creates "V" position.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage swimmers to keep belly button at surface.</li> <li>• Encourage swimmers to keep knees "wet" (as opposed to breaking the surface).</li> <li>• Encourage swimmers to slow down.</li> <li>• Tell swimmers to "tickle" the water surface with their toes.</li> </ol>

### DEVELOPING SWIMMER: Head-First Sculling on Back

<i>Desired Outcomes</i>	<i>Common Errors/Challenges</i>	<i>Correctional Tips and Drills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extends body at surface, with ears in the water, and legs together.</li> <li>• Flexes hands so wrists and palms extend toward feet and fingers extend to ceiling.</li> <li>• Keeps upturned fingers closed and just below surface.</li> </ul>	1. Head is high.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have swimmers lower the head so that their ears are in the water.</li> <li>• Have swimmers stretch out.</li> <li>• Have swimmers change the angle of the hands so that there is a greater lifting force at hips (push downward).</li> </ol>
	2. Head is back.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have swimmers lift the head.</li> <li>• Have swimmers stretch out (tighten the stomach muscles, suck the stomach in).</li> <li>• Check the angle of the hands.</li> </ol>
	3. The legs and feet sink, but the body is straight.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have swimmers use a wider, faster movement.</li> <li>• Check the angle of the hands.</li> <li>• Have swimmers push more water downward.</li> </ol>

## Corrective Tips for Swimming Skills

### DEVELOPING SWIMMER: Head-First Sculling on Back (*continued*)

<i>Desired Outcomes</i>	<i>Common Errors/Challenges</i>	<i>Correctional Tips and Drills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Swings lower arms out and in with even pressure, while upper arms are relatively still and slightly away from body.</li> <li>Keeps hand by hips and underwater, and body moves head first in smooth manner.</li> </ul>	<p>4. Excessive bending of the arms at the elbow (finning).</p> <p>5. Arms are very stiff (cause: the elbows and wrists are rigid).</p>	<p>4. Have swimmers lock the elbows with the arms slightly bent.</p> <p>5. • Have swimmers relax the elbows. • Have swimmers flex the wrists. The wrists lead the inward and outward movement of the arms.</p>
	6. Palms are not turned outward during the outward push.	6. Move the swimmer's hands through the correct action.
	7. Arm action is not continuous.	7. Emphasize continuous movement.
	8. Arm action is not symmetrical or simultaneous.	8. Move the swimmer's hands through the correct action.

### SKILLS AND WATER SAFETY: Dives

<i>Common Errors</i>	<i>Correctional Tips and Drills</i>
1. Head is not tucked in.	1. • Have swimmers tuck a bathing cap or cloth under their chin and keep it there while they dive. • Tell swimmers to keep their chin tucked into their chest at all times.
2. Knees drop forward.	2. • Encourage swimmers to keep their legs straight while they dive. • Have swimmers kick back behind them while they dive. • Tell swimmers to try to get their buttocks over the top of their head.
3. Performs belly flop.	3. • Place your hand on swimmers' arms, and pull them forward and down into the water. • Have swimmers practise a forward roll into the water. • Have swimmers keep their eyes on the bottom for the entire dive.
4. Arms open after entry, resulting in a nonstream-lined body position.	4. • Have swimmers lock their thumbs together as they dive. • Give swimmers something to hold in their hands as they dive. • Have swimmers hold their hands together as tightly as they can.
5. For shallow dive, dive is too deep.	5. • Hold swimmers' arms up so they are nearly parallel to the water surface, and keep their hands aiming in that direction throughout the beginning of the dive. • Place your hand parallel to the water surface, about 5cm off the water and 30cm in front of swimmers; have them use your hand as a target when they dive. • Have swimmers reach forward as they dive into the water (make sure they tuck their chin in just before entering the water).

## SKILLS AND WATER SAFETY: Forward Roll

### *Common Errors*

### *Correctional Tips and Drills*

- |                                                |                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Not holding the head firmly with the hands. | 1. Hold on tightly.                             |
| 2. Turning the head to the side.               | 2. Watch the navel with both eyes.              |
| 3. Not tucking the chin into the chest.        | 3. Emphasize chin on the chest.                 |
| 4. Entering the water with the legs straight.  | 4. Demonstrate the correct waist and knee bend. |

## SKILLS AND WATER SAFETY: Stride Entry (The Jump)

### *Common Errors*

### *Correctional Tips and Drills*

- |                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Takeoff is with two-feet.                               | 1. Have swimmers try stepping into the water to emphasize leaping out, not up. This also emphasizes the one foot takeoff.                                           |
| 2. Swimmer stands straight up or leaning back on the jump. | 2. Have swimmers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lean forward before starting the push-off, and</li> <li>• push the chin forward.</li> </ul>              |
| 3. Swimmer looks down or leans too far forward.            | 3. Have swimmers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lift the head up,</li> <li>• push the chin forward, and</li> <li>• watch some distant object.</li> </ul> |
| 4. Arms are extended in front of the swimmer.              | 4. Demonstrate the correct position.                                                                                                                                |
| 5. Legs are not spread apart during entry.                 | 5. Practise doing a long step on land. Demonstrate the correct position.                                                                                            |
| 6. Legs spread to the sides during entry.                  | 6. Have swimmers try stepping into the water to emphasize leaping out, not up.                                                                                      |
| 7. The legs start to squeeze together too soon.            | 7. Have swimmers delay the squeeze until the knees are in the water.                                                                                                |
| 8. Arms start to swing forward too soon during entry.      | 8. Have swimmers make sure that their arms are in the water before they start the push.                                                                             |

## Corrective Tips for Swimming Skills

### SKILLS AND WATER SAFETY: Standing Shallow Dive

#### Common Errors

#### Correctional Tips and Drills

1. Swimmer stands with feet together and legs straight.	1. • Demonstrate the correct position of the feet slightly apart and the legs with the bent knees. • Ask swimmers to try jumping first with legs straight, then from a position with the knees bent.
2. Waist does not bend enough.	2. Have swimmers try to touch toes with fingertips.
3. Knees aren't pushed forward.	3. Emphasize bending the knees.
4. Head doesn't lift as arms swing forward.	4. • Have swimmers lift head. • Have swimmers watch the point of entry.
5. Heels don't lift off the ground.	5. • Emphasize lifting the heel as arms finish the upward and rearward lift. • Have swimmers time the heel lift to the knee bending.
6. Arms don't swing underneath the body on the forward swing.	6. Have swimmers practise swinging arms underneath the body while standing on deck.
7. Head drops before arms and legs are fully extended.	7. • Have swimmers lift their head. • Have swimmers watch the point of entry (use a handkerchief).
8. Arms don't point at the point of entry.	8. Have swimmers lower their head.
9. Head held too high during the flight.	9. Have swimmers watch the point of entry.
10. Body not stretched out during the entry (either back is arched or hips are piked).	10. Have swimmers exaggerate the rigid stretch on entry.
11. Starts to swim too soon.	11. Have swimmers delay the kick until they feel themselves slow to swimming speed. If the arm pull starts too soon, they will feel a great deal of resistance.
12. Sinks on the glide.	12. • Check the entry. • Have swimmers lift head slightly. • Have swimmers point hands up slightly. The angle of the hands controls the angle of the glide.
13. Surfaces too soon.	13. • Check the entry. • Have swimmers lower head. • Have swimmers stretch out. • Have swimmers point hands down slightly.
14. Glides too long.	14. Have swimmers delay the kick for a count of three after entry into the water.
15. Pulls with both arms to the sides during the glide.	15. • Have swimmers hold the hands together with the arms extended in front of the head. • Have swimmers delay the pull until slowing to swimming speed. • For front crawl, have swimmers start the pull with one arm.

## SKILLS AND WATER SAFETY: Surface Support

### *Common Errors: Body Position*

1. Body leans too far forward.
2. Body leans too far backward.
3. Body bobs.

### *Correctional Tips and Drills: Body Position*

1.
  - Have swimmers let feet sink.
  - Have swimmers tip head back.
  - Check the arm action.
2.
  - Have swimmers let feet sink.
  - Have swimmers tilt the head forward.
3.
  - Check the arm and leg actions.
  - Have swimmers keep arms near the surface.

### *Common Errors: Arms*

1. Hands are in the wrong positions.
2. Swimmer uses a rapid, narrow arm action.
3. Arms are too low.
4. Arm movement is nonsymmetrical.
5. Arms pull downward.
6. Swimmer uses an alternate arm pull to the sides.

### *Correctional Tips and Drills: Arms*

1. Hold swimmers' hands and move them into the correct position.
2. Emphasize a slow, wide arm movement.
3.
  - Have swimmers drag the little finger along the surface as the arms sweep outward.
  - Have swimmers drag the thumbs along the surface as the arms return to the extended position in front of the chest.
  - Have swimmers tilt the head forward.
4. Have swimmers watch arms to make sure action is symmetrical.
5.
  - Have swimmers drag the little finger along the surface as the arms sweep outward.
  - Have swimmers drag the thumbs along the surface as the arms return to the extended position in front of the chest.
  - Have swimmers tilt the head forward.
6. Introduce a symmetrical and simultaneous arm pull.

### *Common Errors: Legs*

1. Kick is rapid and flutter-like.

### *Correctional Tips and Drills: Legs*

1. Emphasize the slow pedalling action.



## Corrective Tips for Swimming Skills

### SURFACE DIVES: Feet First and Head First

#### *Common Errors*

1. Body does not achieve a vertical position in preparation for descent.

#### *Correctional Tips and Drills*

1. • Emphasize tucking the knees to the chest and lifting the head back.  
• Tell swimmers when they are at the vertical position.

### *Surface Dives: Feet-First Surface Dive: The Dive*

#### *Common Errors*

1. Body does not lift high enough in the air.
2. Arms extend to the front and then push down.
3. Body does not achieve a streamlined position.
4. Swimmer puts chin on chest and looks down.
5. Back arches on the descent.
6. Arms begin upward sweep too soon.
7. Arms come out of the water on the upward sweep.
8. Upward push is in front of the body.

#### *Correctional Tips and Drills*

1. Emphasize the downward push of the arms.
2. Emphasize the arms to the sides and push downward.
3. Emphasize arms against the sides, legs together, and body stretched out.
4. Have swimmers look straight ahead.
5. Emphasize stretching out.
6. Have swimmers delay the upward push until they have nearly stopped sinking.
7. Have swimmers delay the start of the upward push.
8. Emphasize a push outward to the sides.

### Surface Dives: Feet-First Surface Dive: Coordination

<i>Common Errors</i>	<i>Correctional Tips and Drills</i>
1. Swimmer pauses between the approach and the dive.	1. Emphasize the approach and dive are continuous.
2. Swimmer pulls or kicks too soon during the descent.	2. Have swimmers sink, then pull, and kick.

### Surface Dives: Head-First Surface Dive: The Approach

<i>Common Errors</i>	<i>Correctional Tips and Drills</i>
1. Swimmer doesn't swim into the dive.	1. • Have swimmers practise the approach from a push-off. • Emphasize a continuous movement from the swim to the dive.
2. Arms pull to the side.	2. Have swimmers watch arms pull underneath shoulders.
3. Body doesn't pike as arms pull.	3. • Have swimmers follow the arm with eyes and head. • Emphasize the pike.
4. Hands are not held against thighs.	4. Have swimmers: • bend arms, • keep hands on thighs, and • make the approach and the dive one continuous action.
5. Body pikes too much or not enough.	5. Have swimmers practise with feedback until they learn correct bend.

### Surface Dives: Head-First Surface Dive: The Dive

<i>Common Errors</i>	<i>Correctional Tips and Drills</i>
1. Arms are pressed down too hard, and legs are lifted too quickly.	1. Have swimmers: • pause between the approach and dive, and • de-emphasize the press.
2. Legs are separated during the lift.	2. Emphasize that the legs are held together.
3. Swimmer kicks before legs are underwater.	3. • Have swimmers sink, then pull, then kick. • Have swimmers feel feet sink below the surface.
4. Arms pull as soon as legs are vertical.	4. Have swimmers delay the pull until only knees, calves, and feet are above water.
5. Arms pull in front of the body.	5. Emphasize pull to the sides.
6. Angle of descent is poor.	6. • Have swimmers: - pause between the approach and dive, and - de-emphasize the press.