



Swim BC Open Water Training Recommendations

This information is a Provincial interpretation of the Swimming Canada “**Open Water Swimming Safety Guidelines – Coaching a Training Group**”. This information is intended to assist clubs in attending to point #2, all other points in the Swimming Canada guidelines should be considered.

- All Swimmers **MUST BE 11 years or over...**
- Swim BC recommends coaches assess baseline swimming competency utilizing the following distance / time guidelines:

**800m @ 12:30.00, or
1500m @ 24:00.00**

- Prior to training, Swim BC recommends the club conduct an introductory **Open Water Mini Clinic** for inexperienced, novice and younger participants.

Suggested **Mini Clinic** content:

Section 1 - Prior to water entry:

Review tips on how to observe and understand the course:

- ✓ Coach or Safety person explain how to sight, review and understand the course;
- ✓ interact with swimmers to ensure they clearly understand the course layout or swimming area
- ✓ demonstrate what is ‘on-course’ and what is ‘off-course’

Understand obstacles:

- ✓ Coach led discussion on potential obstacles within course.
- ✓ What constitutes an obstacle? Why does it present a risk?
- ✓ Swimmers must be able to successfully articulate to the coach where an obstacle exists

Learn and demonstrate signals:

- ✓ Learn and successfully demonstrate pre-determined “help” and “okay” hand signals.
- ✓ Swimmers successfully demonstrate signals prior to entry to water.

Learn and demonstrate a Panic Plan:

- ✓ Coach or Safety person explain an easy to remember panic plan for swimmers and have swimmers rehearse prior to water entry (e.g. stop, head back, tread water, deep breaths, lay on back, signal coach or safety person with appropriate pre-rehearsed signal)
- ✓ Swimmers successfully demonstrate and recite Panic Plan

Section 2 - Water Skills:

- ✓ Comfortably tread water (minimum 5 mins)
 - Coach or safety person assess swimmers water temperature comfort level during and after treading water
- ✓ Front & Back floating and resting skills
 - Coach or safety person assess swimmer relaxation and ease of breathing
- ✓ Swimmer successfully demonstrates pre-rehearsed Panic Plan
- ✓ Swimmer is able to successfully remove, clear and re-set goggles while treading water
- ✓ Sighting technique practice
- ✓ Successfully demonstrate visual contact with coach and demonstrate set hand signals
- ✓ Swim BC recommends swimmers wear brightly coloured / neon swim caps – no blue, green or black caps

HAVE A SAFE SWIM!