SWIMMING TERMS AND DEFITIONS

**backstroke** - One of the 4 swimming strokes contested in meets. The primary rule is that swimmers must remain on their back for the entire race, with the exception of the last stroke before a flip turn. Backstroke is the 3rd stroke in the Individual Medley (IM) order, and it is the first leg of the Medley Relay. While the only distances contested at the Olympics are the 100 and 200 meters, swimmers of most ages and levels can compete in the 25 and 50 meters/yards as well.   
Read more at:

**body position** - General term that describes how a swimmer floats in the water. Proficient swimmers have learned how to maintain a balanced body position at the surface of the water.

**entry (hand)** - How the hand enters the water on each stroke.   
  
**flutter kick** - The rapid, up-and-down kick used in both freestyle and backstroke. Efficient flutter kicks are small and very rapid leg movements that cause the water to "boil" without splashing too much.   
  
**freestyle** - One of the four competitive strokes. Sometimes called "the crawl," freestyle is a long-axis stroke

**goggles** - Protective covering worn over the eyes. Goggles come in many styles and sizes, and can be made with corrective lenses.

**gutter** - Trough around the edge of a pool that collects water and directs it out of the pool and through the filter system. Some gutters are designed to keep waves from bouncing off the wall and back into the pool.   
  
**hand velocity** - The speed of a swimmer's hand through the water.   
  
**kick** - The movement of a swimmer's legs and feet.

**kickboard** - A lightweight, flat flotation device used to practice kicking. Swimmers typically rest straight arms on the board.   
  
  **lane** - The space between lane lines, or between a lane line and the wall. Lanes are approximately 2.5 meters (8 feet) wide.

**lane line** - The cables or "ropes" strung the length of the pool (from the blocks to the opposite wall) that divide the water into lanes. Modern lane line ropes are covered in plastic flotation pieces that absorb or eliminate the wakes created by swimmers (referred to as wave- or wake-eating lane lines).

**lane markings** - The black lines at the bottom of the pool marking the middle of each lane. The black lines end in a T at both ends to indicate that the wall is near.

**lap** - Typically refers to one length of a pool. Technically, and in years past, a lap used to mean "down and back" or two lengths of a pool, but the term generally does not mean that in modern times!

**lapped** - Term for when the first person in a lane catches up to and passes the last person in the lane.   
  
**length** - Once across the pool.   
  
**novice** - Another word for beginner.   
  
**paddle** - A flat piece of plastic worn on the hands, and held in place by rubber cords that fit over the middle finger (and sometimes also the wrist). Paddles can be used to build strength and practice correct swimming technique. Too much paddle use, or frequent use of paddles that are too large can cause shoulder injuries.   
  
**push off** - To literally push off the wall.   
  
**relay** - A race in which four swimmers compete as a team. All the swimmers must swim an equal distance in the race. At practices, a relay simply means a multi-person race, the rules of which are limited only by the imaginations of the coach. For details on competitive events see [freestyle relay](javascript:void(0)) and medley relay.

**sculling** - To propel oneself by gently moving the hands back and forth in the water. Used as a drill, in a variety of positions, to learn to "feel' the water.   
  
**stroke** - The style of swimming. There are four competitive swimming strokes: freestyle, backstroke, breastroke and butterfly. The term "stroke" can also refer to a stroke cycle, as in: "On that last stroke, your elbow dropped below your wrist again."   
  
**suit** - What a swimmer wears in the pool. Styles and materials vary widely, and are, to an extent, dependent on the level of competition the swimmer is engaged in.

**All terms and definitions found on:**

[**http://swim.isport.com/swimming-guides/swimming-glossary**](http://swim.isport.com/swimming-guides/swimming-glossary)