

SIERRA SHARKS - F.A.Q.

How many practices does my child need to attend?

Our swim team's philosophy is recreational and personal improvement first and foremost. We want children to be excited about coming to practice. Certain age groups, we advise they make as many practices as possible, however for our younger age groups, we recommend they make 1-2 practices consistently. More practices should be when the child is excited to go and wants to go. We do not want to ever hear any child become burnt out from attending too many practices.

Is practice mandatory (to participate in a swim meet)?

No. The coaches do randomly take roll; however, it is for them to familiarize themselves with the swimmers. Your child can participate in meets, whether they attended practices during the week prior or not.

Do I need to let the coaches know when my child will not be at practice?

In general, no. If your child is going to miss a significant number of practices, over a period of time (i.e. vacation), you may want to let the coaches know. This will provide the coaches knowledge of your child's absence, rather than concern as to the well being for your child if they are missing for more than a week.

In the summer, do we attend both morning and afternoon practice?

No. We provide two practice times, daily. This ensures all of our participants, and their families can find sometime during the week to attend practice. We do not allow participants to attend morning and afternoon practices.

You can attend whichever practice works best for your schedule. Morning one day, afternoon another day is very common.

How do coaches I let the coaches know my child will not be at a swim meet?

We have a swim meet signup procedure. You will sign your child up for the swim meets he/she will be able to attend. That he/she cannot attend; you will fill out that line accordingly.

In addition, you will also be given the choice to sign your child up for individual events (7/8 and above can participate in no more than 3 individual events per swim meet). It is advised that your child have the opportunity to swim each event, at least once, by the end of the season.

How are relays formed?

The swimmers who compose the relay teams for any given swim meet are selected by the coaches, at their discretion, on the basis of team needs within the age group for the strokes involved.

What are the relays?

There are two group relays; Free Relay (all age groups participate in this relay) and Medley Relay (7/8 and above participate).

Free Relay is where each relay member swims freestyle.

6/U and 7/8 relays, swim a total of 4 laps (one lap per swimmer)

9/10 and above swim a total of 8 laps (two laps per swimmer)

Medley Relay is where each relay member swims a specific stroke. The order of the relay is: Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, Freestyle.

6/U do not participate in this relay

7/8 and above swim a total of 4 laps (one specific stroke per swimmer)

In addition there is an Individual Medley Relay for ages 9/10 and up. The individual will swim all 4 strokes (Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle)

What is a Shark Buddy?

Shark Buddies is a mentor type program where we randomly pair an older swimmer with a younger swimmer. The intent is the two will get to know one another throughout the season; showing support, encouraging of personal best and in general, creating a unique bond of friendship. Exchanging of notes and gifts is very common and encouraged, however this should never create a financial hardship. The Sharky Store will have “Buddy Grams” available for purchase, and the Activities committee will provide opportunities for the buddies to get together.

If you signed up to be a buddy – please make the effort to get to know your buddy. The confidence of your buddy depends on the effort.

Are there any rules to what they should be wearing?

Swim suit is always required (no cut offs allowed in the pool), however we do not enforce team suits for all swimmers. Suits: Arrive at practice in a swimsuit appropriate for practice.

It is recommended girls wear a one-piece swimsuit that allows for flexibility in the arms without straps sliding down.

Boys will find that they will swim faster in racing jammer style suits than in traditional swim trunks.

To save your team suit, we recommend the purchase of any other training style swimsuit or jammer. Always rinse your child’s swimsuit out with cold water, and allow to air dry.

Do all swimmers have to wear caps?

No as cap wearing is a matter of preference. It is recommended any child with long hair wear a cap, as it keeps the hair out the eyes, and can slow down a swimmer too.

If you put a little baby powder or cornstarch into the cap before placing it on your swimmer’s head, it will go on with ease. Girls with long hair might want to pull it into a pony first and then pull it all under the cap.

There are two types of swim caps – latex and silicone. If you have are having trouble with the swim cap, you might try another type to see if it works better.

Do all swimmers have to wear goggles?

We recommend all swimmers should wear goggles. Please take time to adjust the goggles before practice. If the goggles are new, you might have your child try the goggles in the bathtub to see if they work before coming to practice. Many young swimmers get upset when their goggles don’t fit correctly because they get water into their eyes. The coaches can help adjust goggles if necessary, but it saves everyone a lot of time if the goggles are fitted prior to practice. There are many different brands and styles of swim goggles. If you have some that are not working for your swimmer, go to a swim shop that will help fit the goggles on your child’s face.

What do we bring to practice?

Your child, who is wearing a swim suit, cap, goggles and swim suit. Are you laughing?

Depending on how many children you have for practice and what age groups – you might be there a long time. Suggestions are: sunscreen, water, light snacks, child’s medicine (inhaler), books, puzzles, games, balls, toys for siblings, and anything extra as many families will be so thankful if you can share that something they might be missing.

How do my children get their ribbons?

We have family files and they will sit on deck. Each family has a file and your child’s ribbons will be placed in the file.

Please do not have your children pick up their ribbons during a swim meets, unless they are told to do so.

How do you communicate with the families?

Mass communication is most commonly done through email (is your email current? Are you getting our emails?).

We will also post copies of all correspondence on our bulletin board.

What is "Shark Bytes"?

Shark Bytes is our newsletter. The newsletter is scheduled to come out appx. 4-6 times during the season; more or less as needed.

We post the Shark Bytes on line as well and it will be posted on the bulletin board too.

How long do swim meets last?

Depending on the team we are swimming against, a swim meet can last 4-6 hours, and in some cases has known to go longer.

6/Unders only participate in the Free Relay (2nd event of the meet) and individual Free and individual Back. Once your child's events are complete, you are free to leave, unless you choose to stay. Approximately 2 hours after a meet has started is when 6/U families begin to leave.

Swim meets can be long, and if the weather is hot, they can be miserable. Please keep hydrated, and make sure everyone is wearing sunscreen. If the temperature is high, and the facilities allow for a 10 minute break, then the announcer will allow the parents to jump into the water to cool down. Please follow the rules, as this is for "non-swimmers/adults only".

How does my child get priority registration?

Your child will get priority registration by attending 5 of 8 meets and when you fulfill your volunteer commitment. Each meet counts as one meet (we have 6) and attending champs counts as two meets.

It is important to realize the volunteer commitment is why we can actually have a swim meet. Without the effort of all parents, your child would not have a swim team to participate with.

**CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR THE MOST UP TO
DATE INFORMATION!
WWW.SIERRASHARKS.ORG**