

Lesson 4 Supplement

If you have difficulty with the fingertip drag and drive drill, this supplement breaks down the motion into three separate drills. Master each one in sequence.

Fingertip Drag and Drive Drill Sequence

Initially, these drills should be done very, very slowly and deliberately. Ultimately, they can be done at near swimming speed with swimming breathing. All of these can be done with and without fins. The legs only need to provide a minimal amount of propulsion. Do not worry about kicking when mastering these drills.

Step 1: Half Stroke (a.k.a. Sharkfin)

Start in side balance. You will do one length on one side, with the same arm extended the entire time, and the next length with the other arm. To begin, get comfortable in side balance and then lift the elbow of the upper arm – high and on the **belly** side of your body – **not** behind your back or over your body. Bring the elbow forward, dragging your hand in the water, to a position beside your face. Say “hello” to your hand (out of the corner of your eye, remember that you are looking down.) Memorize that hand position. This is the point at which you will stop dragging and begin driving the hand forward. Not now, though, that happens in the next drill. This is the “sharkfin” position, and you will be struggling a bit not to sink with this much of your arm out of the water. Return the upper arm and hand to your side, while rolling to your back to breathe. Breathe twice and get re-balanced. Repeat until you reach the far end.

Step 2: Single Stroke (a.k.a. Corkscrew)

In this drill you will take a single, stroke with one arm and roll all of the way onto your back to breathe. Then after you have re-balanced and breathed on your back, you will repeat with the other arm (this time rotating in the other direction). Start as above; when your hand comes to your face, **do not stop** but rather drive it forward, replacing the leading hand and at the same time rolling all of the way (270° not a typo!) to your back to breathe. Leave the new leading hand extended out ahead of you (palm up when you are on your back). Take two breaths, get re-balanced and then repeat on the other side.

Step 3: Fingertip Drag-and-Drive Drill

Start as above; rather than rolling to your back for air after the first stroke, perform two or more consecutive fingertip drag-and-drive strokes (alternating). Initially, when it is time to breathe, roll onto your back to breathe and get re-balanced. Do not use swimming breathing until the rotation, timing, and stroking movements are comfortable.

What to think about: (one thing at a time):

- Lead the motion with your elbow.
- Your hands travel along two parallel tracks – they never cross.
- The recovering hand (the one you are dragging forward) follows its track straight ahead.
- The stroking hand (the one pulling back) pulls straight back towards the back of the pool.
- Step 2: Do not hesitate for even a moment when you go from dragging to driving. Make that forward motion seamless.
- Step 3: If having difficulty in this step, focus on **only one arm** at a time. **Right** arm going down the pool, **left** arm coming back.