

Review of Lesson 3

- Fingertip Drag and Drive Drill
- Paddle Blade Stroke Drill

Video: One length each of the above.

This Week's Objective

Perfect these two drills. Practice the fingertip drag and drive drill very slowly until the movements are comfortable and fluid. Practice the paddle blade stroke drill emphasizing rhythm and constant, gentle movement. Later, you can speed it up by rotating your core faster (**NOT** by pulling harder or kicking harder/faster).

Freestyle Swimming

Freestyle swimming is somewhere between these two drills. Take the perfect body position and as much rotation as possible from the finger-tip drag and drive drill, add the rhythm, constant movement and flow from the paddle blade stroke drill, and then add swimming breathing.

Streamlining from the Wall

Streamline posture: Stand up tall, but relaxed. Minimize curves in your spine. Extend both arms over your head, place one hand over the other and lock the thumb of the upper hand over the wrist bone of the lower hand. Squeeze your head between your arms.

To streamline from the wall: Stand sideways to the wall, holding onto it with one hand. (If there is nothing to hold onto, start with your back to the wall.) Drop into the water and into the streamline position as you plant your feet on the wall at shoulder width. Your upper body should be 12-18" below the surface and parallel to it. Push off evenly with both legs and glide, while maintaining a perfect streamline from head to toe. You should glide to the surface, with your body parallel to it.

Streamlining from the wall to freestyle: Streamline from the wall as above. As you feel yourself decelerate, rotate to one side by bringing one leg slightly back (learn to do this on both sides). As you near the surface, take your first kick with your lower leg to begin rotation to the other side, and simultaneously take your first stroke with your lower arm. This "breakout" stroke is a very fast, light and compact stroke to maintain your speed – it is NOT a "power stroke". Begin normal freestyle swimming as you rotate to the other side. Generally speaking, avoid breathing on your first stroke.

Sample Practice Session Following Lesson 4

Streamlining to Freestyle (Without fins)

- Arms:** Extended forward, squeezing the head, hand locked over hand
- Head:** Neutral on spine (chin *not* tucked or lifted)
- Torso:** Parallel to the surface
- Legs:** Push off at shoulder width, bring together and relax. *Do not kick too soon.*
- Rotation:** As you decelerate, rotate to the side.
- First Stroke:** Kick with your lower leg first, at the same time taking a fast, light, and compact pull-out stroke with your lower arm.
- Breathing:** Not until second or third stroke.

Freestyle (With and without fins)

- Head:** Head and eyes straight down when not breathing.
- Breathing:** Relaxed, regular breathing pattern.
- Rotation & Balance:** Perfect **alternating** side balance the entire length. At slower speeds, your belly button goes from wall to wall. As you increase speed, you will rotate less – trading rotation (and stroke distance) for a higher stroke rate and more speed (shorter strokes, but more of them).
- Recovering:** Recover quickly and compactly – no hesitation at the end of the stroke..
- Anchoring:** Hand enters the water and grabs a spot just beyond your reach. Grab an armful of water, keep the elbow high, and hold that position in the water, as you pull your body over the anchor.
- Hands:** Should pass each other well in front of the head (in the “front quadrant”).
- Kicking:** Kick just enough to maintain forward movement, but be sure to keep your legs and hips “high” in the water. Try to stop kicking as you glide from side to side.