

## **Review**

These drills should be looking very good by now!

- Front Float
- Side Balance
- Fingertip Drag and Drive
- Paddle Blade Stroke Drill

## **Kicking**

Practicing kicking is the cod-liver oil of swimming. Do it. It's good for you.

Kick as compactly as possible - within the column that your body moves through, with as little bending of the knees as possible.

When you don't kick right, you pay the price:

- Bent knees apply brakes in front of your body, and in back of it.
- A wide kick may produce more drag than propulsion.
- A kick that is too hard will disrupt your rotation – your lower propulsion system will be working against your upper propulsion system.

Practice kicking on your side – you can practice swimming breathing at the same time.

## **Freestyle Review**

It's basically the Paddle Blade Stroke Drill with gentle, rhythmic kicking.

## **Freestyle – Open Turns**

As you touch the wall with one arm extended, tuck your legs (knees to chest), drop on your back and into the water, streamline and push off evenly, about a foot below the surface. Glide to the surface on your side, and begin stroking again (first stroke is with the lower arm).

When practicing, begin doing two-length repeats (with an open turn between).

## **Video**

One length freestyle followed by an open turn and a couple of strokes.

## **Sample Practice Session Following Lesson 5**

Learn to structure your practice session.

**Have a Plan:** Know what you are going to do before getting into the water. If you don't have a plan, you have no way to evaluate your progress, no map to follow. Ideally, you should write out a complete plan before going to the pool. It should contain warm-up, main set, and cool-down segments as described below. Relaxation and loosening up at the start, and stretching at the end, should be part of every workout – you will not need to write those components down. In the real world, you may not always have time to write a workout. When that happens, get in the water with a single technique focus in mind, and stick with it for the duration of your workout. For example, you might decide that today you are going to focus on keeping your hips high – swim every length with that focus – don't worry about all of the other stuff.

**Loosen Up:** Before getting into the pool, loosen up and lubricate your joints one at a time by moving your ankles, knees, hips, torso, shoulders, and hands in small circles. Be sure that you do *not* stretch before your workout – stretching cold muscles can cause injury.

**Relax:** Put all of your non-swimming problems in the locker, then close it and lock it. (They will still be there when you are done.) Relax by lying face-down on the bottom of the pool or by balancing at the surface. Let go of all of the stress of the day and become completely involved in your swimming practice.

**Warm Up:** Start slowly, become calm, establish a normal breathing pattern. Work on getting relaxed and loose. Start with long, slow strokes. Continually lengthen your stroke or do whatever helps you to feel that you are gradually getting your whole body involved in the stroke. Allow at least five minutes for this.

**Main Sets:** Use a variety of drills and swimming sets. Try to have a single technique focus for the workout, regardless of what drills and swimming sets you use. (Leave at least ten minutes for cooling down and stretching.)

**Cool Down:** Swim slowly – flush out the lactic acid. Do not skimp on this part of the workout. Try taking a stroke off your stroke count on successive laps. Swim quietly. Swim compactly.

**Stretch:** Out of the pool. Stretch all of your major muscle groups, using the following guidelines: No extreme or painful movements. No bouncing or sudden movements. On each stretch, apply gentle pressure and then ease off. Repeat each stretch at least three times, stretching a little further each time.

**Take Notes:** What worked or didn't work? Maybe sketch out the next workout.