

Warm UP and Review of Fundamentals

Posture, kicking, breathing. Vertical kicking (kick in 3s). Begin rotational vertical kicking.

Recovery Basics

Recovery is what you do with your arm from the end of a stroke until that arm is back out front again and ready to begin another stroke. For open water and endurance swimming, a high-elbow recovery is best. It is also the easiest to learn and use at varying speeds.

Fingertip Drag 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. The goals are to:

1. Train your recovering arm to move directly forward.
2. Train your elbow to remain in front of your body plane (that protects your shoulder).
3. Train your core to maintain its balance at the surface while your body rolls through a variety of orientations.
4. Train your extended arm to wait out front until the recovering arm passes the head.

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

Begin kicking gently in side balance facing the near wall. Keep the same arm extended for the entire length. Start with the upper arm resting on your side, bent at the elbow, with the forearm and hand across the belly. Then form the “sharkfin” by lifting 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 straight 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. Slide the upper arm and hand back to its resting position on your side. Initially, roll to your back to breathe (leaving that same arm extended) – breathe twice and then get re-balanced on your side before repeating the sharkfin. Later, when swimming breathing is comfortable and your balance at the surface is good, use swimming breathing. At the end of each length, rest for 4-5 breaths and then return on the opposite side.

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

Start as above, but instead of stopping your hand at your head, **drive** it forward while taking a stroke with the other arm, rolling all of the way over onto your back, leaving the recovering arm out front and the stroking arm where the stroke ends. Don't worry much about how the stroke is done (yet). Take two breaths and get rebalanced on your back. Then roll down onto the side with the extended arm, and repeat. You will be alternating arms, rotating in opposite directions on each stroke. **Note:** Do not hesitate for even for a moment when you go from dragging to driving. Make that recovery motion a single, seamless movement.

Step 3: Fingertip Drag

Start as above, but rather than rolling to your back for air after the first stroke, perform two or more consecutive fingertip drag strokes. 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 and balance are comfortable.

Sample Practice Session Following Workout 2

About 45 minutes (as often as possible) – this is all low intensity work to train balance and the high-elbow recovery movement.

- **Bottom Float:** Relax on the bottom – get your body *and your mind* into the water.
- **Vertical Kicking:** Five minutes: each minute kick for 45 seconds and rest for 15. Kick in 3s and rotate body one-quarter turn every third kick.
- **Front Float:** Five minutes. At first, use a foam noodle to support your feet. When you can do it, kick away the noodle and remain balanced at the surface. When balance at the surface becomes comfortable, challenge your balance by moving arms apart and back together, then legs apart and back together. Try to relax every muscle in your body that you are not using to balance in the front float position.
- **Posture and Balance Drills:** Perform each of the following drills for five minutes. Rest at each wall and get re-focused. The number of yards you complete are not at all important at this point. Retraining your neuromuscular system is what counts:
 - **Back Balance:** Two minutes.
 - **Side Balance:** Five minutes – practice swimming breathing on each side.
 - **360° Balance:** Five minutes.
- **Fingertip Drag Half Stroke (Sharkfin):** Five lengths on each side.
- **Fingertip Drag Single Stroke (Corkscrew):** Five laps.
- **Fingertip Drag:** Five laps.

Video Clips

Have a look at the Fingertip Drag Drill clip on the following webpage:

http://www.breakwatersportstraining.com/drill_videos_arms.html

Workout Notes Online

Notes for each workout will available online from the following webpage. If you have taken a previous program, note that this webpage is new, as these workout notes are changing:

<http://www.breakwatersportstraining.com/newhandouts.html>