FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA SWIM LESSONS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

REGISTERING FOR LESSONS

Q **Do we need to be Y members to sign up for swim lessons?**

A Yes, all swim lesson participants must have an active YMCA of Southern Maine Membership. We offer a variety of memberships and Financial Assistance to ensure swim lessons are accessible for all. Please contact us so we can help find the right membership for you.

Q **I want to sign my child up for lessons, but am unable to afford them. Can you help?**

A Yes! We are committed to serving all, regardless of ability to pay. Our Financial Assistance program is designed to ensure that all can access critical programs like swim lessons. Find our Financial Assistance Application here, and please contact us with any questions.

Q **For how long does each session run?**

A Swim lessons meet once a week for 8 weeks.

Q **How long is each class?**

A
- Infant/Toddler Stages A & B – 30 min.
- Preschool Stages 1, 2, 3 & 4 - 30 min.
- School Age Stages 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 – 45 min.

Q **For what ages are you offering lessons? Do you have teen and adult classes and is the curriculum the same?**

A At launch, lessons will primarily focus on children ages 6 months -12 years. Limited teen and adult classes may be available at some branches. We are working on adding more over time. They will follow the same curriculum with age appropriate updates.

Q **What age level is appropriate for my child?**

A
- 6 months to 2 years old = Infant/Toddler
- 3 years to 5 years old = Preschool
- 6 years to 12 years old = School Age

Q **I'd like to bring my children to the same class. Can I sign them up for the same stage even if they don't meet all the prerequisites?**

A No, while we understand the desire to condense lessons into one class for your family, children must meet all age and skill prerequisites to participate in a particular stage. Classes are designed based on safety and progression.

If your child's swimming abilities are higher or lower than what is required for the stage, being in the wrong class will limit their growth and learning and create a safety concern.

Q **For which stage should I register my child? I'm accustomed to the old "fish" lesson names.**

A Our Lesson Selector explains the skills and prerequisites needed for each Stage. We'd be happy to discuss your child's skill level and where they'd best fit.

Q **I couldn't get into the swim lesson I wanted. When does the next session start?**

A Our swim lesson sessions run for eight weeks. As we launch, we know demand will be high. We are working to expand our offerings as we progress through the new year. Sessions run for two months and registration opens two weeks prior to each session. Please see our Schedules Page for more information.

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YMCA SWIM LESSONS
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SAFETY AROUND WATER

Q What will my child learn in swim lessons?

A Each swim lesson stage focuses on the mastery of a specific skillset. The stages are progressive, based on age and skill, and organized in three major categories, with several classes offered at each level:

- **Swim Starters (Stages A & B)** – Accompanied by parents, infants and toddlers will learn to be comfortable in the water and develop swim readiness skills.
- **Swim Basics (Stages 1, 2 & 3)** – Students learn safety around water (general water safety topics and Swim, Float, Swim and the Jump, Push, Turn, and Grab safety benchmarks) and achieve basic swimming competency.
- **Swim Strokes (Stages 4, 5 & 6)** – Students build stroke technique (rhythmic breathing, breaststroke, butterfly, diving) and master water safety.

Q How will my child move through the stages?

A Your child will be ready to progress to the next stage when they have accomplished all of the benchmark skills taught in their current stage.

Swimmers will often repeat a stage to ensure they've mastered the skills. We all learn at a different pace and encourage swimmers and families to take the time needed to practice and grow.

COVID SAFETY PROCEDURES

Q Why are guardians required to be in the water for Preschool Stages 1 and 2?

A Stages 1 and 2 are our beginner classes and require close contact with the student. Maintaining physical distancing is important as we navigate the pandemic. With a guardian in the water to assist their child, we can help ensure the safety of the child, instructor and family. This is also a great opportunity for guardians to learn and bond with their child.

Q Can I wear a facemask in the water when I am with my child for Stage 1 or 2?

A We understand the important role facemasks play in keeping us safe from COVID. Unfortunately, wearing a mask in the water poses a drowning hazard. For this reason, facemasks are not allowed when in the pool. If you wish, you may wear a face shield. Our instructors will all wear face shields, and we ask that everyone wear facemasks on the pool deck and elsewhere in the Y.

Q How do you keep the equipment clean?

A We provide each swim lesson participant with their own set of cleaned and color-coded equipment at the start of each class. This equipment will not be shared among class participants. We sanitize the equipment at the end of each class following CDC recommendations.

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ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Q **Is there a place to change?**

A Yes, our locker rooms are open, although with a reduced capacity. Because of this, we do encourage you to arrive at lessons already in your bathing suits.

Q **Can I drop my children off for lessons and work out or leave the Y?**

A It depends on the age of your child(ren). All participants are expected to follow our Youth Facility Access rules regarding child supervision on the pool deck.

Q **Can we use goggles during the lesson?**

A Goggles are a great swimming tool for Stages 3, 4, 5 and 6.

They are not recommended for Stages 1 and 2 as the class' benchmark skills require students to learn how to put their face in the water without goggles.

Closed-nose (Scuba) goggles are not allowed in lessons.

Q **Can we bring our floaties to the lesson?**

A No, we ask that you leave your water toys at home. The Y will provide all equipment necessary for the lesson other than bathing suits, water diapers and rubber pants.

Q **My child isn't potty trained, is that ok?**

A Yes, children who aren't potty-trained need to wear two tight-fitting layers – a swim diaper AND rubber pants. A bathing suit does not qualify as a tight fitting layer. This is very important. If we have an accident in the pool, we may need to close it for up to 24 hours.

Swim diapers and rubber pants can be purchased at major retailers like Walmart, Target, Amazon, etc. If you need assistance obtaining appropriate swim attire please speak with us so we can help.

Q **Can I free swim after my lesson ends?**

A We encourage all participants to exit the pool in a timely manner after their swim lesson ends. This will allow us to clean equipment and prepare for the next class.

Please check with the lifeguard to see if there is an open lane before starting your swim. To learn more about our operations during the pandemic, see What to Expect.

All children must wear swim test bands while open/free swimming. Please speak with the Membership Desk about having your child swim tested.

Child Supervision Rules must be followed at all times.

WE'RE HERE FOR EVERYONE

All ages—from infants to seniors—can learn to swim.

If you have questions, please contact us. We're here to help.

Casco Bay Branch, Freeport: 207-865-9600
Greater Portland Branch, Portland: 207-874-1111
Northern York County Branch, Biddeford: 207-283-0100

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