

Swim Classification Procedures

The swim classification of individuals participating in a Boy Scouts of America activity is a key element in both Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat. The swim classification test should be renewed annually, preferably at the beginning of each outdoor season. Traditionally, the swim classification test has only been conducted at a long-term summer camp. However, there is no restriction that this is the only place the test conducted. It may be more useful to conduct the swim classification prior to a unit going to summer camp and will give your unit much more time to prepare the campsite on Sunday.

All persons participating in BSA aquatics are classified according to swimming ability. The classification test and test procedures have been developed and structured to demonstrate a skill level consistent with the circumstances in which the individual will be in the water. The Swimmer's Test demonstrates the minimum level of swimming ability for recreational and instructional activity.

The various components of each test evaluate the several essentials to the minimum level of swimming ability. Each step of the test is important and should be followed as listed below.

Swimmer's Test:

The swimmer test demonstrates the minimum level of swimming ability required for safe deep-water swimming. The various components of the test evaluate the several skills essential to this minimum level of swimming ability:

Jump feet first into water over your head in depth, swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy, resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be swum continuously and include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating.

The test administrator must objectively evaluate the individual performance of the test, and in so doing should keep in mind the purpose of each test element.

"Jump feet first into water over your head in depth ...

The swimmer must be able to make an abrupt entry into deep water and begin swimming without any aids. Walking in from shallow water, easing in from the edge or down a ladder, pushing off from side or bottom, and gaining forward momentum by diving do not satisfy this requirement.

" ... Swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl. .. "

The swimmer must be able to cover distance with a strong, confident stroke. The 75 yards must not be the outer limit of the swimmer's ability; completion of the distance should show sufficient stamina to avoid undue risks. Dog-paddling and strokes repeatedly interrupted and restarted are not sufficient; underwater swimming is not permitted. The itemized strokes are inclusive. Any strong side or breaststroke or any strong overarm stroke (including the back crawl) is acceptable.

" ... swim 25 yards using an easy, resting backstroke ... "

The swimmer must perform a restful, free-breathing backstroke that can be used to avoid exhaustion during swimming activity. This element of the test necessarily follows the more strenuous swimming activity to show that the swimmer is, in fact, able to use the backstroke as a relief from exertion. The change of stroke must be accomplished in deep water without any push-off or other aid. Any variation of the elementary backstroke may suffice if it clearly allows the

swimmer to rest and regain wind.

" ... The 100 yards must be swum continuously and include at least one sharp turn ... "

The total distance is to be covered without rest stops. The sharp turn demonstrates the swimmer's ability to reverse direction in deep water without assistance or push-off from side or bottom.

" ... After completing the swim, rest by floating."

This critically important part of the test evaluates the swimmer's ability to maintain himself in the water indefinitely even though exhausted or otherwise unable to continue swimming. Treading water or swimming in place will further tire the swimmer and therefore is unacceptable. The duration of the float test is not significant, except that it must be long enough for the test administrator to determine that the swimmer is resting and likely could continue to do so for a prolonged period. Drown-proofing may be sufficient if it is clearly restful, but it is not preferred. If the test is completed except for the floating requirement, the swimmer may be retested on the floating only (after instruction) provided that the test administrator is confident that the swimmer can initiate the float when exhausted.

Beginner's Test

Jump feet first into the water over the head in depth, level off, swim 25 feet on the surface, stop, turn sharply, resume swimming as before, and return to starting place.

The entry and turn serve the same purpose as in the swimmer test. The swimming can be done with any stroke, but no underwater swimming is permitted. The stop assures that the swimmer can regain a stroke if it is interrupted. The test demonstrates that the beginning swimmer is ready to learn deepwater skills and has the minimum ability required for safe swimming in a confined area in which shallow water, sides, or other support is less than 25 feet from any point in the water.

Administration of Swim Classification Test (You may choose one of these)

Option A (at camp)

The swim classification test is completed the first day of camp by Camp Aquatics personnel.

Option B (Council conducted/council controlled)

The council controls the swim classification process by predetermined dates, locations and approved personnel to serve as aquatics instructors. When the unit goes to a summer camp, each individual will be issued a buddy tag under the direction of the Camp Aquatics Director for use at the camp.

Option C (At unit level with other approved aquatics resource people):

The swim classification test done at unit level should be conducted by one of the following council-approved resource people: Aquatics Instructor, BSA; Aquatics Supervisor; BSA Lifeguard counselor; swimming instructor; or swim coach. When the unit goes to a summer camp, each individual will be issued a buddy tag under the direction of the Camp Aquatics Director for use at the camp.

Special Note: When swim tests are conducted off-site prior to the camp session, the Aquatics Director shall at all times reserve the authority to review or retest all participants to ensure that standards have been maintained.

Unit Swim Classification Record

This is the individual's swim classification as of this date. Any change in status after this date i.e., nonswimmer to beginner or beginner to swimmer, would require a reclassification test by the Camp Aquatics Director. Those not listed on this form will be tested upon arrival at camp.

Unit Number: _____ Date of Swim Test: _____

Check Appropriate Column for Swim Classification

	Full Name (please print)	Non-Swimmer	Beginner	Swimmer
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				

Certification As: (please circle)

Aquatics Instructor, BSA Aquatics Supervisor BSA Lifeguard Counselor

American Red Cross Water Safety Instructor/Certified Lifeguard

Swim Coach (School _____) (Please attach copy of certification)

I attest to the validity of the preceding information as a certified lifeguard. A copy of my certification is attached. I understand that classifying an unqualified Scout as a swimmer, or beginner could endanger the health and safety of the individual and others.

Name of Person Conducting Test _____

Print Name _____ **Signature** _____

Unit Leader

Print Name _____ **Signature** _____

Special Note: When swim tests are conducted off-site prior to the camp session, the Aquatics Director shall at all times reserve the authority to review or retest all participants to ensure that standards have been maintained.

Form invalid without attachment of a COPY of Certification Card