
the complete guide to

swimming
breaststroke

**learn, improve and fine-tune basic
breaststroke technique**

**fully illustrated with
practical exercises**

mark young

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breaststroke

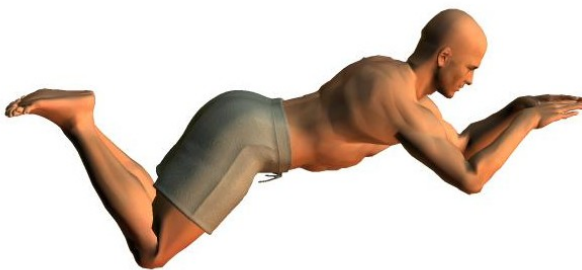
body position, legs, arms, breathing and timing

Breaststroke is the oldest and slowest of the four swimming strokes. It is also the most inefficient of all strokes, which is what makes it the slowest. Propulsion from the arms and legs is a consecutive action that takes place under the water. A large frontal resistance area is created as the heels draw up towards the seat and the breathing



technique inclines the body position also increasing resistance. These are the main reasons that make this stroke inefficient and slow.

This stroke is normally one of the first strokes to be taught, especially to adults, as the head and face is clear of the water, giving the swimmer a greater



perception of their whereabouts and their buoyancy. There are variations in the overall technique, ranging from a slow recreational style to a more precise competitive style. Body position should be as flat

and streamlined as possible with an inclination from the head to the feet so that the leg kick recovery takes place under the water.

The leg kick as a whole should be a simultaneous and flowing action, providing the majority of the propulsion.

The arm action should also be simultaneous and flowing and overall provides the smallest propulsive phase of the four strokes.

The stroke action gives a natural body lift which gives the ideal breathing point with each stroke and a streamlined body position during the timing sequence of the arm and leg action is essential to capitalise on the propulsive phases of the stroke.

body position

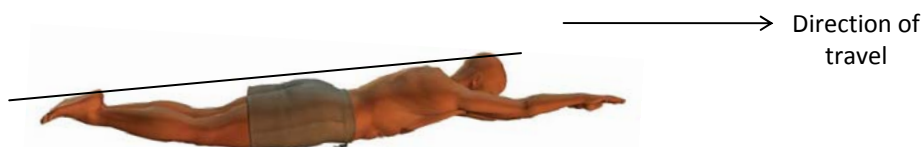
The body position should be inclined slightly downwards from the head to the feet.

The body should be as flat and streamlined as possible with an inclination from the head to the feet so that the leg kick recovery takes place under the water.

Head movement should be kept to a minimum and the shoulders should remain level throughout the stroke.



Body position at a slight angle if the head is above the water surface



Body position flatter and more streamlined during the glide phase when the face is submerged

The main aim should be good streamlining, however the underwater recovery movements of the arms and legs together with the lifting of the head to breathe, all compromise the overall body position. In order to reduce resistance created by these movements, as the propulsive phase of an arm pull or leg kick takes place, the opposite end of the body remains still and streamlined.

The stroke exercises contained in the following part of this book form a reference section for each aspect of breaststroke swimming stroke.

what are they?

Each specific exercise focuses on a certain aspect of the swimming stroke, for example the body position, the leg kick, the arms, the breathing or the timing and coordination, all separated into easy to learn stages. Each one contains a photograph of the exercise being performed, a graphical diagram and all the technique elements and key focus points that are relevant to that particular exercise.

how will they help?


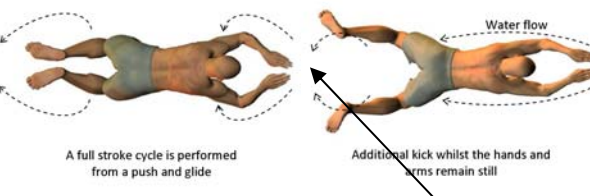
They break down your swimming stroke into its core elements and then force you to focus on that certain area. For example if you are performing a leg kick exercise, the leg kick is isolated and therefore your focus and concentration is only on the legs. The technical information and key focus points then fix your concentration on the most important elements of the leg kick. The result: a more efficient and technically correct leg kick. The same then goes for exercises for the arms, breathing, timing and coordination and so on.

will they improve your swimming strokes?

Yes, definitely! These practical exercises not only isolate certain areas but can highlight your bad habits. Once you've worked through each element of the stroke and practiced the exercises a few times, you will slowly eliminate your bad habits. The result: a more efficient and technically correct swimming stroke, swum with less effort!

how to use this section

The page layout for each exercise follows the same format, keeping all relevant information on one page. The aims, technical focuses and key points are all listed with a photograph and graphical diagram of the exercise.

Stroke The stroke being practiced	Stroke part The aspect of the stroke being practiced	Exercise The name and photograph of the exercise being practiced
BREASTSTROKE	Timing	Two kicks, one arm pull
		
Aim The basic aim of the exercise	Aim: to perfect timing whilst maintaining a streamlined body position. From a push and glide, the swimmer performs a 'pull, breathe, kick, glide' stroke cycle into another streamlined glide. They then perform an additional kick whilst keeping the hands and arms stretched out in front. This encourages concentration on timing and coordination and at the same time develops leg kick strength.	
Technical Focus Keys parts of the stroke technique	Technical Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Legs should kick into a glide ○ Legs should kick as the hands and arms recover ○ A glide should follow each leg kick ○ Head lifts to breath with each arm pull 	Key Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kick your body into a glide ○ Pull, breathe, kick, glide
 <p>A full stroke cycle is performed from a push and glide</p> <p>Additional kick whilst the hands and arms remain still</p> <p>Water flow</p>		
Diagram A breakdown of the key part of the exercise		

BREASTSTROKE: Legs

Prone position with a float held under each arm



Aim: to practise and develop correct leg technique in a prone position.

Using two floats aids balance and stability and encourages correct body position whilst moving through the water.

Technical Focus

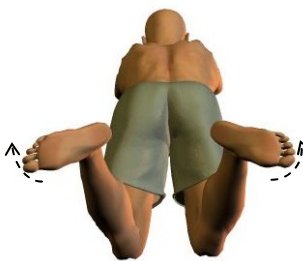
- o Leg kick should be simultaneous
- o Heels are drawn towards the seat
- o The feet turn out just before the kick
- o Feet kick back with knees inline with the hips
- o Feet come together at the end of the kick

Key Actions

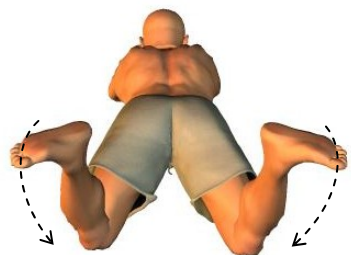
- o Keep your knees close together
- o Point your toes to your shins
- o Drive the water backwards with your heels
- o Glide with legs straight at the end of the each kick



Heels are drawn up towards the seat. Soles face upwards



Feet turn outwards to allow the heels and soles to aid propulsion



Heels push back and outwards in a whip-like action

The Complete Guide to Swimming Breaststroke is the perfect quick-fix for anyone wanting an easy to follow, concise and simplistic guide book. For the complete beginner, this book helps to learn and understand the basic stroke, and for the established swimmer to adjust and improve. The 21 fully illustrated exercises contained in this book cover all aspects of the stroke and can help any beginner to learn and practice, and any swimmer to eliminate bad habits and fine-tune their breaststroke.

“A simple, yet highly detailed guide to helping anyone learn, improve and enhance their breaststroke technique in easy simplistic steps”

Mark Young – author

Mark Young is a well established swimming instructor with over twenty years experience of teaching thousands of adults and children to swim. He has taught countless beginners from scratch and turned many of average ability into advanced swimmers. This book draws on his experiences and countless successes to put together this simplistic methodical approach to mastering breaststroke swimming technique.

