

# How To Teach Breaststroke

Basic technique drills, step-by-step lesson plans and  
everything in-between

A swimming teacher's definitive guide to teaching  
breaststroke swimming stroke

**Mark Young**

**Download** the full version of this book here:

<https://www.swim-teach.com/how-to-teach-breaststroke.html>

# Contents

	Page
<b>What makes a good teacher?</b>	7
<b>Equipment</b>	15
<b>Breaststroke Technique</b>	23
<b>Exercises</b>	33
Body Position	36
Leg Kick	46
Arms	58
Breathing	68
Timing & Coordination	76
<b>Lesson Plans</b>	79
Whole Stroke	84
Body Position	90
Leg Kick	96
Arms	102
Breathing	108
Timing & Coordination	114

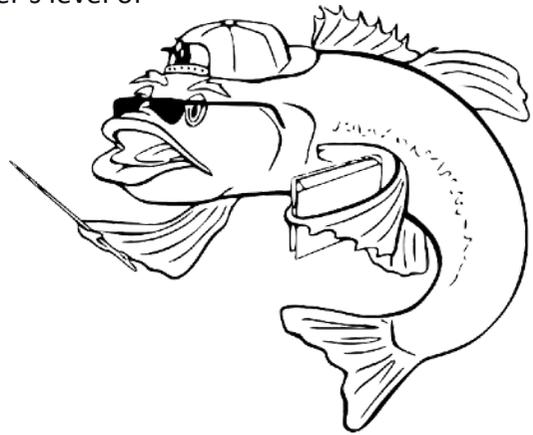
**Download** the full version of this book here:

<https://www.swim-teach.com/how-to-teach-breaststroke.html>

# What makes a good teacher?

A teacher is looked up to by their pupils as a role model and a source of knowledge and guidance. A teacher possesses several key characteristics that make him or her individual and it is these personal characteristics that can determine a teacher's level of success.

A good swimming teacher requires a wide range of qualities. You will probably be stronger in some areas than others and as you gain experience you will build your competence in all areas.



## Teaching Qualities

To be a good teacher and role model to your pupils, you need to possess some essential qualities. These are:

### Knowledge

Having sound knowledge of your subject gains you respect, not only from your pupils but from parents and other swimming teachers. You will need to keep your knowledge up to date and always admit when you don't know the answer, but make it your business to find out.

### Empathy

Teaching swimming requires empathy on all levels. For example, the child who is scared and has every reason to be, the adult who is equally scared or even embarrassed, the child who is over-excited at the prospect of going in the pool and the child who is trying hard but not keeping up with the rest.

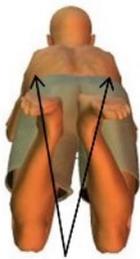
**Download** the full version of this book here:

<https://www.swim-teach.com/how-to-teach-breaststroke.html>

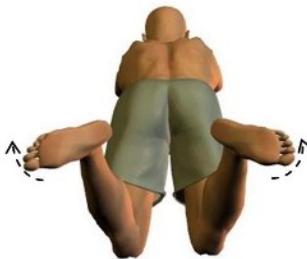
## Leg Kick

The essential teaching aspect of the legs is that the action is a series of movements that flow together to make one sweeping leg kicking action.

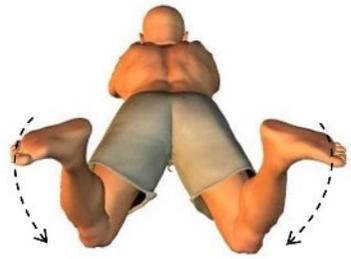
A swimmer or teacher needs to recognise the difference between the wedge kick and the whip kick in breaststroke. The leg action provides the most significant propulsion in the stroke, and swimmers will favour a wedge kick or a whip kick, depending on which comes most naturally. For a whip kick, the legs kick in a whip-like action with the knees remaining close together. For a wedge kick, the legs kick in a broader, more deliberate circular path.



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 leg kick as a whole should be a simultaneous and flowing action, providing the majority of the propulsion. Knees bend as the heels are drawn up towards the seat, and toes are turned out, ready for the heels and soles of the feet to drive the water backwards. The legs sweep outwards and slightly downwards in a flowing circular path, accelerating as they kick and return together and straight, resulting in a streamlined position.

**Download** the full version of this book here:

<https://www.swim-teach.com/how-to-teach-breaststroke.html>

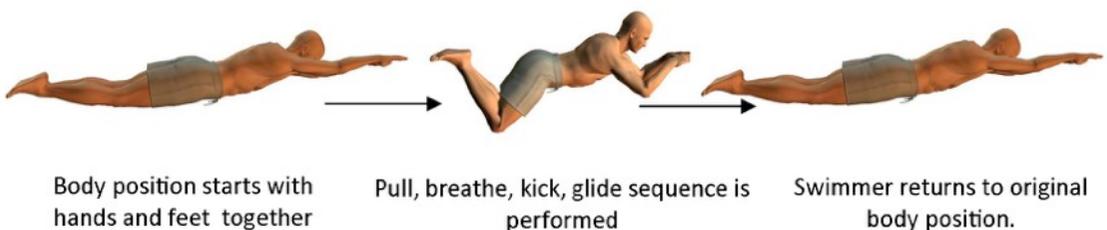
## Timing

The coordination of the propulsive phases should be a continuous alternating action, where one propulsive phase takes over as one ends. The stroke timing can be summed up with the following sequence: pull, breathe, kick, glide.

A streamlined body position at the end of that sequence is essential to capitalise on the propulsive phases of the stroke. Breaststroke timing can be considered another way: when the arms are pulling in their propulsive phase, the legs are streamlined, and when the legs are kicking in propulsion, the arms are streamlined.

Full body extension is essential before the start of each stroke cycle.

Decreasing or even eliminating the glide and using the arm and leg actions in an almost continuous stroke to give more propulsion is a more competitive variation of stroke timing.



## Common Mistakes

**Download** the full version of this book here:

<https://www.swim-teach.com/how-to-teach-breaststroke.html>

## 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.

### Teaching Points

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

### Teacher's Focus

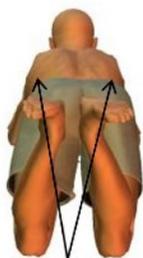
- Leg kick should be simultaneous
- Heels are drawn towards the seat
- The feet turn out just before the kick
- Feet kick back with knees inline with the hips
- Feet come together at the end of the kick

**Download** the full version of this book here:

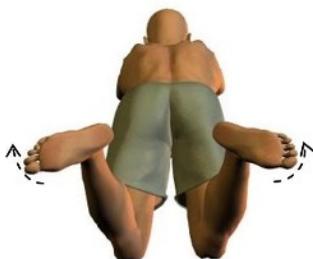
<https://www.swim-teach.com/how-to-teach-breaststroke.html>

## Legs

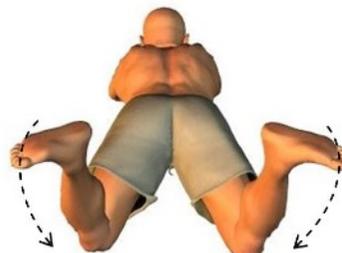
Prone position with a float held under each arm



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

Common Faults	Remedy
One foot turns out, causing a 'scissor' like kick	Repeat earlier leg practices
Legs kick back and forth	Reiterate the teaching point, demonstrate and practice
Legs kick is not simultaneous	Reiterate the teaching point, demonstrate and practice
Toes are not pointed at the end of the kick	Reiterate the teaching point, demonstrate and practice

**Download** the full version of this book here:

<https://www.swim-teach.com/how-to-teach-breaststroke.html>

## Lesson Sequences

Lesson plans are laid out in a sequence (beginner, intermediate, advanced) to give the teacher easy reference to other lessons, exercises, and activities. This layout should allow for easier differentiation across varying abilities.

Lesson plans do not have to be followed in sequence, although they can be if you wish. Each plan has its aim and therefore can be used in sequence with other lessons aimed at that level to suit the individual pupil or pupils.

**These lesson plans and the exercises and activities are set out as a guide.** Every pupil is different and will interpret and respond to practices and teaching points in their way, therefore as a swimming teacher; it is essential to be flexible in your approach. In other words, where a pupil finds a particular exercise difficult, choose an easier exercise from a previous plan. Where a pupil is not quite grasping the concept of what you are teaching, try using a different phrase or teaching point.

## Teaching Points

Teaching points are our ‘magic words’. Having various teaching points in our virtual tool kit can be extremely useful. For example, when you say to a pupil ‘point your toes, and they just don’t get it, you change the teaching point to ‘kick with floppy feet’. Suddenly, they are kicking with relaxed ankles and pointed toes.

Learning to be creative with our teaching points can be a very powerful skill and can be the difference between a pupil struggling and that light bulb moment when they suddenly understand and can do it.

**Download** the full version of this book here:

<https://www.swim-teach.com/how-to-teach-breaststroke.html>

# Lesson Plan #8

**Lesson type:** breaststroke leg kick

**Level:** adult or child intermediate

**Previous learning:** basic breaststroke technique

**Lesson aim:** to strengthen and develop basic breaststroke leg kick

**Equipment:** floats, buoyancy aids and hoop

Exercise/Activity	Teaching Points	Organisation	Duration
<b>Entry:</b> swivel or sitting dive entry	enter slowly	all together	1 min
<b>Warm up:</b> 2 widths full stroke breaststroke	take your time	all together	3 mins
<b>Main Theme:</b> supine leg kick with woggle or floats	kick and glide	all together	2 mins
kicking with a float held under each arm	snap feet together	waves	3 mins
kicking with one float held in front	kick with power	waves	3 mins
kicking with one float held in front adding a glide	feet together when gliding	waves	3 mins
kick with floats held under each arm plus breaths	kick and blow	waves	3 mins
2 widths full stroke breaststroke	breathe, kick, glide	all together	3 mins
<b>Contrasting Activity:</b> sitting dives	chin to chest	one by one	3 mins
push and glide through a submerged hoop	hands and feet together	one by one	3 mins
<b>Exit:</b> using the pool steps	take your time	one by one	1 min

Total time: 28 minutes

**Download** the full version of this book here:

<https://www.swim-teach.com/how-to-teach-breaststroke.html>

## Lesson #8 Assessment

<b>Lesson Objective:</b> to strengthen and develop basic breaststroke leg kick.		
<b>Below average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Above average</b>
		
<b>Attempts to demonstrate but does not show the correct technique</b>	<b>Able to perform most of the technique correctly some of the time</b>	<b>Performs the technique correctly most of the time</b>

Assessment			
Legs kick simultaneously with power			
Feet turn outwards			
Feet return together with toes pointed			
Kick is followed by a streamlined glide			

**Download** the full version of this book here:

<https://www.swim-teach.com/how-to-teach-breaststroke.html>