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To **download** the full version of this book **including all exercises**, go to:
<http://www.swim-teach.com/how-to-swim-front-crawl.html>

front crawl

an overview

Swimming with good front crawl technique is a desire that many long for. Whether its for competition, triathlon or just to feel and look good in your local pool, front crawl is the swimming stroke everyone wants to know how to swim well.

Front crawl is the fastest, most efficient stroke of them all. This is largely down to the streamlined body position and continuous propulsion from the arms and legs.

The alternating action of the arms and legs is relatively easy on the joints and the stroke as a whole develops aerobic capacity faster than any other stroke. In competitive terms it is usually referred to as Freestyle.

The constant alternating arm action generates almost all of the propulsion and is the most efficient arm action of the four basic swimming strokes. The leg action promotes a horizontal, streamlined body position and balances the arm action but provides little propulsion.

Front crawl breathing technique requires the head to be turned so that the mouth clears the water but causes minimal upset to the balance of the body from its normal streamlined position.

The timing and coordination of the arms and legs occur most commonly with six leg kicks to one arm cycle. However, stroke timing can vary, with a four beat cycle and even a two beat cycle, which is most commonly used in long distance swims and endurance events.

body position

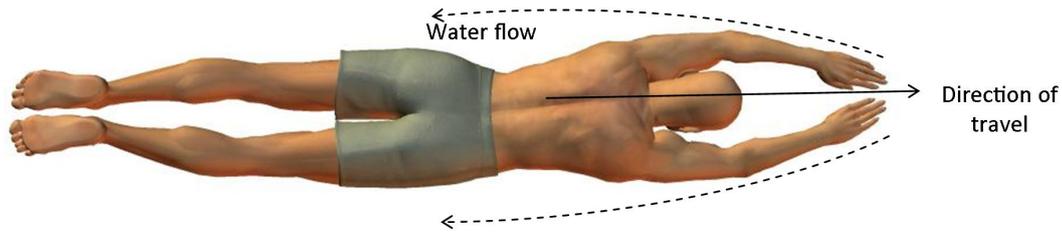
The overall body position for front crawl is as streamlined and as flat as possible at the water surface, with the head in-line with the body.

The waterline is around the natural hairline with eyes looking forward and down.



If the position of the head is raised it will cause the position of the hips and legs to lower which in turn will increase frontal resistance, causing the stroke to be inefficient and the breathing technique to be incorrect.

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Streamlined body position minimises drag, allowing efficient movement through the water

Shoulders remain at the surface and roll with the arm action. Hips also roll with the stroke technique, close to the water surface and the legs remain in line with the body.

Common Body Position Mistakes

The common body position mistakes made are with head position and hand and feet position during the stroke.

If the head is too high over the water surface, it will cause the legs and feet to be lower under the water surface and cause the overall body position to be angled and therefore very inefficient.

Hands and feet must be together throughout the swimming stroke as this gives the body its streamlined efficiency, allowing it to move smoothly through the water.

If the hands or feet move apart it causes the overall shape of the body in the water to become wider and therefore inefficient.

The best exercise to practice perfecting the correct body position and shape is a push and glide from the poolside. The swimmer pushes off from the pool wall or floor and glides across the water surface, keeping the head central and hands and feet touching together.

legs

The legs kick in an up and down alternating action, with the propulsive phase coming from the down kick. There should be a slight bend in the knee due to the water pressure, in order to produce the propulsion required on the down kick.

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front crawl: stroke exercises

beginners to learn and swimmers to improve

The stroke exercises contained in the following parts of this book form reference sections for each aspect of front crawl swimming stroke.

What are they?

Each specific exercise focuses on a certain part 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 front crawl 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 front crawl?

Yes, definitely! These practical exercises not only isolate certain areas but also 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 front crawl, swum with less effort!

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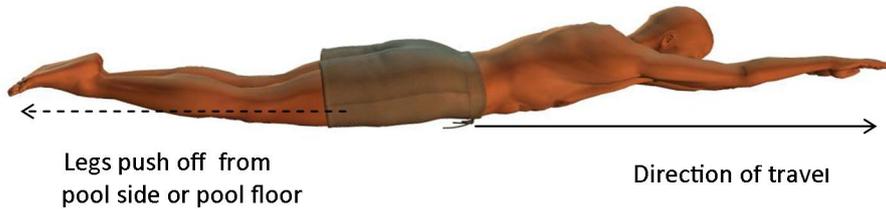
FRONT CRAWL: Body Position

Push and glide from standing



Aim: to develop correct body position and confidence in pushing off.

The swimmer can start with arms stretched out in front and pushes off from the pool floor or from the wall with one foot and glides through the water unaided.



Key Actions

Push hard from
Keep your head
Stretch out as fa
Keep your hand
Keep your feet t

Technical Focus

Initial push sho
Head remains st
Face submerged
Shoulders shoul
Legs in line with

Common Faults

Failure to subme
Push off is too w
Whole body is n
Feet are not tog

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