

DOLPHIN SWIM CLUB BABY SWIM CLASS ORIENTATION

Welcome to Baby Swim! You have made the best choice for your baby by giving them a lifelong gift of swimming. We at the Dolphin Swim Club would like to take a few minutes to give you an idea of what to expect from class and why we do what we do! We pride ourselves in being a progressive, smart program that teaches your child safety in and around the water, strengthens fine and gross motor muscles, and develops cognitive skills.



We know there is an amazing amount of activities, classes, and toys to choose from for your baby. We want you to know that Dolphin Swim Club's Baby Swim class aims to teach your child a skill that is not only fun and stimulating to your baby's development, but has the greatest and longest-lasting reward a class can offer: a life-saving skill that your child can use and enjoy his/her entire life. We are excited that you are joining with us to teach your baby this skill.

WHY IS IT A "SMART" CLASS?

When children learn to swim at an early age, they are healthier, better coordinated, have enhanced social skills, and in general are more cognitively advanced than their non-swimming peers. When your baby enters the water, amazing things happen. You are enhancing your baby's development by being conscious of their natural love for water. Babies in water experience a heightened, multi-sensory stimulation involving touch, hearing, sight, and taste.¹ You as a parent will learn techniques that offer physical, emotional, and psychological support for baby's innate affinity to water.

WHAT SKILLS SHOULD I EXPECT MY CHILD TO LEARN?

Babies will work on basic skills that will be the building blocks for swimming. Our Baby Swim class focuses on breath control, water comfort, floating, moving through the water, kicks, and safety.

WHAT WILL WE DO IN CLASS?

Your trained instructor will fill your thirty-minute class with exercises, games, and songs all geared to teach your baby the above listed skills and make him/her smart around the water. Here are a few things to know about our class structure and vocabulary your instructor will use.

Why Do We Use "Cues" and How Do You Practice Them?

Cues prepare the child for the skill to come. When we repeatedly say, "One, two, three," or show baby to draw a big breath by our facial cues, the child learns to hold its breath when it hears or sees your cue. This is learning. We use verbal, facial, and other physical cues to help babies learn skills such as breath control for going under water. Repetition, recognition, and association are great learning tools for your child in everyday life. For swimming, we suggest you practice these cues at home during bath time to increase their understanding.

What are Holds?

The way you hold your baby in the water is key to your child's natural floating ability. Our goal in class is to let your baby feel the water and experience it in a positive way. The "harbor hold" is when the parent extends one's arms in front while the baby's arms hang over the parent's forearms. This allows baby to hang freely in the water with little support. A "sandwich hold" is when a parent positions one hand on the middle of the baby's back and one on baby's front, allowing you to properly submerge your child or help him float on his back.² Other holds may be introduced in your class depending on your child's age and ability. If you have any questions along the way, feel free to ask!

Why Do We Sing in Class?

Singing is fun! Children respond in a positive way to songs, and it helps all of us get to know each other. Songs are also a great distraction from concerns and can get babies excited about new skills. Songs can also help guide class and give your child a great cue of when a skill begins and ends.

PROGRESS WILL CHANGE THROUGH THE FIRST TWO YEARS!

As you know kids grow up fast! As a child grows, not only do their motor skills change, but their center of gravity changes as well. Babies will go through many learning stages throughout class, so do not get discouraged if your baby needs to "re-learn" a skill; it is a completely normal part of the learning process.



WHAT DO I DO IF MY CHILD IS UPSET?

Not every day will be easy. Sometimes babies will get upset; know that it is normal and it will pass. We suggest comforting the child by holding them close. Another great way is to step away and take time to distract and calm the child through toys, song, or just a hug. As soon as your baby is calm, please return to class. Remember to praise your baby throughout class, and even when they get upset, tell them you were proud for trying and remember to give lots of high fives and smiles!

We are so excited to start this journey with you and your child.

We'll see you in the pool!

1. Studies undertaken by the Sports Academy, Cologne, West Germany by Liselott Diem, A West German Child Development Researcher: The Federal Minister for Education and Science: Public Relations Bulletin, March 28, 1979

2. Aquatic Beginnings: Connecting Natural Aquatic Environment from Birth and Beyond by Debbie Marrs-Sayers, B.S Founder- Aquatic Education Specialist



DOLPHIN SWIM CLUB – A Learn-to-Swim School

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