

Parent Guide for the first swim meet

What you should bring:

1. Team suit, cap and goggles (an extra pair of goggles is a good idea!)
(Baby powder or Talcum powder will help to preserve the swim cap and keep it from sticking).
2. Have your child wear their team T-shirt if they have one.
3. Chairs- most pools don't have much seating on deck so bring your own chairs.
4. Towels- more than one is a good idea.
5. Something to sit on. Example: sleeping bag, old blanket, or anything that will be comfortable to sit on. The swimmers will be spending a lot of time on it.
6. Sweat suit or Parka, bring one.
7. Flip-flops or deck shoes (especially for outdoor meets)
8. Games: travel games, coloring books, books, anything to pass the time.
9. Food: Each swimmer and family should bring a small cooler with food. It is better to bring snacks. They usually have snack bars at the meet, but the lines are long and most of the time they only sell junk food.
10. Water bottle – Even swimmers can get dehydrated – Drink lots of water.
11. \$\$ for meet program. Usually these are between \$5.00 - \$7.00 and will tell you when your child is swimming.
12. \$\$ for relays. These cost \$1.75 each and the coach will let you know at the meet if your child will be in a relay. The parents do not select relays for the kids.
13. Highlighter- for marking your child's races in the program. (If you have more than one child it helps to bring a different color for each.)
14. Sharpies- some of the kids like to write their events/lanes etc. on their arm.
15. As a spectator keep in mind that the indoor pools can get very hot inside so dress accordingly!!
16. Outdoor meets: sunscreen and a hat!
17. Your meet entry form will tell you what time warm-up begins, usually an hour before the first event. Coaches will remind the kids the day before the meet when to arrive at the pool.
18. Remember, you must check in at the Clerk of Course at least one half hour before your first event.

Once you have attended one or two meets this will all become very routine. Please do not hesitate to ask any other Team parent for help or information! These meets are a lot of fun for the swimmers! They get to visit with their friends, play games, and meet kids from other teams. They also get to "race" and see how much they have improved from all the hard work they have put in at practice.

Special Parent's Note The pool area is usually very warm. Therefore, you need to make sure you dress appropriately. Nothing is worse than being hot at a swim meet. It makes the time pass very slowly! At most of the meets, the parents and swimmers sit together as a team. This is a very important social aspect of swimming . If you don't think that the ground is comfortable, feel free to bring folding chairs to sit on and easy ups to guard from the sun.

When you arrive at the pool:

1. When you arrive look for other Otter swimmers and parents. The coaches would like the kids to sit together as a team.
2. Buy a program so you will know when your child is swimming.
3. During warm up you can highlight your child's events. Notify the coaches when they are not busy if your child is missing from a race they were entered into.
 - a. Most meets we attend will be swum slowest to fastest. Kids with no times (NT) will usually swim in one of the first heats.
 - b. The kids usually write their event numbers on their arm.

Reading the Heat Sheet:

- A. The very first time your child swims a race they will be listed as 'NT' meaning they do not have an official time in that event. Once they have an official time, their time will be recorded as their 'seed time' at the next swim meet and their heat will be based on this time.
- B. The Events are posted in order usually alternating girls (odd) and boys (even) events.
- C. An event will post with heat and lane assignments in the designated areas approximately 10-20 minutes before the event is swum. Your child needs to get the heat and lane assignment information to their coach as soon as they know it. The coaches sit in a designated area on the deck so the kids can easily find them.
- D. Encourage your child to cheer for their team mates when they are not swimming.
- E. Your child should talk to their coach before and after their races.
- F. Make sure your child gets to their lane, behind their block on time. Coaches will be watching swimmers and talking to swimmers about their races and cannot be looking for swimmers.

Very Basic Swimming Rules

rules for swimming are very in depth, these are just a few quick pointers you can watch for

Starts

The swimmers are not allowed a false start. If they jump the start and the starter thinks they are trying to get an advantage (whether intentional or not), they may be taken out of the race.

Turns and finishes

1. Freestyle: feet have to touch the wall
2. Backstroke: swimmers have to be on their back when they touch the wall. After they touch, they can then turn around, but they must push off on their back. More advanced swimmers may use a flip turn, where they will roll onto their stomach right before the wall and execute a flip turn which must be done in one continuous motion. At the finish a swimmer must finish on their back. A swimmer may not roll over and grab the wall until they have first touched it.
3. Breaststroke and Butterfly:
 - A. Swimmers have to touch with both hands at the same time.
 - B. A swimmer may not freestyle kick off the wall in either breaststroke or butterfly.
 - C. When swimming butterfly, both arms must move at the same time.
 - D. No scissor kick is allowed.

Meet Results:

Encourage your swimmer to do their best and have fun. Results are usually posted on a wall at the meet as they become available. These will show their official time and place for each event. The coaches also get all results after the meet and the results are available on the swim connect website. If your child places in an event, ribbons are given to the coaches and are given out as a team at the next practice. How the meet is scored and awarded is usually on the meet information or the meet program and can vary from meet to meet. Encourage your child to go out and have fun and not worry about placing or getting ribbons.

Disqualifications: If your child is disqualified (DQ'ed) in an event the officials will usually talk to them after the race and explain why. The coaches are also notified of the reason and will talk to your child. This helps them learn the rules and helps the coaches know what they need to work on in practice. Try to keep your child from getting discouraged when this happens. The most important thing to remind your child is to go out and have fun!!

Receiving Awards in Public

Whenever there is a system of presenting awards at a meet, it is customary for swimmers to be prompt and to cooperate fully with dignity and respect at the presentations. A team uniform may be worn when accepting the award. It is also customary for the Willits Otters swimmers to be polite and modestly thankful for any awards they receive. It is appropriate to congratulate other swimmers and receive the same with poise and a "thank you". Good sportsmanship is essential. If photos are being taken, we ask the swimmer to remain until the shooting is complete, being sure to cooperate with the photographer. Do not ham it up! The picture may be special to someone else. The image a swimmer presents is a direct reflection of the team.

Team dinners:

Occasionally the team will organize a team dinner at an out of town meet. Listen for announcements of this during the meet for the time and place. This is a great way to for you and your child to meet other swim families and is a great team building activity.

OUT OF TOWN MEETS

Trips to meets in other cities become an important aspect of a swimmer's career while advancing through the age group ranks. Willits Otters Swim Team has established the following policies for the safety of the swimmer and peace-of-mind of parents:

1. Parents are to be responsible for arranging transportation and lodging to away meets, with the exception of Nationals and those competitions so designated. **DO NOT ASK YOUR SWIMMER(S) TO HANDLE THIS JOB.** Oftentimes, a certain hotel will be designated as "team headquarters."
2. Parents are encouraged to attend out-of-town meets with their swimmers and to chaperon other youngsters. These trips can be great fun for parents and swimmers alike. They also are a rare opportunity to participate in a special way in each young swimmer's career.
3. A coach has too many responsibilities to the entire team to accept responsibility for an individual swimmer. Therefore, do not ask a coach to provide transportation.
4. Any swimmer riding in a car is responsible to the parent/driver for their behavior.
5. A medical release and emergency telephone number should be given to the parent/driver with whom your swimmer is riding in case emergency medical treatment is required.
6. An appropriate contribution is expected from each passenger in a car to the driver/owner to help defray gasoline and related expenses.