



ISD SPORTVEREIN E.V. SWIMMING

LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS

PURPOSE

This document describes the ISD and ISD Sportverein swimming levels from first water confidence to advanced swim training. The structure is designed to help parents, swimmers and coaches understand the main focus of each level, the entry requirements, the expected development goals and the criteria used for progression to the next level.

- Progression should be based on the promotion criteria and the coach's professional judgement, not (only) on distance or age.
- A swimmer may repeat a level if technique, confidence or safety behaviour are not yet stable enough for the next group.
- Children may develop unevenly. A swimmer can be strong in stamina but still need more technical or confidence work before moving up.

LEVEL OVERVIEW

Level	Main focus	Short description
A	Water confidence and buoyancy	Getting used to the water, reducing fear, basic self-rescue
B	First independent swimming	Learning first swimming technique and swimming 15 m independently
C	Water safety and stable basic swimming	Building control, stamina, backstroke and deep-water confidence
D	Three-stroke development	Learning basic freestyle and improving breaststroke/backstroke techniques
E	Structured swim training and endurance	Longer distances, basic starts, turns, timing and race formats
F	Semi-competitive training	Training in all four strokes, speed, turns and race-specific skills
COMP SQUAD / MASTERS	Advanced swim training	Advanced technique, pacing, starts, turns and NECIS preparation

LEVEL A

Focus	Water confidence and buoyancy
Type	Beginner lessons
Goals	Getting used to the water, becoming comfortable in the water and developing fun self-rescue abilities.
Entry requirements	No previous swimming experience required. The swimmer should be able to wade evenly in approximately 90 cm deep water.
Key skill	The swimmer understands and begins to use the concept of buoyancy.

DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Reduce fear of water through gradual exposure.
- Submerge face under water and open eyes underwater.
- Build confidence through jumping, diving and gliding with and without assistance.
- Experience floating and learn to use buoyancy instead of fighting against the water.
- Move back to the pool edge from a short distance of approximately 1-2 m with assistance or minimal support.

PROMOTION CRITERIA

- The swimmer can enter the water with increasing confidence.
- The swimmer can put the face in the water and tolerate short submersion.
- The swimmer shows basic gliding and floating ability with support.
- The swimmer can move back towards the pool edge from a short distance.
- The swimmer demonstrates the Level A key skill: using buoyancy rather than panic or resistance.

LEVEL B

Focus	First independent swimming
Type	Learn-to-swim lessons
Goals	Learning first swimming technique and developing the ability to swim independently over a short distance.
Entry requirements	Level A graduation or Level A key skill. The swimmer should be comfortable in the water and able to use basic buoyancy.
Key skill	The swimmer can swim approximately 15 m independently.

DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Learn breaststroke as the first main swimming stroke, initially with and later without flotation aids.
- Improve body position, breathing rhythm and coordinated arm-leg movement.
- Develop basic distance diving up to approximately 3 m.
- Develop basic deep diving skills up to approximately 1.2 m, depending on pool depth and swimmer readiness.
- Build confidence through jumping into deeper water and returning safely to the pool edge.
- Learn different jumps and their purpose, such as pencil jump and cannonball.

PROMOTION CRITERIA

- The swimmer can swim approximately 15 m independently without flotation aids.
- The swimmer can submerge, exhale underwater and recover calmly.
- The swimmer can jump into deeper water and return to the pool edge.
- The swimmer demonstrates basic diving confidence.
- The swimmer demonstrates sufficient independence to progress into technical and stamina-focused lessons.

LEVEL C

Focus	Water safety and stable basic swimming
Type	Intensive lessons
Goals	Building stamina, improving water safety, introducing backstroke and developing reliable deep-water confidence.
Entry requirements	Level B certificate or Level B key skill. The swimmer must be able to swim independently for approximately 15 m.
Key skill	The swimmer can move safely and independently in deep water, swim longer distances with control and demonstrate basic self-rescue skills.

DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Learn backstroke basics, including breaststroke legs on the back, kicking legs and basic arm movement.
- Improve previously learned strokes, especially breaststroke technique, breathing and body position.
- Build the ability to swim longer distances with control and without excessive fatigue.
- Improve general water skills: jumping from the 1 m board, deep diving up to approximately 2 m and distance diving up to approximately 5 m.
- Develop deep-water confidence and basic self-rescue behaviour.

PROMOTION CRITERIA

- The swimmer can swim longer distances with control, typically at least 25-50 m depending on age and pool setting.
- The swimmer demonstrates controlled breaststroke with recognizable technique.
- The swimmer demonstrates basic backstroke ability.
- The swimmer can move independently and calmly in deep water.
- The swimmer shows basic self-rescue skills, including returning to the pool edge after jumping or losing balance.
- The swimmer demonstrates the Level C key skill: safe and independent movement in deep water.

Note: This level should not be described as absolute water safety. It means the swimmer has developed reliable basic swimming capability in a supervised pool setting.

LEVEL D

Focus	Three-stroke development
Type	Intensive lessons
Goals	Learning basic freestyle while improving stamina and technique in previously learned strokes.
Entry requirements	Level C certificate or Level C key skill plus coach recommendation.
Key skill	The swimmer can demonstrate three different strokes and swim at least two of them confidently over a longer distance without excessive fatigue.

DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Learn basic freestyle technique, including body position, leg kick, arm movement and breathing rhythm.
- Continue technical training in breaststroke and backstroke.
- Improve endurance and the ability to swim with consistent technique over longer distances.
- Learn safe head-first entry from the pool edge where permitted and appropriate.
- Develop confidence with higher jumps, including 3 m board exposure where allowed by pool rules and swimmer readiness.

PROMOTION CRITERIA

- The swimmer can demonstrate breaststroke, backstroke and basic freestyle.
- The swimmer can swim at least two strokes confidently over a longer distance without excessive fatigue.
- The swimmer can follow technical instructions and make visible corrections in the water.
- The swimmer shows sufficient stamina and independence for structured group training.
- The swimmer demonstrates the Level D key skill: understanding and swimming three different strokes.

LEVEL E

Focus	Structured swim training and endurance
Type	Group lessons / group training
Goals	Developing the ability to swim longer distances, maintain technique under fatigue and participate in structured swim training.
Entry requirements	Level D certificate or Level D key skill.
Key skill	The swimmer can maintain recognizable technique over longer distances and participate confidently in structured swim training.

DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Build stamina towards longer continuous swimming distances, up to approximately 800 m depending on swimmer age and readiness.
- Learn basic butterfly movements and sculling technique.
- Improve all previously learned strokes: breaststroke, backstroke and freestyle.
- Learn basic starts from the starting block and 1 m board where permitted.
- Introduce basic turns, timed swimming and swimming against the clock.
- Introduce races, relays and lane discipline.
- Introduce basic rescue transport or towing techniques if this is part of the curriculum.

PROMOTION CRITERIA

- The swimmer can maintain recognizable technique over longer distances.
- The swimmer can participate safely in a structured lane-based group training environment.
- The swimmer understands basic starts, turns, timing and relay formats.
- The swimmer demonstrates first butterfly movements and basic sculling.
- The swimmer is prepared for advanced recreational training or the transition into semi-competitive training.

LEVEL F

Focus	Semi-competitive training
Type	Group training
Goals	Introducing competitive swimming principles, faster swimming, advanced turns and training in all four strokes.
Entry requirements	Level E certificate or Level E key skill.
Key skill	The swimmer can train in all four strokes, perform basic race-specific starts and turns and is ready for semi-competitive or competitive swim training.

DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Build strength, stamina and speed on a semi-competitive level.
- Train all four strokes: breaststroke, backstroke, freestyle and butterfly.
- Improve starts, streamline position and underwater phases where appropriate.
- Introduce flip turns and other stroke-specific turning techniques.
- Develop pacing, interval training and basic race preparation.
- Support swimmers who may wish to continue into Masters, NECIS or comparable team environments.

PROMOTION CRITERIA

- The swimmer can train in all four strokes with basic technical understanding.
- The swimmer can perform basic race-specific starts and turns.
- The swimmer can complete structured training sets with consistent effort and lane discipline.
- The swimmer shows readiness for advanced recreational or semi-competitive swim training.
- The swimmer demonstrates the Level F key skill: readiness for advanced training beyond standard group lessons.

COMP SQUAD / MASTERS

Focus	Advanced swim training
Type	Advanced group training
Goals	Advanced technical training, competitive swimming, starts, turns, pacing and race preparation.
Entry requirements	Level F key skill, coach recommendation or suitable NECIS/swim-level swimming ability. NECIS participation is not mandatory.
Key skill	The swimmer can participate in advanced swim training with a focus on technique, pace, endurance, starts and turns.

DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Advanced technical training in all four strokes.
- Starts, turns, underwater phases and race-specific skills.
- Pacing, interval training, endurance sets and speed development.
- Preparation for NECIS or comparable school/club competitions where applicable.
- High-level recreational training for swimmers who want to continue beyond Level F.

NECIS PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

- The swimmer can participate in advanced lane-based swim training.
- The swimmer can complete technical and endurance sets with focus and discipline.
- The swimmer can work on starts, turns, pace and race preparation.
- The swimmer is suitable for high-level recreational or competitive swim training.