



# How to...



**WOW!**  
Swimmer Michael Phelps, who won 28 Olympic medals, including 23 golds, is the most decorated Olympian of all time.

## Be a stronger swimmer

You can level up your skills in the water this summer.

One of the best physical activities you can do in summer is swimming. Maybe this is the summer you want to pass a deepwater test at your community pool or summer camp. Or maybe you'd like to swim laps. Here's how to be a more confident swimmer.

### Know water safety

The most important step to being a good swimmer, whether you're a beginner or advanced, is to be safe around water. First, be sure never to swim alone. Always swim where a lifeguard is watching and with a buddy. Enter the water feet first, and pay attention to designated swim areas marked by rope or lane lines. Look around for ladders, steps, or sides of the pool where you can safely exit the water.

### Build the basics

You can practice the building blocks of swimming in waist-deep water. Being able to float and tread water are essential safety skills. To float, have an adult or friend gently support your back while you practice floating face up until you can do it on your own. To tread water, move your legs in a bicycle motion while you rotate your arms stretched

out beside you, with cupped hands. Ask someone to time you to see how long you can tread water without holding the wall or touching your feet to the bottom. Set a goal to work toward, such as treading water for one to three minutes.

### Develop your strokes

Four main strokes are recognized in competitive swimming: freestyle (also called the front crawl), backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly. Do whichever strokes you enjoy most! The most popular stroke is freestyle. If you want to get stronger at it, focus on keeping your head down and eyes on the bottom of the pool (don't look up!). Alternate your arms extending into the water in a circular motion, while turning your head to the side to breathe. Use your legs to flutter kick forward.



Practice your favorite strokes.

### Just keep swimming!

The best way to get stronger at swimming is to swim more often. If you can, try to swim three or more days per week. Ask your family about taking swim lessons or joining a summer swim team, which may be offered at a nearby pool or lake.

### 3 fun pool games



**Air ball** Stand in waist-deep water away from other players. The goal: Tap a beach ball with your hands to pass it to others and keep it in the air as long as possible without letting it touch the water.

**Sharks and minnows** A "shark" is at one side of the pool. "Minnows" line the other. Each side swims to the opposite wall as the shark tags the minnows, making them sharks for the next round, until one minnow is left.

**Marco Polo** This classic game is named for the 13th-century Venetian explorer. One player closes their eyes and yells out "Marco." Players respond "Polo" and avoid being tagged.