

# Unit Swim Classification Form

The Boy Scouts of America has developed guidelines concerning the swim classification testing, which we usually do Sunday at check-in at summer camp. You may complete your units swim classification test prior to coming to camp if you choose to do so. The following steps must be followed to complete the unit swim classification test prior to camp.

1. The swim classification test must be conducted by one of the following individuals: Aquatics Director BSA (BSA Camp School Certified), Aquatic Supervisor BSA (BSA Camp School Certified), Lifeguard Instructor BSA, BSA Lifeguard, Red Cross Lifeguard Instructor, Red Cross Lifeguard, or Water Safety Instructor. All of the above must be 21 years of age or older. When the unit arrives at summer camp, each individual will be issued a buddy tag under the direction and discretion of the camp Aquatics Director.
2. A copy of the reviewer's certificate or card must be attached to the Unit Swim Classification Test Record form.
3. Complete the classification test after January 1st of the summer camp year. Any illness or injury that occurs after the swim test needs to be addressed at camp. It is not necessary that the entire unit use this process. Swim checks can still be done at camp upon arrival for part or all of a unit.
4. The Unit Swim Classification Test Record **must be turned in prior to arriving at camp**. Please turn the form in at least one week prior to attending camp. Completed forms can be mailed or dropped off at the Western Colorado Council, 839 Grand Ave, Grand Junction, CO 81501. If you do not wish to mail the form, please send it to our Camp Director Drew Bair via e-mail at [andrew.bair@scouting.org](mailto:andrew.bair@scouting.org)

## Swim Classification Procedures

The Swim classification of individuals participating in a Boy Scout of America activity is a key element in both Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat. The swim classification tests should be renewed annually and no more than 6 months prior to summer camp. Traditionally, the swim classification test has only been conducted at a long-term summer camp, and that option will still be available.

All persons participating in BSA aquatics are classified according to swimming ability (Adults included!). The swimming tests have been developed and structured to demonstrate a camper's swimming ability and to assign the camper to a water depth appropriate to his swimming ability.

The various components of each test evaluate the several skills essential to the minimum level of swimming ability. Each step of the test is important and should be followed as listed below:

It is very important that the test be administered exactly as stated. Do not make exceptions or deviations for any reason. If there is any question, have the scout retest at camp.

There are three qualification levels in the BSA Swim test. The first is the SWIMMER, which will allow Scouts to swim in all swim areas and boat in open areas of the water. The second is BEGINNER, which will permit limited boating and swimming, the final is a NON-SWIMMER, which will permit wading, and boating only with qualified accompaniment in safe watercraft.

**The Summer Camp Aquatics Director reserves the right to retest a camper if he or she has any reservations about the swim classification assigned through the unit pre-camp swim testing.**

## Swimmer

Jump feet first into water over the head in depth, level off, and begin swimming. Swim 75 yards in a STRONG manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl (no dog-paddle or swimming underwater for long periods of time); then swim 25 yards using an easy, resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be completed in one swim without stops and include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating.

The test administrator must objectively evaluate the individual performance of the test, and in so doing should keep in mind the purpose of each test element.

1. "Jump feet first into water over the head in depth, level off, and begin swimming..."

The swimmer must be able to make an abrupt entry into deep water and begin swimming without any aids. Walking in from shallow water, easing in from the edge or down a ladder, pushing off from side or bottom, or gaining forward momentum by diving do not satisfy this requirement.

2. "...Swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl;..."

The swimmer must be able to cover distance with a strong, confident stroke. The 75 yards must not be the outer limit of the swimmer's ability; completion of the distance should give evidence of sufficient stamina to avoid undue risks. Dog-paddling, strokes repeatedly interrupted and restarted are not sufficient; underwater swimming is not permitted. The itemized strokes are inclusive. Any strong side or breaststroke is acceptable.

3. "...swim 25 yards using; an easy, resting backstroke..."

The swimmer must indicate the ability to execute a restful, free-breathing backstroke that can be used to avoid exhaustion during swimming activity. This element of the test necessarily follows the more strenuous swimming activity to show that the swimmer is, in fact, able to use the backstroke as a relief from exertion. The change of stroke must be accomplished in deep water without any push-off or other aid. Any variation of the elementary may suffice if it clearly provides opportunity for the swimmer to rest and regain wind.

4. "...The 100 yards must be completed in one swim without stops and include at least one sharp turn..."

The total distance is to be covered without rest stops. The sharp turn simply demonstrates the swimmer's ability to reverse direction in deep water without assistance or push-off from side or bottom.

5. "After completing the swim, rest by floating."

This critically important component of the test evaluates the swimmer's ability to maintain in the water indefinitely even though exhausted or otherwise unable to continue swimming. Treading water or swimming in place will further tire the swimmer and are therefore unacceptable. The duration of the float test is not significant, except that it must be long enough for the test administrator to determine that swimmer is, in fact, resting and could likely continue to do so for a prolonged time. If the test is completed except for the float requirement, the swimmer may be re-tested on the floating only (after instruction) provided that the test administrator is confident that the swimmer can initiate the float when exhausted. Some Scouts, because of buoyancy issues, may not be able to keep their legs up in a float. As long as the Scout can rest, maintain his breathing without going under and without panicking – the swimmer may pass the float.

### **Beginner**

Jump feet first into water over the head in depth, level off, swim 25 feet on the surface, stop, turn sharply, resume swimming as before, and return to starting place.

The entry and turn serve the same purpose as in the swimmer's test. Again, underwater swimming is not permitted. The stop assures that the swimmer can change directions without stopping and regain a stroke if it is interrupted.

### **Non-Swimmer**

No test is required, however all are encouraged to get into the water.

### **Special Notes**

1. When swim tests conducted away from camp or at the point of activity, the Aquatics Director shall at all times reserve the authority to review or retest all participants to assure that standards have been maintained.

2. **Failure to comply with all the requirements of this form will result in a retest at camp.**

3. Incomplete forms, or absence of certification, will result in a retest at camp. The Aquatics Director at camp may review or re-test any Scout whose skills appear to be inconsistent with his classification.

