

This has been put together after lots of requests for sample sets. The items below are the sort of thing to be expected at any of our swim sessions. This will not replace a coach but will help have a plan if swimming on your own for whatever reason. You will get more out of organised club swims plus the benefit of a qualified coach or two. I hope it helps.

You will need to think about the time of year.

- **Winter (off season) concentrate on technique and building aerobic (slow swims little rest).**
- **Next phase, build, keep some aerobic swim in the main set but start adding speed and pacing sets.**
- **Pre season needs to be specific for your event and focus on more speed, long and short.**
- **Race season you can only maintain the level you're at.**

Phil

W/U

250/350 metres mixed strokes

BEFORE W/D

Always finish a session with a few sprints

4 x 25 or 4 x 50

This helps muscle memory for speed.

W/D

250/350 metres mixed strokes

KICK SETS

Only needed in two swims every week.

12 x 25 metres no float.

Either:

- front arms extended shoulder width apart. Palms face floor of pool, hands cupped slightly cupped. To add to this scull with hands.
- Side, shoulder up towards roof, lower arm extended as above. Swap sides every 25. either face looking at bottom of pool or to the side so you can breath as and when, lay ear on arm.
- Back, arms extended above head to an arrow. Rest head on arms as if laying on a bed head on pillow. You really have to stretch out on this (streamlined)
- Back, if head sinks on the above method bring hands to your side (hands in pocket) You should aim to improve kick to perform arms above head.
- Advanced back hold hands in the air.

12 x 25 metres with kick board.

Either:

- Front, head up, hold float at the top, furthest from you.
- Side, hold float at the top in the centre, arm laying across float. Face out of water ear laying on extended arm.
- Back, arms extended above head hold bottom of float. Float should lay on top of water. Again pillow head on extended arms.
- Back, lay float on water above knees. Hold bottom of float, head pillowed. Idea is whilst kicking your knees should stay under the water and therefore not be lifting the float in the air.
- Advanced front hold float vertically, the more of the float in the water the more resistance. Hold float at sides.

For variety you can mix them up. If you use fins never do more than 50% of your kick with them.

6 x 50 metres, any of the above

DRILLS – DO NOT RACE but concentrate on technique

Only complete one set. Each drill in each set is progressive.

Set One – objective to improve rotation and control of stroke. With practise you should be able to put this all together, sculling, shark fin, etc

1. 2 x 25 Lateral kick, one shoulder out of water pointing to roof, lower arm extended, palm facing pool floor slightly cupped.
2. 2 x 25 As above rotate at half length. Breath any time apart from rotation.
3. 4 x 25 as above rotate after 12 kicks
4. 4 x 25 as above rotate after 8 kicks
5. 4 x 25 as above rotate after 6 kicks

To add to this scull with extended hand.

Variation on 12 and 8 kicks add a shark fin. Hand in pocket, lift hand out of pocket i.e. raise elbow not hand.

After 12 kicks add 4 x 25 12 kick drill with 3 full strokes between, then 4 x 25 with 5 full strokes, then 4 x 25 with 3 full strokes.

Set Two – objective high elbows, assisting the pull under the water and high, relaxed, elbow recovery.

1. 4 x 50 as 25 fists, 12.5 half fists, 12.5 swim
2. 2 x 50 as 25 fists, 25 swim
3. 4 x 50 as 25 zip up 25 swim. Zip up - on recovery gently run thumb up your side to neat the arm pit before hand re-enters water just in front of head.
4. 4 x 50 as 25 finger drag, 25 swim
5. 4 x 50 long slow stroke concentrating on high elbow recovery.

As you improve you can add 4 x 50 as drill/swim hand drag and then 4 x 50 drill/swim forearm drag. These two add resistance.

Set Three – to focus on the catch and glide, although can be used to focus on any part of the stroke but focus on the same aspect of the stroke for the whole drill set.

1. 2 x 25 stroke count. Swim normally with normal push off or you're cheating yourself.
2. 1 x 50 stroke count. Is it the same as the same as 2 x 25 total?
3. 4 x 50 drill/swim single arm count to 4 before pulling.
4. 4 x 50 drill/swim catch up count 4 before pulling
5. 4 x 50 drill swim single arm count to 2 before pulling.
6. 4 x 50 drill swim single arm count to 1 before pulling.
7. 2 x 25 stroke count reduce previous count by 1 on each length

Variation you could do all single arm reducing the count from 4 to 1 on each set of 4 x 50 and the same would apply to the catch up. The counting makes sure you finish the front of the stroke placing your hand in a better catch position (4 – 6 inches under the surface).

Variation you can also change the breathing patterns, without the count before pulling suggested breathing pattern is every 2. Catch up could be every 3.

Variation on single arm to improve timing on stroke.

1. 100 as drill/swim 50 single arm drill as 7 pulls right 7 pulls left, 5 pulls right 5 pulls left, 3 pulls right 3 pulls left. 50 swim.
2. 100 as drill/swim 50 single arm drill 4 pulls right 4 pulls left. 50 swim.
3. 100 as drill/swim 50 single arm drill 2 pulls right 2 pulls left. 50 swim.

You may have to think about your breathing on these drills.

Set Four – Objective adding different drills into longer swims. This helps break a longer swim up assisting technique at the same time. The drills need to be progressive through the swim.

Examples:

1. 150 as 25 fists, 25 swim, 25 single arm count 2, 25 swim, 25 fists, 25 swim.
2. 200 as 25 fists, 25 swim, 25 single arm 4 left 4 right, 25 swim, 25 single arm 2 left 2 right, 25 swim, 25 fists, 25 swim.
3. 500 as 25 fists, 25 swim, 25 finger drag, 25 swim, 50 single arm 7L/7R 5L/5R 3L/3R, 50 swim, 25 finger drag, 25swim, 25 fists, 25 swim.

You get the gist, fairly easy to remember, in blocks of 50 or 100 as drill/swim. Like this you could set yourself 6 x 150 etc

Set Five – Objective improve breathing efficiency by varying our breathing pattern

1. 25 breath to weak side
2. 25 breath every 3
3. 25 breath every 4
4. 25 breath every 5
5. 25 breath every 6
6. 25 breath every 7
7. 25 breath every 6
8. 25 breath every 5
9. 25 breath every 4
10. 25 breath every 3

Variation, 50's instead of 25's. try counting strokes per 25 for different breathing patterns.

MAIN SET

Multiples of one type of one of the following. Gradually build the quantity of repeats so you don't lose technique and therefore quality. If you feel the technique is poor, quality gone for whatever reason, normally tired, then stop as you'll gain nothing but bad habits by continuing.

1. Distance – once per week W/U SWIM W/D start the swim at 500 metres adding a little every week. Every fourth week treat as a TT. TT distance depends on length of race training for. Say the first is 400 metres if the second is 600 metres try to hold the same pace as 400. which means for Ironman you'd start with a 800 and hold that pace as you progress through to over 3000.
2. for better swimmers 400 metres as an IM broken into 100's as 25 fly kick, 25 fly single arm, 25 fly single arm, 25 fly full stroke; 25 back kick, 25 back single arm, 25 back single arm, 25 back full stroke; 25 breast kick (hands on hips or over bum), 25 two kicks one pull, 25 two pulls one kick, 25 breast full stroke; 25 front kick, 25 front single arm, 25 front single arm, 25 front full stroke. NB these 40's are continuous swims. If you can't fly then replace with another stroke. Suggest no more than 3 repeats with at least 1 minutes rest.
3. 200 with tumble turns away from wall, no push off from wall and no feet on floor. Rest 30 seconds
4. 100/200 build descend as 25/50 build, 25/50 descend, 25/50 build, 25/50 descend. VERY HARD if pacing wrong.
5. turn around times – 10 x 25's on 30 seconds (may be added at end of a main set), 10 x 50's on 1'10, 100's on 2'10 etc the time includes swim and rest.
6. as above with descending/ ascending times. 7 x 100 on 2'10, 2'05, 2'00, 1'55, 2'00, 2'05, 2'10.
7. Aerobic – 100's or 200s with minimal rest, 5 secs for 100, 10 secs for 200. Again pace it wrong you won't survive.
8. pyramid set, 50, 100, 150, 200, 150, 100, 50 (maybe repeated) rest maybe in seconds 5,10,15,20,15,10. 2 mins between sets.

The session would be:

W/U

DRILL

MAIN SET -may be a couple of items from above e.g 7. 4 x 100 5secs Rest interval (RI). 3. 4 x 200 tumble away from wall RI 20 secs

Few sprints if no speed work already completed

KICK

W/D