



## Breaststroke

### Stroke Coaching Points

- Breaststroke is a valuable survival stroke.
- The arm and leg actions are symmetrical
- The pull facilitates the kick

### Body Position

- The swimmer is in a prone, streamlined position in the water.

### Arm Action

The arm action in breaststroke is simultaneous with an underwater recovery.

### Key Points

- From a front glide position (streamlined), the hands should be pitched down and out.
- Keep elbows high as you scull your hands out and round.
- Hands should sweep back into the body to meet at the upper chest, keeping elbows close to the side of the body
- The arm stroke supports the propulsion from the legs.
- Hands can recover under or over the water, but elbows must remain below the water.
- Arms then stretch forward returning to a streamline position.

### Leg Action

The majority of the propulsion comes from the leg kick. The leg kick in breaststroke is probably the most difficult of all kicks for swimmers to master and may take some time. The leg action is simultaneous and is sometimes described as a “whip kick”.

### Key Points

- Knees should be slightly more than hip width apart.
- Recover the heels close to the hips.
- Keep knees close together and turn the feet slightly out (dorsi-flexion)
- Sweep out and backwards in a circular action, keep feet flexed rather than loose.
- Feet inside hip line during foot recovery





- Finish kick with the legs fully extended, knees and ankles together and toes turned out and down.
- Feet inside hip line during foot recovery.
- The body should now be in a streamlined position.

### Breathing

- Inhaling occurs during the in-sweep or pulling phase of the stroke, which will lift you upwards in order to take a breath through the mouth.
- Exhale under the water through the glide.

### Progressions

- Breaststroke kick drill on edge of pool
- Breaststroke kick – supine-demonstrating correct action
- Breaststroke kick- prone- demonstrating correct action
- Breaststroke arm action using fins and a gentle butterfly kick
- Full stroke

### Drills

- Breaststroke kick using kickboard prone for short distance then extend
- Breaststroke kick using kickboard in a supine position- kickboard over knees
- Breaststroke arm action using fins and a gentle butterfly kick action short distance
- 2 x Breaststroke kicks – 1 x full stroke- swimmer maintains a good streamlined body position
- Full stroke demonstrating correct timing – breathing/arm pull/kick action
- Correct breathing/timing at the start of the inward scull action.



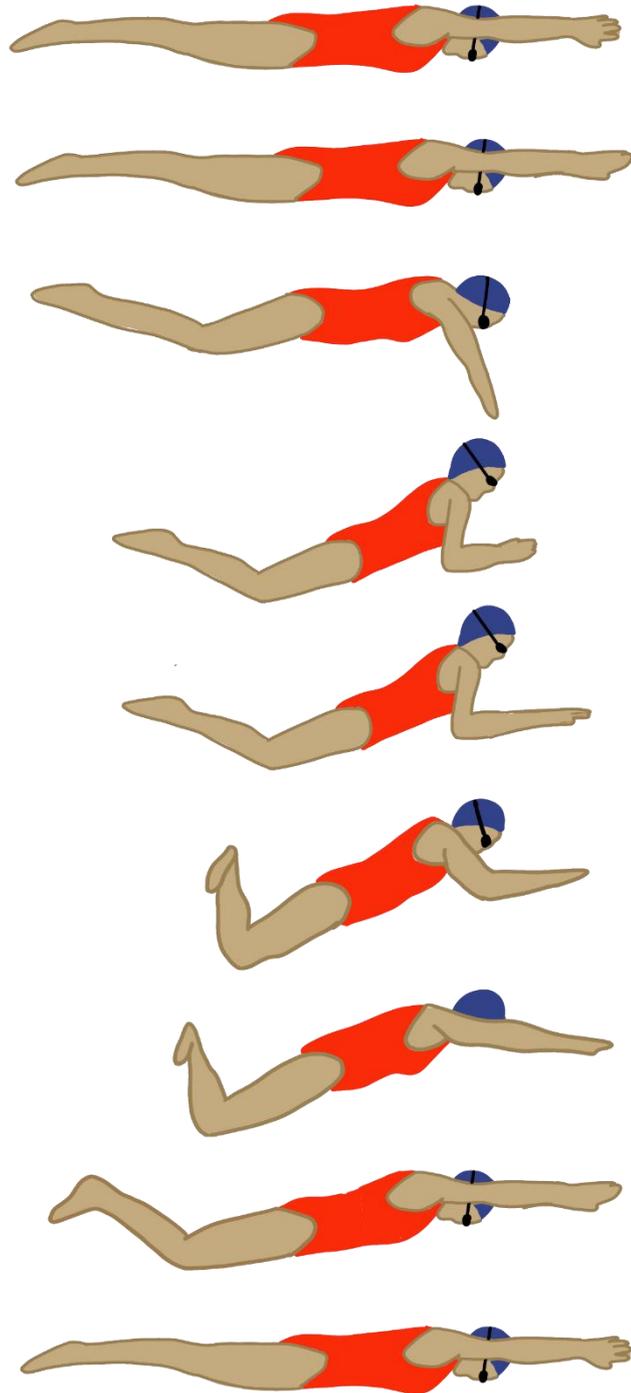


Figure 33: Breaststroke





## Starts

All starts are signaled by the starter who will whistle the swimmers to their start position. The starter will then command the swimmers to “Take your marks.” The swimmers leave the block or end of the pool when the starting signals sounds.

Starting is a very important aspect of competitive swimming, and, in accordance with [Fina rules](#), a one start rule will be enforced; therefore, it is important that the swimmer is given regular instruction in this skill. Be aware of certain medical conditions, which may restrict swimmers from practicing out of water starts. Coaches should be familiar with and comply with both [Fina](#) and Facility rules and regulations regarding diving starts. Remember, when teaching starting, to break down the skill and make it fun.

There are three types of starts permitted in Special Olympics Competition

- Standing
- Sitting
- In Water (W)

## Standing Starts

Standing Starts may be performed from the concourse or a starting block.

## Teaching Points

1. Stand on the starting block or concourse and curl the toes over the front edge
2. Swimmer should take up the starting position
3. On the starter’s signal, push off the block/concourse
4. Enter the water in a streamline position
5. Freestyle/Butterfly – Kick to the surface
6. Breaststroke – Swimmers may do a breaststroke pull out or glide to the surface of the water
7. Begin the appropriate stroke once they break the water on resurfacing

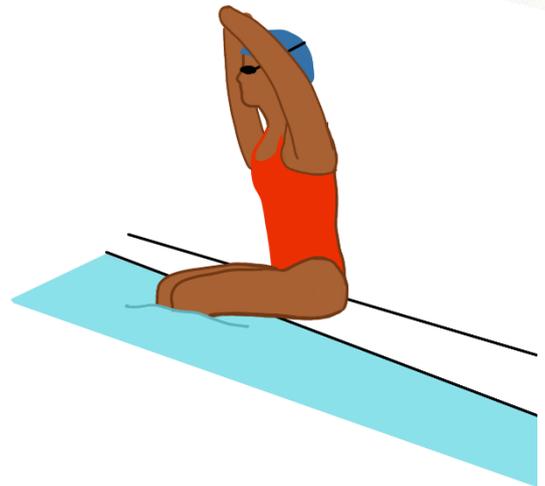




## Sitting Start

### Teaching Points

1. Sit on the Pool concourse
2. On the starter's signal, push off from the wall into the prone streamline body position, kicking, where appropriate.
3. Begin the appropriate stroke as soon as the body is fully extended.



## In-Water Starts

The freestyle, breaststroke and butterfly in-water starts are similar. The teaching points below can be applied to each of these strokes.

### Teaching Points

1. Hold onto side of pool while in the water with either hand.
2. Place both feet on the wall.
3. Bend both knees slightly.
4. Extend the other hand in the water toward the other end of the pool.
5. Ensure the swimmer is looking forward to the other end of the pool.
6. On the start signal, Push off the side into the prone streamline body position, kicking, where appropriate.
7. Begin the appropriate stroke as soon as the body is fully extended.

## Swimming Turns

### Breaststroke Turn

The breaststroke turn must be executed with a simultaneous two-hand touch

### Teaching Points

1. Swim breaststroke towards the wall
2. Touch the wall simultaneously with both hands
3. Begin to rotate the body
4. Bring the knees to the chest and plant the feet on the wall





5. Push off forcefully with both feet and assume a prone, streamlined position
6. Resume the breaststroke.

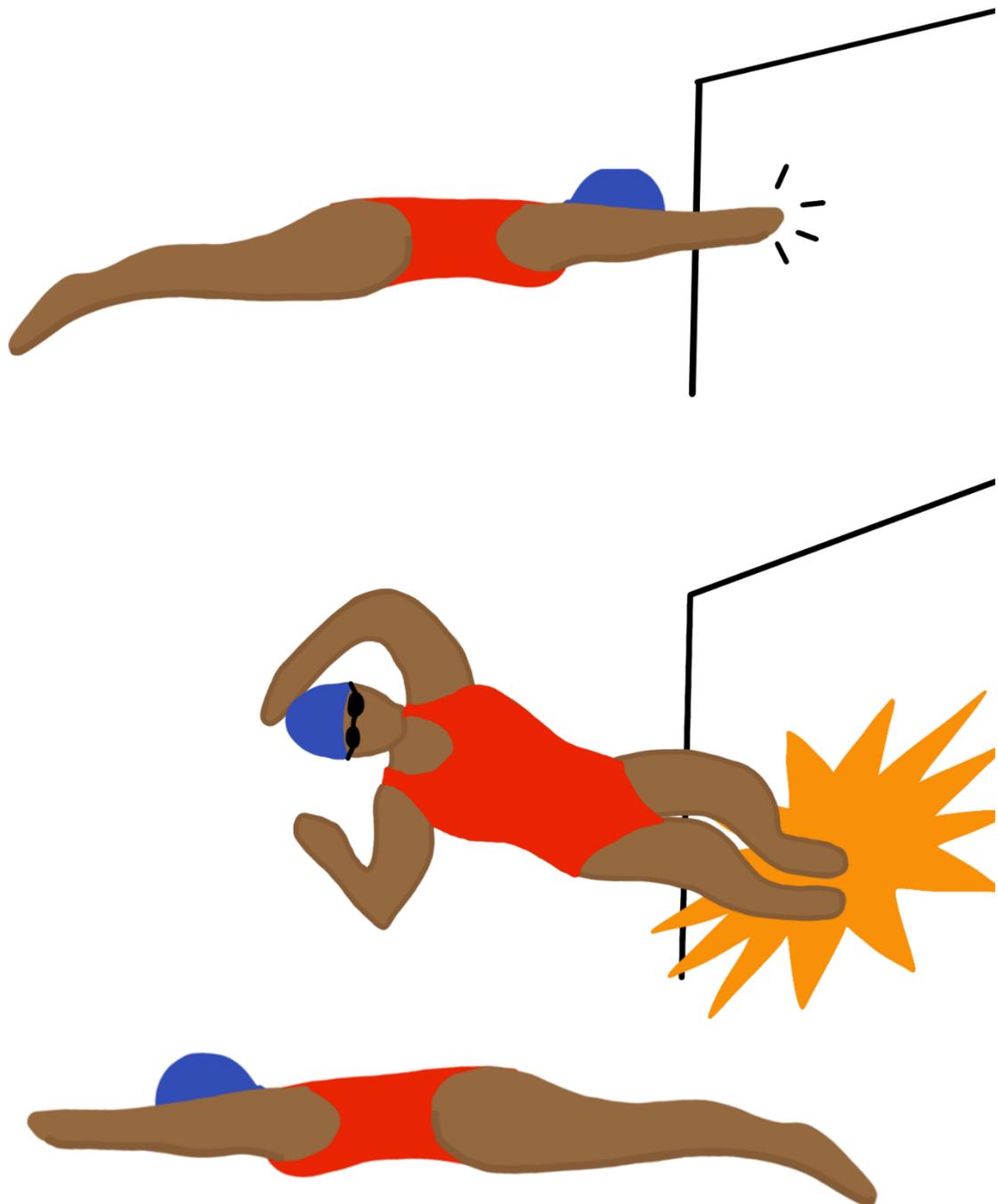


Figure 34: Breaststroke Turn

## Finishes

### Finish Breaststroke





1. Reach forward and touch the wall with both hands simultaneously
2. The shoulders must be at the same level.

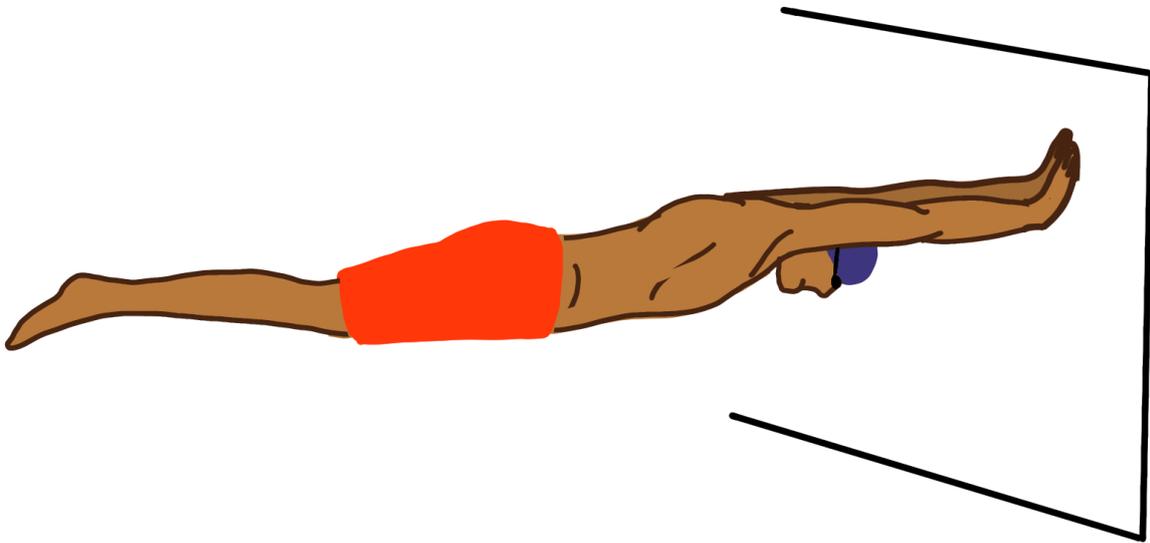


Figure 35: Two Hand Finish

### Rules and DQs

Refer to [SO](#) and [Fina rules](#).

Rules that apply to breaststroke will be:

1. After the start and after each turn, the swimmer may take one arm stroke completely back to the legs during which the swimmer may be submerged. At any time prior to the first Breaststroke kick after the start and after each turn a single butterfly kick is permitted. The head must break the surface of the water before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke.
2. From the beginning of the first arm stroke after the start and after each turn, the body shall be on the breast. It is not permitted to roll onto the back at any time except at the turn after the touch of the wall where it is permissible to turn in any manner as long as the body is on the breast when leaving the wall. From the start and throughout the race the stroke cycle must be one arm stroke and one leg kick in that order. All movements of the arms shall be simultaneous and on the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.
3. The hands shall be pushed forward together from the breast on, under, or over the water. The elbows shall be under water except for the final stroke before the turn, during the turn and for the final stroke at the finish. The hands shall be brought back on or under the





surface of the water. The hands shall not be brought back beyond the hip line, except during the first stroke after the start and each turn.

4. During each complete cycle, some part of the swimmer's head must break the surface of the water. All movements of the legs shall be simultaneous and on the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.
5. The feet must be turned outwards during the propulsive part of the kick. Alternating movements or downward butterfly kicks are not permitted except as in Rule 1. Breaking the surface of the water with the feet is allowed unless followed by a downward butterfly kick.
6. At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water level. At the last stroke before the turn and at the finish an arm stroke not followed by a leg kick is permitted. The head may be submerged after the last arm pull prior to the touch, provided it breaks the surface of the water at some point during the last complete or incomplete cycle preceding the touch.

DQ Codes can be found in [Rules and Regulations section](#).

