

Swim Smooth's Drill Cheat Sheet



Drill	Purpose	Key Points	Mantra
Sink downs	Exhale properly, counteract breath holding	Exhale through nose and/or mouth, relax and let your body sink as you exhale fully	Sigh deeply
Breathe-bubble-bubble-breathe	Helps you coordinate exhalation and bilateral breathing timing in the full stroke	As you swim full stroke freestyle repeat the mantra, breathing out for two arm pulls and breathe in on the third	Breathe-Bubble-Bubble-Breathe
Bubble-Bubble-Stretch / 1-2-Stretch	Helps coordinate the catch and arm timing, preventing losing support of the lead arm while breathing	Breathe out thinking 'bubble' for two arm pulls and think about stretching out the third lead hand as you take a breath	Bubble-Bubble-Stretch
Popeye breathing	Head and mouth position while breathing	Keep your lower eye in the water, angle your mouth to the side how Popeye chews his spinach!	Ear to shoulder when you breathe
Head positions	Finding the optimal head position for you	Try four lots of 50m changing head position each time, experiment which feels best	Relaxed neck
Ballet Kick	Developing straighter leg kick technique, improving your awareness of engaging your glutes	Stand on the inside leg on a step, water above your waist, kick back and forth with toes turned in slightly and relaxed ankles	Squeeze your bum!
Torpedo kick with fins	Helps develop and refine your kicking technique	Streamlined push off and kick, scull hands to breathe face forwards and return head under arms	Kick from the hips, loose ankles
Torpedo kick and swim back	Helps develop and refine your kicking technique	Streamlined push off and kick as hard as you can (without fins) until you've fully exhaled, tread water while you recover, swim back with a gentle kick, much less powerful than before, tapping toes	Brush your toes
Kick on side	Helps you develop good posture, alignment, catch set up and rotation	Kick on your side rotated to 90°, drawing your shoulder blades together and back, keeping hand in line with shoulder with fingertips below wrist below elbow	Shoulders back, chest forwards
6/1/6	Helps develop your alignment, posture and catch set up position while introducing a stroke	6 kicks on the side, stroke and rotate, breathe and 6 kicks on the other side	6 kicks-stroke-breathe-6 kicks
Baton 6/1/6	Correcting arm timing in swimmers who lose support of their lead hand as they go to take a breath	Hold a pen or vitamin tube outstretched with the lead hand, 6 kicks on the side, stroke, switch the baton hand and rotate, breathe and 6 kicks on the other side	6 kicks-baton-breathe-6 kicks
6/3/6	Both developing your posture and alignment in the water as well as rotation, catch set up position and full stroke arm timing	6 kicks on the side, take three strokes and breathe, 6 kicks on the other side	6 kicks-3-breathe-6 kicks
Popov	Improves your a sense of core balance and control in the water, rotation, classic high elbow arm recovery and upper back/shoulder flexibility	Kick on side, slide thumb up to arm pit getting elbow high, slide down to hip, up to arm pit and spear the hand into the water	Mobile shoulders & Elbow Up
Broken arrow	Designed for swimmers with tight upper backs and shoulders to help you loosen off, relax your arm recovery and focus on hand entry	Kick on side, raise arm vertically, pause, bend the arm, spear into the water and rotate and repeat on the other side	Up-break-spear in-breathe

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Scull # 1	Improve initial catch and feel for the water	Scull with both arms symmetrically just wider than your shoulders and back into the middle, changing angle of hands, keeping pressure on the water, fingertips about 30cm below surface and lower than wrist lower than elbow lower than shoulder, chin on the surface, with pull buoy to isolate your arms	Caress and "feel" the water
Scull # 2	Focuses on the phase of the stroke between the catch and pull through, under the head, helps correct a wide S shape or straight arm pull through	Scull with both arms symmetrically just wider than your shoulders and back into the middle, changing angle of hands, keeping pressure on the water, fingertips about 60cm below surface face forward or down, with pull buoy to isolate your arms	Elbows stable
Scull # 3	Developing the final phase of the arm pull through, setting up a bent elbow exit from the water (150° approx.) and prevent elbow pain when swimming freestyle	Use a pull buoy, face in the water, keep your elbows fixed by your side and push the water with alternate arms from underneath your shoulders back to your hips, using your hands and forearms, recover under the water	Duck legs, elbows in
Scull combo	Enhances your proprioception of the catch and pull through phase and feel for the water	Perform scull # 1 then scull # 2 then scull # 3 and immediately transition into freestyle	Smooth transitions
Doggy Paddle	Powerful for developing feel for the water and bent elbow catch, rhythm and timing and keeping hand in line with shoulder throughout catch and pull phase	Using pull buoy, alternate catch and pull strokes through to the hip, recovering underwater, extend and catch in line with shoulder by tipping the wrist and bendin your elbow, no pauses	Reach and roll
Waterpolo	Helps to remove deadspots, improve rhythm and stroke rate and wider swinging arm recovery	Swim head up with chin on the surface at 90% effort head still breathing normally	Still head
Breathing under arm	Practicing rotation to the breathing side, Improving breathing timing with the stroking arm	Using fins, pull with one arm, keep the other relaxed by your side, breathe towards the stroking arm every arm pull, rotate your body to both sides 45-60°	Stroke and dip shoulder / hip
Unco	Helps develop rhythm and timing for catch, pull and rotation as well as breathing timing	Using fins, pull with one arm, keep the other relaxed by your side, breatheaway from the stroking arm every arm pull, rotate your body to both sides 45-60°	Stroke and dip shoulder / hip
P-Unco	Helps develop catch and pull through rhythm, timing and mechanics as well as breathing timing and rotation	Using fins, pull with one arm, keep the other relaxed by your side, breatheaway from the stroking arm every arm pull, rotate your body to both sides 45-60°	Stroke and dip shoulder / hip
Javelin	Correcting your stroke problems while breathing: pressing down, pulling through wide, catching early or late and crossing over	Kick on side with fins and a Finis Freestyler paddle on the lead arm only, keep lead hand aligned by pulling your shoulder blades together and back, transition into full stroke breathing every 4 strokes away from the paddle	Shoulders back, chest forwards - breathe AWAY from the paddle
Pull buoy & paddles	Isolate the arms to improve hand entry, catch mechanics and core control, also improves arm strength with the increased surface area and resistance of the paddle	Using a pull buoy, swim without kicking using your arms for propulsion, stretching through your core and rotating the hips in line with the shoulders	Smooth traction - press water back behind you
Ankle band	The band stops your legs kicking and adds drag, helping to focus on improving your catch, pull, rhythm and timing	Optional pull buoy, swim freestyle without kicking with a high stroke rate, getting into your catch quickly, stretching tall through your core	Stretch through the core