

web workout

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SHAKING THE COBWEBS—BACK TO THE POOL!

workout notes

After a summer of biking and open water swimming, it's time to get back to the regimen of swimming between the walls again. In Wisconsin in September we can almost smell the cooler days of October falling all around us. I always like to start off the new season with some longer swim sets. The purpose of these workouts is to recapture the attributes of good, efficient swimming.

My coaching philosophy is based on the premise that practice should be fun and interesting. It should be challenging enough to raise your heart rate but should not kill you. I also subscribe to the "Masters Prerogative," which states that workouts can be modified as long as everyone in the lane/group agrees. This means that a more reasonable interval may be employed to make the set work for everyone.

Workouts are generally designed for 1 hour, 15 minutes because that's all the time we have in the pool. Aerobic sets with intervals are designed for about :15 to :20 of rest. So, if a set of 100s has an interval of 1:30, I'm assuming that group is able to hold a time somewhere between 1:10 and 1:15. So, if you're faster or slower than that feel free to modify.

Basically I design sets that I feel comfortable doing on intervals I can hold. Sets of 200s are normally done on 3:00, assuming a finish time of approximately 2:30 to 2:40; here, about :20 to :30 rest. The guide to determining your interval should be your ability to bring your heart rate down to a rate where you can accomplish the next swim in the set at the same finish time as the previous one. Descending sets mean that each swim gets progressively faster—even if it's 1 second! The rest intervals are usually the same, but if you're going faster each swim then you get that much more rest. A challenge? You bet! Swimming is about constantly challenging yourself.

Terry Laughlin, in his book, *Total Immersion*, talked of observing the great Russian sprinter, Alexander Popov, during his workout. Popov would gradually increase his speed until his stroke technique started to break down, then he would slow down to recapture his desired technique and resume his build-up. Think about Popov as you cool down. Always leave the pool with near-perfect technique trapped in your muscles. We're not all Popovs, which makes perfection somewhat relative and subjective.



workout one: Monday

A Group (4,050 yds)

- 400 Rev IM easy
- 400 K-IM
- 200 Pull
- 200 IM easy

B Group (3,200 yds)

- 300 Rev IM easy
- 300 K-IM
- 150 Pull
- 200 IM easy

C Group (2,450 yds)

- 200 Rev IM easy
- 150 K-IM
- 150 Pull
- 100 IM easy

drills

25 each for maximizing balance, alignment and rhythm:

- **Basic Balance:** Arms at side, shoulders back, neck in line with spine, chin in a neutral position relative to chest, eyes looking straight down, gentle kick; the crown of your head and butt should be out of the water.
- **Left-side Balance:** Same as basic, but chin is over left shoulder. Although difficult, you should try to keep hips at water surface.
- **Right-side Balance:** Same as basic, but chin is over right shoulder. Although difficult, you should try to keep hips at water surface.
- **Hip Roll:** Start in the side balance position and, keeping eyes focused straight down, roll your hips to the other side. Try to do a couple of rolls without moving your head or taking a breath.
- **Left-side Balance, Arm Extended:** Same as previous side balance, but with left arm extended.
- **Right-side Balance, Arm Extended:** Same as previous side balance, but with right arm extended.
- **Slide 'N Glide:** From left side balance arm extended, right arm sneaks along chest toward front. Dynamically roll the hips and thrust the right arm forward; try not to pull with the retreating left arm. The objective is to show how dynamic a force the middle third of your body is. I read somewhere that 30 percent of your muscle mass is located in your core; learning how to use it can have a huge impact in your swimming proficiency.
- **3-Stroke 'N Glide:** Starting in side-balance mode, take three strokes and glide on the third stroke; repeat. By taking two breaths on each glide (inhale, exhale, inhale, exhale), you will be training that errant front arm not to start pulling prematurely. Maxim: Stay long in the water as long as possible.

warm-up sprints

- 4x25 @ :30
- 4x25 @ :35
- 4x25 @ :40 (count strokes)
- 6x50 @ 1:00
- 5x50 @ 1:05
- 4x50 @ 1:10 (golf)

Swimming golf is a fun game that consists of counting your strokes for a 50 and adding that number to your elapsed time; so, 17 down, 20 back and a time of :40 would equal a score of 77. Like regular PGA golf, it's good to have a par value: A Group par is 72; B Group is 80; C Group is 95.

main set

- 3x300 Free @ 4:45
- 2x300 Free @ 5:15
- 1x300 Free @ 6:00
- 3x50 Choice @ 1:00
- 3x50 Choice @ 1:10
- 3x50 Choice @ 1:15
- 3x200 Free @ 3:00
- 2x200 Free @ 3:30
- 2x200 Free @ 4:00

vertical kick

- 4 x @ :15 on :25 to :30 (Alternate flutter and dolphin; all groups)
Technique tips: Keep legs close enough so that toes can sometimes touch; short amplitude between feet; toes pointed down (make paddles out of feet); legs fairly straight but let knees relax; *no bicycling*.
Challenge: First :05 hands across chest; second :05 hands out of the water to the side; third :05 lift hands overhead, completely out of water (this requires very strong, fast kick). Easy 50 after this kicking set.
Total set = 100 yards

breath-control set

- 6x50 w/:15 rest
 - 5x50 w/:15 rest
 - 4x50 w/:15 rest
- Breathe every third, fifth, seventh, fifth, third stroke.

cool down

- 8x25 w/:05 to :10 rest (all groups)
Practice absolutely perfect technique. Hint: Use a build pace.

workout two: Tuesday

A Group (4,050 yds)

- 400 Choice easy
- 200 K-IM
- 25-50-75-100-75-50-25 Pull
- 200 Choice easy

B Group (3,400 yds)

- 300 Choice easy
- 200 K-IM
- 25-50-75-100-75-50-25 Pull
- 200 Choice easy

C Group (2,500 yds)

- 200 Choice easy
- 150 K-IM
- 25-50-75-100-75-50-25 Pull
- 100 Choice easy

drills

25 each for maximizing balance, alignment & rhythm:

- **Dolphin Kick:** Underwater, arms at side, neck in line with spine, chin in a neutral position relative to chest, eyes looking straight down; stay long by not bending knees, short amplitude of kick.
- **Dolphin With Hip Roll:** Alternate-side breathing; concentrate on leaning forward after taking a breath.
- **Dolphin on Back:** Try with arms overhead; then try with backstroke kick.
- **Backstroke Kick:** With alternating arms perpendicular, at side then overhead.
- **One-Arm Butterfly:** Alternating every one or two strokes.
- **Three-Quarter Catch-Up:** Make sure you breathe as your arm is extended; the recovering arm should be out of the water and moving forward. Roll the hips, pull with the front hand, thrust forward and reach with the recovering hand. Imagine this: front hand is holding a tennis ball; the ball is pushing the hand up, even as the hand is putting pressure on the ball. Grab the ball with the other hand.
- **Corkscrew:** As hand reaches forward, roll onto back and take one to two strokes then roll onto stomach again. The objective is to hold your alignment while rotating from front to back and back to front. Try to do this holding tight to the lane line on the pool floor.

warm-up sprints

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| ••• 4x25 @ :30 | ••• 4x25 @ :35 | ••• 4x25 @ :40 (count strokes) |
| ••• 6x50 @ 1:00 | ••• 5x50 @ 1:05 | ••• 4x50 @ 1:10 (golf, see Monday workout notes) |

main set

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| ••• 4x250 @ 5:00
Middle 50 is Fly or Back | ••• 4x250 @ 5:45 | ••• 4x150 @ 6:30 |
| ••• 3x50 Kick w/:15 rest | ••• 3x50 Kick w/:15 rest | ••• 3x50 Kick w/:15 rest |
| ••• 5x100 Free @ 1:30 | ••• 4x100 Free @ 1:40 | ••• 3x100 Free @ 2:00 |

vertical kick

- 4x :15 on :25 to :30 (all groups)
Alternate flutter and dolphin kick; also see technique tips in Monday workout.

speed set

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| ••• 5x100 Free w/:15 rest | ••• 4x100 Free w/:15 rest | ••• 3x100 Free w/:15 rest |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|

cool down

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| ••• 4x25 w/:05 to :10
Practice absolutely perfect technique. | ••• 8x25 w/:05 to :10 | ••• 8x25 w/:05 to :10 |
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workout three: Wednesday

A Group (3,900 yds)

- 300 Rev IM easy
- 300 K-IM
- 2x 50-100-150-75-25 Pull
- 200 IM easy

B Group (3,500 yds)

- 300 Choice easy
- 200 K-IM
- 2x 50-100-150-75-25 Pull
- 200 IM easy

C Group (2,500 yds)

- 200 Rev IM easy
- 150 K-IM
- 1x 50-100-150-75-25 Pull
- 100 IM easy

drills

- **2x25 Free With Eyes Closed** (at least 90 percent of the time)
25 each:
- **Breaststroke Scull With Dolphin Kick**
- **One-Arm Butterfly:** Alternate arms every one to three strokes (Michael Phelps' favorite drill).
- **Breaststroke Kick on Back:** Neck in line with spine, hands at side, bring heels up and touch heels with fingers.
- **Breaststroke Kick on Stomach:** Hands at side, bring heels up and touch heels with fingers, keep head down except to breathe. Three-Stroke 'N Glide with two breaths per stroke.
- **Golf Swimming:** 5A/5B/4C x 50 w/:15 rest. Par: A/72, B/80, C/95.

main set

Freestyle, Aerobic:

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| ••• 2x200 @ 3:00 | ••• 2x200 @ 3:30 to 4:00 | ••• 2x150 @ 3:30 |
| ••• 2x150 @ 2:30 | ••• 2x150 @ 2:45 to 3:00 | ••• 2x125 @ 2:45 |
| ••• 3x100 @ 1:40 | ••• 2x100 @ 1:45 to 2:00 | ••• 2x100 @ 2:00 |
| ••• 4x75 @ 1:20 | ••• 2x75 @ 1:40 | ••• 3x50 @ 1:10 |
| ••• 4x50 @ 1:00 | ••• 3x50 @ 1:05 | |

kick set

- 6x25 fast w/:15 to :20 rest
- 6x25 fast w/:15 to :20 rest
- 6x25 fast w/:15 to :20 rest

cool down

- 8x25 w/:05 to :10 (all groups)
Practice absolutely perfect technique.

workout four: Thursday

A Group (3,800 yds)

- 8x50 Rev IM easy
- 8x25 Kick, Choice w/:10 to :15 rest
- 300 Pull IM
- 200 Choice easy

B Group (3,250 yds)

- 6x50 Rev IM easy
- 8x25 Kick, Choice w/:10 to :15 rest
- 200 Pull IM
- 200 Choice easy

C Group (2,555 yds)

- 4x50 Rev IM easy
- 8x25 Kick, Choice w/:10 to :15 rest
- 100 Pull IM
- 100 Choice easy

drills

- **2x25 Free With Eyes Closed** (at least 90 percent of the time) 25 each:
- **Breaststroke Scull With Dolphin Kick**
- **One-Arm Butterfly:** Alternate arms every one to three strokes
- **Breaststroke Kick on Back:** Neck in line with spine, hands at side, bring heels up and touch heels with fingers.
- **Breaststroke Kick on Stomach:** Hands at side, bring heels up and touch heels with fingers; keep head down except to breathe. Three-Stroke 'N Glide with two breaths per stroke.
- **Golf Swimming:** 5A/5B/4C x 50 w/:15 rest. Par: A/72, B/80, C/95.

main set

- **Mixed IM/Free** (75 Fly/Back/Breast; 50 Free—all groups)
Rotate 75 IM: Fly/Back/Breast; Free/Fly/Back; Breast/Free/Fly; Back/Breast/Free
- 8x125 @ 2:15
- 4x75 @ 1:30
- 6x125 @ 2:30 to 2:45
- 4x75 @ 1:45 to 2:00
- 4x125 @ 3:00 to 3:30
- 4x50 @ 1:30

horizontal kick set

- 6x25 fast w/:15 to :20 (no board—all groups)

vertical kick

- 3x :20 w/:15 (maintain good, consistent form—all groups)

breaststroke drill/freestyle/breaststroke

- 4x75 w/:15 to :20 rest
- 8x25 w/:15 rest
all-out fastest sprints
- 4x75 w/:15 to :20 rest
- 6x25 w/:15 rest
all-out fastest sprints
- 4x75 w/:15 to :20 rest
- 6x25 w/:15 rest
all-out fastest sprints

cool down

- 8x25 w/:05 to :10 rest (all groups)
Practice absolutely perfect technique.

workout five: Friday

A Group (3,800 yds)

- 200 Choice easy
- 8x25 Kick, Choice w/:10 to :15 rest
- 4x125 Pull IM w/:15 to :20 rest
- 200 Choice easy

B Group (3,250 yds)

- 200 Choice easy
- 8x25 Kick, Choice w/:10 to :15 rest
- 4x125 Pull IM w/:15 to :20 rest
- 200 Choice easy

C Group (2,550 yds)

- 150 Choice easy
- 8x25 Kick, Choice w/:10 to :15 rest
- 4x125 Pull IM w/:15 to :20 rest
- 100 Choice easy

drills

- **Warm-up Sprints:** 50-75-100-100-75-50 w/:20 rest on all
- **Pre-Set: Timed Swims**
A: 300 w/1:00 rest; 200 w/1:00 rest; 100
B: 300 w/1:00 rest; 200 w/1:00 rest; 100
C: 200 w/:45 rest; 100 w/1:00 rest; 50
Record these times for future reference.

main set

- 6x125 Free @ 2:00
- 6x125 Free @ 2:15 to 2:30
- 4x125 Free @ 2:30 to 3:00

horizontal kick set

- 6x25 Fast w/:15 to :20 rest (no board—all groups)
- Easy 50 Choice (all groups)

vertical kick set

- :3x :20 w/:15 rest (maintain good, consistent form—all groups)

breastroke drill/freestyle/breastroke

- 4x75 w/:15 to :20 rest
- 8x25 w/:15 rest all-out fastest sprints
- 4x75 w/:15 to :20 rest
- 6x25 w/:15 rest all-out fastest sprints
- 4x75 w/:15 to :20 rest
- 6x25 w/:15 rest all-out fastest sprints

cool down

- 8x25 w/:05 to :10 rest (all groups)
Practice absolutely perfect technique.

workout six: Saturday

A Group (3,900 yds)

B Group (3,350 yds)

C Group (2,850 yds)

warm-up

The purpose of this warm-up is to stretch the muscles and joints.

- 300 Choice easy
- 300 Kick, IM order w/:15 to :30 rest
- 6x75 Pull, Choice w/:15 to :20 rest
- Easy 200 Choice
- 250 Choice easy
- 200 Kick, IM order w/:15 to :30 rest
- 4x75 Pull, Choice 2x75 w/:15 to :20 rest
- Easy 200 Choice
- 200 Choice easy
- 150 Kick, IM order w/:15 to :30 rest
- Pull, Choice w/:15 to :20 rest
- Easy 200 Choice

warm-up sprints

The purpose is to get your heart acclimated to the coming Main Set.

- 4x25
 - 4x25
 - 4x25
- Count strokes. Without losing rhythm, try to minimize number of strokes. Keep eyes down!
Observation: I've found that by letting your eyes move forward, perhaps looking for the wall or neighboring sea monsters, that subtle action makes your head move up! So, keep your eyes focused on the line.
- 3x50 w/:15 to :20 rest
 - 4x50 w/:15 to :20 rest
 - 5x50 w/:15 to :20 rest

main set

Freestyle-Build (to get progressively faster within the swim/repeat)

- 300/4:30
- 2x150/2:30
- 3x100/1:30
- 4x75/1:20
- 6x50/1:00
- 12x25/:30 to :35
- 300/5:00
- 2x150/3:00
- 4x75/1:40
- 6x50/1:10
- 12x25/:40
- 2x150/4:00
- 3x100/2:30
- 4x75/2:00
- 4x50/1:15
- 8x25/:45

drills

- **Stroke 'N Glide:** Three, with two breaths per glide.
- **One-arm Butterfly:** Switch arms every one to three strokes; breathe to the side, keeping head flat.
- **Three-Quarter Catch-Up:** Strive for good rhythm.
- **Fist Swimming:** Concentrate on high elbow to allow pulling with hand/forearm, not shoulder.

stroke set

Butterfly/Freestyle: Use one-arm fly, breathing to the side with head/face flat.

- 4x50 Fly down/Free return w/:10 to :20 rest
- 4x50 Fly down/Free return w/:10 to :20 rest
- 3x50 Fly down/Free return w/:10 to :20 rest

breath-control set

- 4x50
 - 4x50
 - 3x50
- Build breathing every fifth stroke only w/:20 rest.

cool down

- Easy 100 (all groups)
- Concentrate on maintaining close to perfect technique.