WHAT AGE GROUP DOES THE STUDENT FALL INTO?

- 6 months–3 years: Parent & Child, Stages A–B
- 3 years–5 years: Preschool, Stages 1–4
- 5 years–12 years: School Age, Stages 1–6
- 12+ years: Teen & Adult, Stages 1–6

All age groups are taught the same skills but divided according to their developmental milestones.

WHICH STAGE IS THE STUDENT READY FOR?

Can the student respond to verbal cues and jump on land?  
- NOT YET
- A / Water Discovery

Is the student comfortable working with an instructor without a parent in the water?  
- NOT YET
- B / Water Exploration

Will the student go underwater voluntarily?  
- NOT YET
- 1 / Water Acclimation

Can the student do a front and back float on his or her own?  
- NOT YET
- 2 / Water Movement

Can the student swim 10–15 yards on his or her front and back?  
- NOT YET
- 3 / Water Stamina

Can the student swim 15 yards of front and back crawl?  
- NOT YET
- 4 / Stroke Introduction

Can the student swim front crawl, back crawl, and breaststroke across the pool?  
- NOT YET
- 5 / Stroke Development

Can the student swim front crawl, back crawl, and breaststroke across the pool and back?  
- NOT YET
- 6 / Stroke Mechanics

*At the YMCA, we know families take a variety of forms. As a result, we define parent broadly to include all adults with primary responsibility for raising children, including biological parents, adoptive parents, guardians, stepparents, grandparents, or any other type of parenting relationship.

STAGE DESCRIPTIONS

SWIM STARTERS

A / WATER DISCOVERY
Accompanied by a parent, infants and toddlers learn to be comfortable in the water and develop swim readiness skills through fun and confidence-building experiences, while parents learn about water safety, drowning prevention, and the importance of supervision.

B / WATER EXPLORATION
Parents accompany children in Stage A, which introduces infants and toddlers to the aquatic environment through exploration and encourages them to enjoy themselves while learning about the water.

SWIM BASICS

1 / WATER ACCLIMATION
Students learn personal water safety and achieve basic swimming competency by learning two benchmark skills:

- Swim, float, swim—sequencing front glide, roll, back float, roll, front glide, and exit
- Jump, push, turn, grab

2 / WATER MOVEMENT
Students develop comfort with underwater exploration and learn to safely exit the event of falling into a body of water in stage 1. This stage lays the foundation that allows for a student’s future progress in swimming.

3 / WATER STAMINA
In Stage 3, students learn how to swim to safety from a longer distance than in previous stages in the event of falling into a body of water. This stage also introduces rhythmic breathing and integrated arm and leg action.

SWIM STROKES

4 / STROKE INTRODUCTION
Students in stage 4 develop stroke technique in front crawl and back crawl and learn the breaststroke kick and butterfly kick. Water safety is reinforced through trading water and elementary backstroke.

5 / STROKE DEVELOPMENT
Students in stage 5 work on stroke technique and learn all major competitive strokes. The emphasis is on water safety and how to incorporate swimming into a healthy lifestyle.

6 / STROKE MECHANICS
In stage 6, students refine stroke technique on all major competitive strokes, learn about competitive swimming, and discover how to incorporate swimming into a healthy lifestyle.

HAVE MORE QUESTIONS? Our front-desk staff is available to answer any questions about the swim lessons program.