

Recommended Safety Guidelines and Skills for Beginners:

Always practice good safety habits with your family. Nobody is ever drown-proof. Swim lessons are only one way to help you become safer in and around the water.

1. Children should never be unsupervised in or around any body of water, including bathtubs, pools, ponds, fountains, water structures or any other body of water. Be sure there are no buckets or other objects storing water where children may have access to them.
2. Children should always hold an adult's hand when walking near any body of water to avoid accidental falls into the water.
3. Children should always ask for or be given permission to go swimming, and an adult must always be in the water with the children.
4. Adults must be in the water, actively supervising children and stay within arm's reach at all times.
5. Children should always sit down and wait for the adult to enter the water first. The adult should then invite the child to SAFELY enter the water.
6. A safe entry into the pool is controlled by the adult. The adult may hold the child, hold the child's hand, or the child may hold a handrail and step into the pool. Children may sit and scoot into the pool or turn around and scoot into the pool (like going down steps in a house). Children should **not** be allowed to jump from the wall or any safety area.
7. Children should always be taught to wait for permission from the adult before swimming away from any area of safety: ie: steps, wall, shallow play area, ladder etc.
8. "Floaties" should not be used: they build a false sense of security. The child should be aware of what he/she can and CANNOT do and understand their limitations.
9. Safety guidelines and habits must be strictly enforced for the child's safety.

Pool Safety Rules:

1. Nobody is ever drown-proof- Active adult supervision is always required.
2. Always swim with an adult.
3. No running around pool area.
4. No splashing or dunking others in the pool.
5. No grabbing others while in the pool.
6. No eating or chewing gum in the pool.
7. No glass in the pool area.

Layers of Protection around the pool:

1. Prevention
 - a. Pool barriers, fences, door and pool alarms
2. Preparation
 - a. Water Safety education
 - b. Swim lessons year round
3. Response
 - a. Keep a LAN line telephone in pool area within reach.
 - b. Be CPR and First Aid trained and stay up to date with your certification.

FAQ's:

1. What should I bring to swim lessons?

Each swimmer needs a swimsuit and a towel. Children who are not potty trained are also required to wear a snug-fitting swim reusable swim diaper over a disposable swim diaper (Double Swim Diaper technique). Children must be accident free for at least six months before swimming without a swim diaper. Please bring a bathing suit and towel for the adult swimming with the child.

2. When should I feed my child?

Please feed your child no less than 1 to 1 ½ hours prior to your swim lesson. This allows time for the food to be digested.

3. What precautions are taken to prepare my child for going under water?

- a. American Swim Academy's instructors will teach you the safest techniques to hold your child in the water. We position you to be able to see your child's face and mouth to prevent accidental ingestion.
- b. Instructors will gradually introduce water to your child's face. We teach you how to prepare your child to hold his/her breath and become comfortable with water on his/her face. We will give you tips to help you practice at home with your child. It usually takes 4-5 classes before your child will completely submerge under the water.
- c. Instructors will guide you in determining the length of time and the frequency of times your child submerges during class.

4. What if my child cries or is afraid?

It's very common for a child to cry or be afraid when starting something new. Our teachers are trained to deal with the most fearful of students and our deck managers are also on hand to assist if necessary. We use simple distraction techniques; toys, songs and games to help calm and reassure them, and we will not submerge a new swimmer under the water. A child may cry for several weeks in a row, but be patient. Consistency and praise are key in your child's progress. If you need help getting into the pool with your child, please ask our staff for assistance and be sure to let us know any information that will help us get to know your child better (favorite toys, special songs, heroes, etc). We will gladly get your child in the water and swimming happily in no time!

5. How long will it take before my child is safe?

- a. No child is ever waterproof. Nobody is ever drown-proof. We can only help to make them safer around water.
- b. ASA Aqua Babies program helps you and your family practice good water safety skills and habits in and around the pool.

- c. It takes commitment and dedication. The typical child starting at 6 months, swimming multiple times per week may complete our Aqua Babies safety skills by age 2 ½- 3.

6. Isn't my child too young to start swim lessons?

- a. NO! We use a gentle approach that slowly acclimates the youngest swimmers to the water. Starting very young helps children relax and gain comfort and confidence in the water before they can develop any fears of the water.
- b. The National Institute of Health supports starting swim lessons at an early age.
- c. They published a study that states that swim lessons at an early age may help save lives (2009).
 - i. Providing very young children with swimming lessons appears to have a protective effect against drowning and does not increase children's risk of drowning, reported researchers at the National Institutes of Health.
 - ii. "Swimming lessons are appropriate for consideration as part of a comprehensive drowning prevention strategy," said Duane Alexander, M.D., director of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), the NIH Institute at which the study was conducted.
 - iii. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) — *The Nation's Medical Research Agency* — includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is the primary federal agency for conducting and supporting basic, clinical and translational medical research, and it investigates the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/swimming-lessons-do-not-increase-drowning-risk-young-children>

7. What can my 6-month-old baby actually learn?

- a. At 6 months your baby can submerge under water for a brief time
- b. Develop grip strength at the wall
- c. Develop physical skills necessary for balance, control and movement both in water and on land

- d. Develop verbal and social skills valuable both in and out of the water