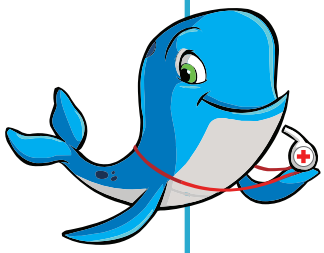
American Red Cross

SWIMMING AND WATER SAFETY NEWS

Learn-to-Swim Level 6–Personal Water Safety



Welcome to American Red Cross Learn-to-Swim Level 6!

Congratulations on your commitment to learning to be safe in, on and around the water and to swim well. Participation in the American Red Cross Learn-to-Swim Level 6 means that you have achieved a significant level of swimming skill. The great news is that now the fun really begins. Level 6 opens the door to a variety of specialized aquatic activities that can lead to whole new sets of aquatic experiences that could last a lifetime!

We're proud to offer you:

- Professional instructors who are well trained by the American Red Cross.
- Learning made fun in a safe environment.
- A balanced program that teaches swimming skills and how to be safe in the water, including a focus on lowering the risk of drowning and increasing the chances of drowning survival.
- A comprehensive swimming and water safety program for everyone in the family–from infancy to adulthood including:
  - A free Red Cross Swim mobile application available for download from iTunes, Google Play or Amazon Marketplace app stores.
  - *Swim Lessons Achievement Booklets* to track skill achievement and progression through the levels.
  - Badge system to recognize and reward achievement outside of the levels, motivating participants to strive toward developing specific skills and for recognizing participants for something that they are doing well, especially when they are struggling with a specific skill or set of skills needed to successfully complete the level.

What do you learn in Level 6–Personal Water Safety?

As in all the other levels, in Learn-to- Swim Level 6, our instructors follow a plan to refine swimming and water safety skills that were taught throughout the levels. The expectations are quite high in regards to distance and quality.

Additionally, in Personal Water Safety, you learn more complex safety skills that may help you survive in an emergency. Some of these skills include:

- Swimming 500 yards continuously using any 3 strokes of choice, swimming at least 50 yards of each stroke.
- Demonstrating turns while swimming.
- Demonstrating circle swimming.
- Jumping into deep water and performing a survival float for 5 minutes.

- Survival swimming for 10 minutes.
- Treading water, kicking only, 2 minutes.
- Rolling onto back and performing a back float for 5 minutes.
- Performing a feetfirst surface dive, retrieving an object from the bottom of the pool at a depth of 7 to 10 feet, returning to the surface and then returning to the starting point.

How are you evaluated in Level 6–Personal Water Safety?

Instructors follow a plan that details the skills to be introduced at each level along with performance expectations.

Your progress and skill achievement are continuously monitored and evaluated. Once all Level 6 skills are achieved and the exit skills assessment is completed, you receive a completion card that indicates that you have completed all levels of American Red Cross Learn-to-Swim!

NEXT STEPS

Where do you go after taking a Level 6 course?

Swimmers who take a Level 6 course are often preparing for more advanced courses, such as Water Safety Instructor or Lifeguarding. Some participants are preparing to participate in other aquatic activities, such as competitive swimming or diving.

Level 6 courses in Learn-to-Swim are customized to meet the objectives of the participants. For instance, this course can help those who want to achieve a higher level of fitness. Because of the variety this level offers, participants can repeat it to focus on different goals each time.

Ask your instructor how you are doing. At the end of the session, your instructor will date, sign and provide comments on your *Swim Lessons Achievement Booklet.* Once you have successfully completed all of the requirements for a level, there is another space for the instructor to indicate that you may enroll in another Level 6 option.

Things to keep in mind:

- Your enthusiasm and interest in learning to swim make swim lessons a fun and rewarding experience.
- This level offers a variety of information, you can choose to repeat it and focus on different goals and activities each time.

How can you build on your own swimming experience?

- Download the Red Cross Swim mobile application and view the stroke performance videos that demonstrate each stroke. Also use the app to share your progress and successes.
- Remember, knowing how to tread water and perform survival floating and survival swimming are important skills to strengthen and practice outside of lessons. You never know when you might need to rely on these skills.

BE WATER SMART!

Anyone who spends time in, on and around the water should know what to do in the event of an aquatic emergency.

Swim as a pair near a lifeguard's chair. Natural bodies of water are safer when a lifeguard is supervising the areas or the area is designated as a swimming area by the proper authorities. If these elements are not in place, always assume that these areas are too dangerous for swimming.

Chain of Drowning Survival

A person who is drowning has the greatest chance of survival if these steps are followed:

- Recognize the signs of someone in trouble and shout for help
- Rescue and remove the person from the water (without putting yourself in danger)
- Call emergency medical services (EMS)
- Begin rescue breathing and CPR
- Use an AED if available and transfer care to advanced life support

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Know about boating before you go floating. Pay attention to weather forecasts and understand local water conditions and hazards. Always develop a float plan before leaving shore.

Wave, tide or ride, follow the guide. The water at the bottom of a slide or a water ride can be deep and have a current as well. Know what to expect before you get in the water.