Tips to Prevent Drowning
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[Taken from TEACH YOURSELF TO SWIM LIKE A PRO IN ONE MINUTE STEPS]
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10 Common Errors that Lead to Drowning

1. **Children left unattended** – unintentional drowning is the leading cause of death for 1-4 year olds. Not just in bath tubs; can be a 5 gallon bucket or toilet. Hot tubs and back yard swim pools need their own perimeter security fence as toddlers wander to the pool from inside the house.
2. **Not wearing life jacket while boating** – 9 out of 10 that drown were not wearing one.
3. **Failure to check weather report** – wind and waves swamp boats. Lightning is also a factor. Camping next to a stream in a canyon with a cloud burst in the mountains above.
4. **Assuming your child is safe at a guarded pool or beach** – a near drowning also results in irreversible brain injury. While few reported deaths occur at guarded areas, lifeguards are not your kid sitter.
5. **Overestimating your swimming ability** – for ages 1-14 unintentional drowning is the 2nd leading cause of death. If you swim with your head out of water the whole time to breathe, you will tire very quickly and panic. Know how to float in a variety of conditions.
6. **Drinking alcohol** – you can pass out in a hot tub due to vasodilation of blood vessels in extremities that limit blood flow to your brain.
7. **Going after that blow up toy or raft** – the wind moves it faster than you can swim to catch up to it. Your life is not worth a $2 beach ball or cheap air mattress.
8. **Getting upended in a cheap toy inner tube** – a small child's legs get trapped with their head upside down when they tip over.
9. **Not familiar with water environments outside of a clear, heated swimming pool** – oceans, lakes, rivers, ponds, quarries, and floods have unique characteristics you need to know about currents, wave action, depth, water clarity and temperature, marine life, and accessibility of emergency vehicles before wading in. Lack of knowledge leads to panic.
10. **Hypothermia and personal health condition** – cold water is a killer. An inefficient swimming skill like breathing in freestyle quickly leads to exhaustion and/or dehydration putting a strain on your heart. Heavy outer wraps and clothing soak up water to weigh you down. If you don't swim well in a swim suit, how well will you swim with your clothes on? Wear a life preserver with a high collar; by its name tells you something.

Top 10 Tips for Swimming Safely in Pools, Rivers, Lakes, and the Ocean

1. Never swim alone or turn your back to the surf or waves breaking on a beach or shoreline.
2. Follow the pool depth markings and other warning signs like no running.
3. Know that when waves break right on the shoreline the steeper beach incline creates a much stronger undertow to recede back to the body of water.

4. Know that a swell driven ocean wave is a hundred times more powerful than a wind driven wave to create a serious undertow and/or rip current receding back to the ocean.
5. Know how to identify where the rip current is by the absence of a white water curl to waves breaking on a sand bar. That is where the water breaking over the sand bar that acts like a dam lets the water back through at a faster speed to create a rip current that will last only a few yards past the sand bar.
6. Know how to float well to rest when you get tired swimming, and can hold your breath to duck under incoming waves.
7. Never run out into an unfamiliar ocean beach to avoid coral, sea urchins, and sting rays.
8. Know the strength of the undertow caused by waves running up on the beach and receding back to keep your balance and avoid panic. The undertow will lose its strength after the water seeks the level of the body of water; generally only a few feet at the bottom of the beach. So lift your body up to float to get out of that heavy flow.
9. Understand river currents and what to do if caught in a flooded stream floating on your back feet first to protect your head from objects and going under.
10. Do not swim and drink alcohol that can impair your physical and mental abilities.

What to Look For in Choosing a Swimming Instructor

I do not make a big deal out of instructor certification or pupil certification as the case may be with some national programs. A swimming instructor is only as good as the **results** they produce in a variety of pupils in time frames. Experience is still the best teacher. You do not ask an experienced college professor to teach the same as their first year of teaching.

To discriminate and deny experienced and qualified instructors that have credentials, education, and experience to teach swimming who consistently get results because they no longer subscribe to outdated Red Cross WSI (Water Safety Instructor) methods and cues is wrong. Similarly, national organizations can have their standards for skill levels to certify those pupils have passed, but they must also allow programs and their instructors to improve and adapt their methods and cues that get proven results. The outcomes are what matter.

I understand the need for standards created from lawsuits leveled at public facilities. Otherwise, you would have far more idiots without education or credentials trying to teach swimming poorly when they cannot swim well enough to demonstrate the proper skills. Many people quit taking lessons because they do not see the **value in the results**. In other words, they are not learning how and why to do good efficient skills.

Paramedics never ask whether their drowning victim was ever certified.

The bureaucracy of some large national programs does not permit them to change their methods or cues very often. And then, those decision makers at the top are often not good swimmers or certified degreed educators like me to know proper teaching methods based on physics and psychology of learning principles.

There has to be better quality control over what is actually taught by knowledgeable people who train the new instructors. This is all irrespective of the "certified" curriculum skills. Knowing what to teach and actually teaching that material efficiently are two different considerations. Parents must use these factors to make their own personal assessment of a program or instructor.

It is not hard to teach young instructors to be good instructors if you know the what, how, and why they need to know and insist on teaching without reservation. In other words, the pupils do not get away without learning to do their swimming skills correctly. Praising fair performance or worse passing them to get their certification card for that level of training only provides a false sense of security to think some skills are OK when they are not proficient enough to be safer in the water. This is what leads 14 and under children, mostly boys 80% of the time, to overestimate their swimming ability, and become the 2nd leading cause of death due to unintentional drowning.

In the past I have listened to many experts in their fields who are not certified teachers or speakers, but they provide valuable information from the results they have achieved. You may also know several "certified" teachers who are not very good. Being Red Cross Water Safety Instructor (WSI) certified provides no guarantee of results. Results are what matter. I personally know many excellent, experienced instructors who get good results by not following the WSI guidelines to offer more advanced training and skills.

1. **Experience**. It is still the best teacher. How many people have been taught how to float with good position, and swim well with their breathing? The quality of group lessons? etc.
2. **Can they accurately demonstrate all the skills**? Competitive swimmers can and also know the proper feeling cues to describe what to focus on when communicating how to swim.
3. **Age**. Younger instructors lack personal understanding of teaching methods and cues. Some may not know how to apply physics principles to insist on quality performance results.
4. **Do they spend time mastering all kinds of floating skills**? Face float, back float, turtle float, survival float, front to back, and back to front reverses while floating are important skills.
5. **Teaching ability.** Do they understand how to communicate laws of physics to insist on proper form and efficient movement in stroke analysis?
6. **Stroke correction analysis.** Can they teach the pupil how to use their own feedback to self-evaluate their performance and keep improving their personal skills?
7. **Teaching methods**. Do they understand psychology of learning principles like "Spatial Awareness," "Sequential Learning," "Mastery Learning," "Feedback Information Processing," and "Transfer of Identical Elements?"
8. **Clothing.** Do they wear bulky sweatshirts and pants that cannot show the accurate pattern of the specific skill such as the catch and rotation in the freestyle with the proper bend in the arm?
9. **Do they get in the water with the pupil?** Do they offer physical guidance to the pupil such as helping with their floating, rhythmical kicking, or moving the hand and arm through the pattern above and below the water?
10. **Do they break down complex skills into easier to learn parts to build confidence?** And do they chain those parts back together in a fluid sequence to be efficient in force application?
11. **Do they yell and scream a lot?** Do the pupils act confused and undisciplined?
12. **Do they play games?** Learning to float and hold your breath at the beginning is more important than playing games and making it fun. Drowning only takes a few minutes. Without early discipline to insist on learning basic skills, kids who learn to play but don't know how to swim may also jump in the deep end to play not knowing the consequences.
13. **Do they get results?** Do their pupil's master basic skills like floating, body position, streamlining, and rhythmical breathing to swim continuously greater distances? Do they teach proper mechanics for backstroke and breaststroke in steps to learn the whole stroke skill?
14. **Do they teach sidestroke before breaststroke because it is easier?** One national program still advocates this, and makes it much harder to correct for a scissors kick when learning the breaststroke. But when you don't know how to teach breaststroke very well, you make this mistake.
15. **Do they teach water safety concerns in environments outside of the pool?** Do the kids have respect for the powerful forces of moving water in waves, and currents to know how to float well and

duck under big waves? Will your child know what to do on vacation in other swimming places, and be safer?

16. **Can they tell you their expectations for your child after an initial assessment?** Will you know the value of your investment in lessons, or could you achieve the same results teaching your child yourself?

What Is The Best Age for Children to Learn to Swim?

- **The best age is 3-18 months.** After a year and a half, a child knows enough to have second thoughts about putting their head under water or trying to stand up in water over their head.

- **Bath tub bathing gets great results.** Before you soap up use a large plastic cup (never glass) to scoop up and pour water over their heads sitting and bent forward. Pour slowly at first and act happy with a smile for them to see your delight to copy. **If you show fear, they will react with fear.**

- **Other simple home steps.** You can transfer the same identical elements from home to the pool and make it easier to learn how to swim. All you need is a kitchen sink or wash basin, dressing mirror, bed, and a bath tub.

- **Download these home steps.** Get my free e-book on my website www.SwimVideoCoach.com

- **Other free tips.** Get from www.YouTube.com/SwimVideoCoach

Always remember your child came from your water filled womb! It is natural for babies and infants to reflexively hold their breath when water is poured over their heads. But keep the water lukewarm.

- **In pool activity.**
  >Two adults stand 3-6 feet apart.
  >Always hold your infant securely under their armpits (never at their waist).
  >In one motion, motor your child head first (never feet first or the water will go directly up their nose) plunging them 1-2 feet deep and toward your partner.
  >You release your grasp and momentarily your partner re grasps your child to pluck them up into their chest with a happy smile!
  >Rest a bit, and brush the water off their face coming from their hair.
  >Repeat in the other direction, and each time when ready lengthen the amount of time and distance free floating underwater until your child is comfortable with the experience.
  >Don't rush, and don't show facial concern or they will read you and be scared.
  >If they choke a bit that's normal, but give them time to recover and keep talking to them the whole time.
  >You can bounce in the water with them in your arms so they don't have time to think about what's coming next or dwell on one bad experience.
  >This is happy fun time!

- **Other water safety floating skills.**
  >Your infant can be taught to float on the back.
  >Initially support them with both hands securely under their stomach and on top of their back as they face you lying flat on the water.
  >Gently roll them over onto their back with their head cradled on your forearm.
  >Make sure their hands, arms, and legs remain level on the water but not lift up out of the water.

>As you sense they feel secure in your arms and begin to relax, slowly let them start to float.
>Do not release your touch or slight support from both hands.
>Keep talking quietly to them, and get them to open their eyes to relax even more.
>Continue to repeat this process until your infant becomes more familiar with the feeling of floating, and eventually you will be able to release your hands a little more as they float.

- **Work on breath holding.**
  >As they get older, get them to hold their breath in the tub with their face in the water.
  >Transfer this same skill into the pool, but get them to keep their mouth open in the water.
  >Progress to holding the breath for up 10-20 seconds with the face in the water, mouth open.

- **Work on the face float.**
  >Use a top step into the pool to lie down on and feel floating free while holding their breath.
  >Like on a mattress at home stretch out hands, arms, and legs together to float on the stomach.
  >Place the forehead down in between the outstretched arms so that they feel their upper arms squeezing against their ears.
  >Tell them their head down makes their hips and legs float level and is required to feel that.

For more tips go to my website www.SwimVideoCoach.com to learn how you can teach yourself and your child to swim like a pro in easy-to-master one-minute steps.

16 Ways to Help Your Kids Get Over Their Fear of the Water.

1. **Make learning to swim a family activity and necessity.** If the mother does not know how or has had a near drowning experience, she will generally convey her fears to her children. Those children have only a 13% chance of learning how to swim. However, if a 1-4 year old learns how to swim, they have an 88% chance of surviving a water accident.
2. **Start early.** Teach them basic swimming skills at home without a pool using a wash basin, dressing mirror, mattress, and bath tub. The best time is from 3-18 months.
   You can download my free 20 page 30 simple step e-book from my website… www.SwimVideoCoach.com.
3. **Learn alongside your child.** Kids copy what they see you do, and acquire a positive attitude for learning how to swim. Do all the home skills with your child.
4. **Overcome negative beliefs.** One is you can't float. Yes you can if you learn to inflate your lungs and breathe off the top of your lungs. Another is that if you don't close your mouth, you will inhale water. Actually you make a better airlock with your nose if you keep your mouth open in the water.
5. **Start with your kitchen sink.** Fill it up 6" from the brim and lower your face into the water. Get your mind to control and relax your body while holding your breath. This may take a few tries until you feel comfortable. You can first pinch your nose then open your mouth wider and un pinch your nose to create the airlock, and see that water will not rush in to drown you. With your mouth open wider and face down start to slowly blow out very large bubbles and feel them go up and over your cheeks.
6. **Hold your breath.** Now that you know you are not going to drown in your sink and can blow out large bubbles, focus on holding your breath for 20-30 seconds and stay relaxed. You must not feel any tension in your body or you'll need to repeat until you are under control. Process this information to improve your mind control and avoid panic.
7. **Float on your back in a bath tub.** You can relax your arms and feel them float up on their own. You can inhale deeper to feel your chest rise up and then down as you exhale.

8. **Study the need for floating skills.** Learn about the forces of moving water to reduce panic and relax to float. Practice taking in a deep breath and holding it briefly for 5-10 seconds. Then quickly exhale and inhale another deep breath. This is all the time you need if you fall into a current or get knocked down by a wave to bob up and get another breath. Learn to go with the flow but gently move your body with good arm strokes or sculling with your hands to a safer place without using up all your energy and air supply that leads to panic.
9. **Transfer your floating skills to a pool.** Start in only waist deep water near the pool side or a corner. If you have a toddler, use the kiddie pool or a concrete step into the pool that is only 6-12" deep where they can suspend their body on top while placing their hands on the pool bottom. Then they can hold their breath and release their hands to feel floating and relax. It is always good to wear a good fitting pair of goggles to improve their vision and comfortably relax seeing the bottom.
10. **Float by bending your waist.** If you arch your back, your hips will go down as your head will be higher. You must keep your forehead down to keep your legs up together while floating. Float like you were lying stretched out on a mattress with your forehead on it. Point your toes with your legs together. Keep one hand on top of the other with your arms stretched out so you can feel your upper arms against your ears. This is the neutral position face float. You can do this on the top concrete step for more security.
11. **Get moving.** You float first and swim second. Start to float holding your breath for at least 15-20 seconds. Stay in the shallow end of the pool where you can easily stand up. When you feel yourself floating and relaxed but still streamlined in the neutral position – your arm stroke starting and stopping point, start to pull alternating your arms like windmills as if you were reaching over a barrel, and pushing to follow through before lifting your arm over. You can add a little kick of your ankles to keep your legs up and reduce resistance.
12. **Show no fear.** The best way to overcome fear is to not show fear when teaching a child what to do. They will read you like a Golden Retriever. You are the adult to know how to do these skills yourself and break them down into smaller easier-to-learn parts to build confidence with success as have been suggested. For example, you can get your child to sit on the top step, and lower their face into your cupped hands to blow large bubbles and hold their breath with their mouth open. These are not hard skills to learn.
13. **Learn the sequence.** Complex swimming skills are easier to learn when you break them down into smaller parts. Then, after you learn each part well, you can chain them all together in a sequence to perform the total skill. I can feel what a beginner is feeling and make adjustments to provide for a simpler step to first build their confidence and trust in me. I constantly talk to them giving accurate cues and instructions. I never allow them time to think that they cannot do what I am asking them to do. I constantly remind them that I would never have them do any part of a skill in a step that I didn't think they could do. My confidence in them and my system is what gets results. But every child is different and all eventually sense they can learn from me. Once they listen and do what I ask we get fast results they can be proud of to build their confidence and respect for the forces of water.
14. **Don't play games.** You may think it is fun to encourage beginners by playing games. When children focus on play they have no respect for the water. They don't hear your warnings. They just jump in water over their heads or try to reach for objects left floating in the pool because this is where they play games. You must teach your child the rules to follow, and discipline them for not following those rules but not for your fears. There is a difference. One builds fear, the other does not.
15. **Invest in a proper fitting life preserver.** If in doubt, make your child wear a life jacket. It only takes a few minutes looking away or answering a phone. But wearing a life jacket keeps your child's head above water at all times. There should be no argument, or you have not made your rules clear. Rule of Thumb… If your child does not know how to swim, you must be in the water near them, too.
16. **Avoid other swim aids.** Swim floaties and other blow up devices you fit on their arms or a bubble strapped to their chest can get pinhole leaks, slip out of, or even pop. These only provide a false

sense of security. And they do not achieve the proper level body position to learn how to float and do their strokes properly.

Why Swimming Is One of the Best Ways to Stay Fit and Lean.

Perhaps 70% of all recreation to enjoy a higher quality of life involves water. Plus, 7/8^{ths} of the earth is covered by water. Even if you live in the desert, cloudbursts can dump so much water that ditches or arroyos quickly fill up with water. People have been swept away trying to drive a vehicle through low lying roadways or areas.

Learning to swim is a necessity to potentially save your life.

Besides your personal safety, there is an obese epidemic that continues to get worse with more fast food and inactivity. To get and stay fit, you have to exercise. Dieting alone does not help, as often the weight you lose is regained very shortly. Swimming is the best form of exercise that can be applied to a variety of activities for fun and pleasure.

You have to change your lifestyle. When you know how to swim, you can enjoy more recreational activities. You can also swim laps for exercise well into your 70's and 80's. You are reducing the effects of gravity. You seldom get the pain and breakdown that you see runners and bikers have on their joints.

Water provides moderate resistance and swimming uses more muscles to tone up your entire body. The more efficient you swim, the less resistance you feel. However as your skills improve, you can increase your effort to swim farther or faster. You can do interval training repeats where you swim shorter distances harder, rest for a period of time in between, and do any number of repeats at the same distance. For example, you can do 8 x 50 yards leaving every two minutes. The faster you swim the more rest you get.

Swimming also reduces gravity and the pounding on your joints from running and biking. As you age so do your joints and often they cannot adapt to the continual stress especially if you become overweight. Aging has a tendency to do that to you.

An average 150 pound person will burn 75 calories running a 10 minute mile, but it is estimated that swimming can burn twice as many or 150 calories for the same vigorous 10 minute pool workout. Gaining or losing weight is a simple equation. You have to burn more calories than you take in to lose weight or vice versa to gain weight.

With the moderate resistance water provides, you can build more muscle. You must know that more muscle requires more oxygen and fuel to burn. This means that with more muscle you can burn more stored fat tissue.

When I am working out, I push myself pretty hard so that my heart rate gets pretty high for my age. And this tells me I am burning calories. I am always perplexed by people who swim laps like they are taking a bath with little slow movement. Their arms seemingly "let go" of the water to slip their arms through. Instead, to build muscle and burn more calories, they should set up their stroke to hold onto the water and pull and push their bodies forward over the top to be efficient.

You want to swim farther and faster to burn calories. There is a trade-off between efficient stroke mechanics and energy expenditure. As you become more efficient, you have to exert more effort to build muscle and work your cardio vascular system.

I keep telling people if your heart rate never exceeds 110-120, you probably are not burning many calories. You also have to exercise for 20 minutes or longer to get into the Krebs-Cycle to burn fat stores.

You may think you are not losing weight because when you get on the scales your fat is being replaced by heavier muscle tissue. You can use a tape measure to get the circumference of your upper arms and thighs, and chest and waist. You will burn fat equally from all over your body. This is why only checking your mid-section you may think you are not losing weight or your exercise is not making a difference.

Think about this concept. What if most of your fat was not stored around your middle or center of gravity? You would be quickly out of balance. Imagine your fat stored in your head – fathead – what a concept. So measure your body parts weekly if you want, as well as checking the scales for weight loss.

You can easily take your heart rate at your carotid artery by pressing your thumb and fingers on either side of your Adams apple. Count for six seconds and multiplying that number by 10 (add a zero) to get a minute rate.

For the average 40-60 year old in fair shape and having been cleared for exercise by their physician, your exercising heart rate should be above 120 to have a good effect. Exercise for 20 minutes or longer to get into the Krebs-Cycle to burn fat. Sitting in a hot tub will not burn off the fat any more than plopping your buns into a frying pan to fry bacon at a much higher required heat.

Total fitness is a combination of your respiratory and cardio-vascular systems. When you swim, you pull and push your body through and over the top of water that resists you. It is as if you were reaching forward to grab a water ski rope suspended beneath you. You grab it and hold on.

If you find your arms are just slipping through the water and you are not moving as well, then you are not gaining the muscular effort you want. You are far better off taking a few good strokes with proper mechanics than to take a lot of fast poor strokes and not move much.

You may think you are swimming when you are not. Yes, you may be burning up more calories at times "spinning your wheels" so to speak, but why not swim more laps to work your respiratory and cardio-vascular systems more?

When you do faster repeats and take some rest in between, your breathing muscles work harder and inflate your lungs more. You open up more alveoli, the tiny air sacs that make up your lungs that are surrounded by capillaries. This promotes the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide.

As your lungs are better able to provide more oxygen to your working muscles, your body can be repaired by a greater supply of oxygen. You will not need to rely on drugs unless you are asthmatic.

In summary, learn to swim efficiently. As you become more proficient exert more effort in repeats to build up your muscles, and your respiratory and cardio-vascular systems. This will also improve the overall health of your heart, lungs, kidneys, liver, and other vital organs. You will not tire as quickly for everyday routine activities to enjoy a higher quality of life.

Remember that more muscle effort means more calories to burn. Be sure to exercise for 20 minutes or longer to burn fat, and get your heart rate above 110-120.

If you are just starting out, get checked out for your planned activities by your doctor. Then start gradually. Your heart is a muscle, and it takes a minimum of 6-8 weeks for muscle adaptation changes. If you have had a prolonged layoff due to being lazy or an injury, then be your own best friend and change your lifestyle.

You are not going to get it done being a "weekend warrior." Build a daily 30 minute exercise routine into your lifestyle. You'll soon start to feel better and be more active. You will feel more alert and alive. Swimming is the way to go. Improve your technique with tips and workout strategies on my website www.SwimVideoCoach.com. When these factors work for you, tell your friends how to find my website.

Author's Personal Appeal

Go to my website www.SwimVideoCoach.com and ask me your question by filling out the Contact Us form. You will get a personal email or telephone answer from me.

Consider joining our MISSION to Save More Lives. You can sign up and learn details on my website www.SwimVideoCoach.com/Ambassadors

I encourage everyone to become a fan www.Facebook.com/SwimVideoCoach and join in the mission to help save more lives due to needless drowning. As a benefit, you will be provided swimming tips on www.YouTube.com/SwimVideoCoach. Then download our FREE e-book "Teach Yourself (or Your Children) To Swim At Home Without A Pool." You will also be provided this group of short e-articles to improve your safety.

Social media is the only way to reach and teach more people how to swim in rural areas without pools or urban and suburban areas of low socio-economics that cannot afford pool admission, lessons, or find experienced instructors.

You can help by spreading the word by forwarding emails to your family, relatives, friends, neighbors, and co-workers for how to get good information to ***teach yourself (or your kids) how to swim without a pool***.

Then once you learn all the basic motor skills at home you transfer the same identical elements to the shallow end of a pool on a weekend or summer trip. All you need is a kitchen sink or wash basin, dressing mirror, mattress, and bath tub.

You can **download for FREE** "Teach Yourself (or Your Kids) To Swim At Home Without A Pool" by becoming a fan at www.Facebook.com/SwimVideoCoach. There are 30 easy-to-master one-minute steps that are also rewarding to feel a sense of accomplishment. You can also download our e-book from our website www.SwimVideoCoach.com.

Teaching basic swimming skills at home is just like teaching your kids baseball or soccer skills in the back yard that they transfer to the playing in the game only you transfer these skills to the shallow end of a pool.