

Swim Classification Test Options



A basic foundation of the BSA Aquatics program is the swim classification test. This annual test represents the minimum skill level for Scouts to be self-sufficient in the water.

Traditionally, the swim test is administered on the first day of summer camp; however, it is permissible for councils or even units to administer swim tests at the local level.

The **local council** chooses from among three options for swim test administration:

- A. Conducted at camp by camp aquatics personnel.
- B. Council-conducted by council-approved, trained personnel at approved sites.
- C. Conducted at the unit level using council-approved, trained personnel.

The unit records the results of swim tests on the *Unit Swim Classification Record* form (#19-122) available at:

<https://www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs/aquatics/forms/>

Guidance for conducting pre-camp swim checks at the local level can be found on the back of the form.

Detailed instructions for administering the Swimmers and Beginners tests are covered in *Aquatics Supervision* (#34346) and are an integral part of the **Swimming and Water Rescue** training.

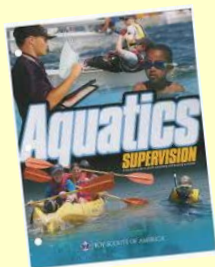
Regardless of where or when the swim test is given certain procedures apply.

- The test is given one-on-one. The test administrator walks alongside the swimmer and is his/her buddy during the administration of the test.
- Each component of the test is important. The test must not be changed either to assist the scout or to expedite the process.
- The test must be completed without aid or support, such as lifejackets, wetsuits, fins, etc. Swim goggles may be used to avoid eye irritation.
- The camp aquatics director reserves the right to retest any participant to ensure that standards have been maintained.

Prepared units plan aquatics activities year-round and will use these options in administering swim-tests.

“Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat guidelines tailor activities to swimming ability. Therefore, the unit leader needs to provide opportunities for swim classification before aquatics outings. Swim tests conducted by council personnel during or just before summer camp give the unit one way to determine swimming ability. However, not all unit members attend camp, new members may join the unit at any time, and some units plan aquatics activities in lieu of summer camp. Therefore, the unit should be able to safely conduct its own swim tests.”

Aquatics Supervision -- a leaders guide to youth swimming and boating activities (#34346)



Unit Swim Classification Record

This is the individual's swim classification as of this date. Any change in status after this date i.e., non-swimmer to beginner or beginner to swimmer, would require a reclassification test by the Camp Aquatics Director.

SPECIAL NOTE: When swim tests are conducted away from camp or at the point of activity, the Aquatics Director shall at all times reserve the authority to review or retest all participants to assure that standards have been maintained. (Changes and/or corrections to the following chart should be initialed and dated by the test administrator.)

Unit Number _____

Date of Swim Test _____

	Full Name (Print) (Draw lines through blank spaces)	Medical Recheck	Swim Classification		
			Non-Swimmer	Beginner	Swimmer
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					

NAME OF COUNCIL-APPROVED PERSON CONDUCTING THE TEST:

Print Name

Signature

Type of Authorization / Training

Expiration Date if applicable

UNIT LEADER:

Print Name

Signature

. Note: Unit Leader signer is knowledgeable of the Swim Test Procedure described in Aquatic Supervision - a leaders guide to youth swimming and boating activities (#34346) and is attesting that he/she has witnessed and agrees that all procedures have been followed.

SWIM CLASSIFICATION PROCEDURES

The swim classification of individuals participating in a Boy Scouts of America activity is a key element in both Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat. **The swim classification tests should be renewed annually, preferably at the beginning of each outdoor season.** Traditionally, the swim classification test has only been conducted at a long term summer camp; however, there is no restriction that this be the only place the test is conducted. It may be more useful to conduct the swim classification prior to a unit going to summer camp.

All persons participating in BSA aquatics are classified according to swimming ability. The classification tests and test procedures have been developed and structured to demonstrate a skill level consistent with the circumstances in which the individual will be in the water. The Swimmer's Test demonstrates the minimum level of swimming ability for recreational and instructional activity in a confined body of water with a maximum 12-foot depth and with shallow water footing or a pool or pier edge always within 25 feet of the swimmer.

ADMINISTRATION OF SWIM CLASSIFICATION TEST (THE LOCAL COUNCIL CHOOSES FROM AMONG THESE OPTIONS):

OPTION A (at camp):

The swim classification test is completed the first day by Camp Aquatics personnel.

OPTION B (Council conducted/council controlled):

The council controls the swim classification process by predetermined dates, locations and approved personnel to serve as aquatics instructors. When the unit goes to a summer camp, each individual will be issued a buddy tag under the direction of the Camp Aquatics Director for use at the camp.

OPTION C (At unit level with **council-approved** aquatics resource people):

The swim classification test done at a unit level should be conducted by one of the following council-approved resource people: **Aquatics Instructor, BSA; BSA Lifeguard; BSA Swimming & Water Rescue; or certified lifeguard, swimming instructor, or swim coach who is familiar with the process.** When the unit goes to a summer camp, each individual will be issued a buddy tag under the direction of the Camp Aquatics Director for use at the camp. **Note:** *Unit Leader* signer is knowledgeable of the Swim Test Procedure described in *Aquatic Supervision - a leaders guide to youth swimming and boating activities* (#34346) and is attesting that he/she has witnessed and agrees that all procedures have been followed.

TO THE TEST ADMINISTRATOR

The various components of each test evaluate the several skills essential to the minimum level of swimming ability. Each test must be taken without aid or support (e.g. lifejacket, fins, wetsuit, etc.). Swim goggles may be worn to protect against eye irritation. **Each step of the test is important and should be followed as listed below:**

SWIMMER'S TEST:

Jump feet first into water over the head in depth, level off, and begin swimming. Swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: side stroke, breast stroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy resting back stroke. The 100 yards must be swum continuously and include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating.

BEGINNER'S TEST:

Jump feet first into water over the head in depth, level off, swim 25 feet on the surface, stop, turn sharply, resume swimming as before, and return to starting place.

SPECIAL NOTE:

When swim tests are conducted away from camp or at the point of activity, the Aquatics Director shall at all times reserve the authority to review or retest all participants to ensure that standards have been maintained.