

Breastroke

Reduction of drag is a key consideration in breaststroke. The basic tenet that dictates the development of breaststroke is maintenance of high hand and heel velocities. **KEY POINT:** Extremely important to the overall success in breaststroke is the recovery to a streamlined position. The streamline position assures a full extension and maximum distance per stroke. A major problem in swimming is the deterioration of the stroke with the onset of fatigue.

PULL

There are three phases to the arm pull, *outsweep*, *insweep* and *recovery*. The *outsweep* can be characterized as the setup for the more propulsive *insweep* phase, emphasizing a more constant velocity through the *outsweep*. During the *outsweep*, the arms should stay as close to the surface as possible. At the widest part of the stroke (which depends on individual strength) the *insweep* begins to take form as the inside edge of the arms begins to take the lead. This edge extends from the fingertips to the elbow. Through the completion of the *insweep*, the swimmer finds the hands coming toward each other with the elbows trailing and ending closely together. The position of the hands at this point should be above the level of the elbows as the swimmer begins the *recovery* phase. During the *insweep* phase the shoulders and back should lift while driving forward. Keep in mind, the *recovery* occurs straightforward as opposed to downward. The elbows should remain fairly close to the surface through out the pull phase.

KICK

There are two phases to the kick -- the *recovery* and the *propulsive* phases. The *recovery* phase begins by bringing the heels (keeping them together) up to the rear end at which point you turn the toes outward to initiate the *propulsive* phase. During the *propulsive* phase the heels should be in a position outside the knees. As with the arm pull, the width of the kick depends upon the individual swimmer's strength and flexibility. The heels should take an elliptical path as the legs are extended. Pressure should be maintained on the inside of the feet or on the soles of the feet. At full extension the heels come together and the completion of the kick occurs as the toes are extended to maximize the streamlined position.

TIMING

Timing is the key to a powerful and efficient breaststroke. The *recovery* of the kick (*drag* phase) should occur simultaneously with the *outsweep* of the arm pull (*propulsive* phase) and vice versa. In other words, when one (either arms or legs) is working the other is recovering.

ETC., ETC.

- Keep the eyes at a 45 degree angle at all times during the entire stroke.
- Think “Fast feet, Fast hands”.
- Lunge

DRILLS.

- Pulling w/ while holding tennis balls. *Helps develop the idea of using the palm and forearm as one unit.*
- Two Kicks, One Pull
- Lane Line Breast Pull. *While standing, place your arms over the lane line w/ your armpits on the lane line. This will help establish the correct hand rhythm.*
- Flat Breast Pull. *Using a pull buoy, keep your body flat in the water and your head up while moving your hands through the pull. This drill will help you remain flat from the start position until the beginning of the insweep.*
- Flat Breast Pull Underwater. *Helps you remain flat from the start position until the beginning of the insweep. Body flat in the water & head up, move the hands through the pull, pausing only when in the streamline position.*
- Breast Pull w/ a Dolphin Kick (w/ or w/ out fins). *Help emphasis the wave motion.*
- Frog Kick Drill. *Back of the hands placed on the butt at all times. On the recovery of the kick, the feet must go all the way to the butt before the kick begins. Prevents half breaststroke kicks & parachute feet.*
- Breast Kick on the Back. *This will help to determine whether the knees are coming up too far.*
- Scrunch Scull. *Swimmers are in a vertical position, head & shoulders out of the water. Knees are bent & held in front of the chest, w/ the heels below the hips. Perform a breaststroke pull forward, w/ the elbows held in a high position, not pulling the elbows back. The blades sweep across the knees & extension forward is carried out w/ high velocity.*
- Kicking w/ the hands on your head.