

High School Stroke and Turn Briefing*

*Adapted from the 2023-2024 NFHS Swimming and Diving Rules Book

Welcome – General Comments

- Assignments – Jurisdiction – Protocol – Pool irregularities – Any swimmers with disabilities

Freestyle

Start – Forward Start

Stroke/Kick – Any body position and any style may be used. Some part of the swimmer must break surface throughout the race except swimmer may be submerged after start and each turn not more than 15 meters where the head must break the surface.

Turns / Finish – Some part of the swimmer must touch the wall at the completion of each length or required distance.

Backstroke

Start – Start in the water with back to the course ... standing in or on the gutter or curling the toes over the lip of the gutter immediately after the starting signal is not permitted.

Stroke/Kick – Any style as long as swimmer remains on back (shoulders at or past vertical towards the back). Must break surface throughout the race except swimmer may be submerged after start and each turn not more than 15 meters where the head must break surface.

Turns / Finish – Some part of the body must touch the end of the racing course at a turn or finish ... MAY turn on the breast while executing the turn if head past backstroke flags ... Only one single arm stroke or one simultaneous double arm stroke allowed while on breast ... Kicking/gliding actions are permitted. Swimmer must assume position on the back before feet leave wall. Swimmer must finish the race on their back. Once some part of the head passes the backstroke flags immediately prior to reaching the finish, the swimmer may be completely submerged.

Breaststroke

Start – Forward Start

Stroke – Body kept on breast. Stroke cycle is one arm pull and one leg kick in that order. Arms move simultaneously without any alternating movement. After start and each turn one arm stroke beyond hipline is allowed. Head must break surface before hands turn inward at widest part of second stroke. Recovery by the hands from the breast-on, under or over the water. Elbows under water except for last stroke before turn or finish. During each complete cycle, some part of the head shall break the surface of the water.

Kick – After start and each turn, prior to the first breaststroke kick, a single butterfly kick is permitted. For the breaststroke kick, movement of the legs and feet shall be simultaneous. Feet turned out during propulsive part of kick. No alternating, scissors, or butterfly, kick except as stated, is allowed.

Turns / Finish – Shoulders at or past vertical toward the breast when feet leave wall. Touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface. At the last stroke before the turn and at the finish an arm stroke not followed by a leg kick is permitted. Head may be submerged after the last arm pull prior to the touch, provided it breaks the surface of the water at some point during the last complete or incomplete stroke cycle preceding the touch.

Butterfly

Start – Forward Start

Stroke – Body kept on breast. Multiple kicks permitted but only one arm pull under water. Some part of the swimmer must break the surface throughout the race, except the swimmer may be submerged after start and each turn not more than 15 meters where the head must break the surface. Arms, shoulder to wrist, brought forward over the water and pulled back simultaneously.

Kick – Simultaneous up and down movement. No alternating, scissors or breaststroke kicking movements.

Turns / Finish – Shoulders at or past vertical toward the breast when the swimmer leaves the wall. Touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface.

Individual Medley / Medley Relay

Individual Medley: Rules for each stroke apply. Must swim $\frac{1}{4}$ of event distance as prescribed stroke, in order of Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke and any stroke other than backstroke, breaststroke or butterfly for the last quarter. During the final leg, the swimmer must be at or past vertical toward the breast before any stroke, kick or propulsive motion. Each swimmer shall adhere to position, stroke, kick, turn and finish rules for the stroke being swum.

Medley Relay: Rules pertaining to each stroke apply. Each swimmer must swim $\frac{1}{4}$ of event distance in the prescribed stroke, in order of Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly and any stroke other than backstroke, breaststroke or butterfly for the last quarter. During the final leg, the swimmer must be at or past vertical toward the breast before any stroke, kick or propulsive motion. Each swimmer shall adhere to position, stroke, kick, turn and finish rules for the stroke being swum.

Relay Take Off

Watch the feet of the outgoing swimmer. Once the outgoing swimmer loses contact with the deck, block or wall, look to see if the incoming swimmer has touched the wall. If the incoming swimmer has not touched, it is an early take-off. When starting block wedges are installed, the second, third and fourth swimmers shall have at least one foot in contact with the surface of the starting platform in front of the wedge during takeoff. If a violation occurs, the side judge shall wait until the last competitor of the heat is in the water before signaling a violation has occurred with a raised hand.

Benefit of the doubt goes to the swimmer

Call what you see and see what you call.