

Main Registration Information for Swim Lessons

Minnow Classes

Minnow Classes - The Minnow Program is a unique way for swimmers 2-4 years old to become confident of the water and at the same time be safe in any water environment. The Minnow Program will meet **Monday – Thursday for two consecutive weeks**. The Minnow classes will teach the young submerging their head, safety, and basic swim. To be in the Minnow program a child must be comfortable with parent release into the instructor's care. Confidence is the **key** at this age, so parents need to be comfortable with the swim instructions.



Minnow Registration Form

Participant Name:

Birthdate:

Parents' Names:

Email:

Address:

Zip:

Phones:

Circle Class:

Minnow Classes	Session 1	May 14 th – 17 th May 21 st – 24 th : 5:30 – 6:00pm
	Session 2	June 4 th – 7 th June 11 th – 14 th : 9:00 – 9:30am
	Session 3	July 9 th – 12 th July 16 th – 19 th : 9:00 – 9:30am
	Session 4	August 6 th – 9 th August 13 th – 16 th : 9:00 – 9:30am

SHARK CLASSES

Shark Classes - The Shark Program is a unique way for swimmers 5 years old and up to become prepared for summer, camps, vacations, and swim teams. The Shark Program will meet **Monday – Thursday for two consecutive weeks**. The Shark classes teach freestyle and backstroke. Swimmers also learn to swim across the pool which is a requirement for most area swim teams. To be in the Shark program a child must be able to jump from the side of the pool, submerging their head, and motor 5-8 feet to an instructor with their face in the water. More beginner swimmers should join swim lessons.



Shark Registration Form

Participant Name:

Birthdate:

Parents' Names:

Email:

Address:

Zip:

Phones:

Circle Class:

Shark Classes

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Medical Information & Parental Consent/Release

I, the minor's parent and/or legal guardian, understand the nature of the fitness activities related to swimming lessons/competitions, and the minor's experience and capabilities; and believe the minor to be qualified to participate in such activity. I hereby release, discharge, covenant not to sue, and AGREE TO INDEMNIFY AND SAVE AND HOLD HARMLESS each of the Releasees (Volunteers and Employees of The City of Marble Falls) from all liability, claims, demand, losses, or damages on the minor's account caused or alleged to be caused in whole or in part by the negligence of the Releasees or otherwise including negligent rescue operations, and further agree that if, despite this release, I, the minor's parent and/or legal guardian, or anyone on the minor's behalf makes a claim against any of the above Releasees, I WILL INDEMNIFY, SAVE, AND HOLD HARMLESS each of the Releasees from any litigation expenses, attorney fees, loss liability, damage, or cause any may incur as the result of any such claim.

I give the above listed Releasees permission to perform or authorize medical treatment for the minor child as needed. Included below is information about my child's medical history and emergency contacts.

I GIVE or DO NOT GIVE (circle choice) my child permission to go down the water slide and off the diving boards.

Pertinent Medical Information and emergency contact(s):

Emergency Contact Name _____

Emergency Contact Phone Number: _____

Physicians Name and Number: _____

Minor's Name: _____

Address: _____

City and State: _____

Home Phone Number: _____

Cell Phone Number: _____

Print Legal Guardian Name: _____

Legal Guardian Signature & Date:

Introduction

Water is everywhere for a child. They take baths in it, splash in it, and play in it. According to the US Center of Disease Control and Prevention, drowning is the 2nd leading injury-related death for children under 15. It is imperative that all children learn basic water safety and learn to swim. All lessons include safety instruction. Different types of water present different safety needs for children. A bath tub or small pool is different than a large pool or lake. A place a child can easily sit or stand with their head above water is different than a competitive or recreational pool where they can not stand.

Children have an inherent fear of the unknown. Swimming lessons help them learn how to be safe in various types of water, and help them become confident in the water.

For swimming lessons to be successful, parents must transfer the trust a child has for their parents to the swim instructor. It is important that before classes start the parents talk about swim lessons in a positive way and let the child know they have confidence in the instructor and believe in the process to learn to swim.

The most challenging task for a swim instructor is to teach a toddler, child, or adult who is afraid of the water. Generally this fear is not really a general fear of water as everyone puts the substance in a glass and drinks it and lets it touch their skin as rain. Rather, it is the fear of the face or head submerged in water, the fear of opening eyes under water, and the fear of not being able to feel solid ground when in water (water too deep to stand on). Amazingly, people think their children love the water only to find swim lessons very traumatic for their child. The following is designed to help parents prepare their children for the great sport of swimming. To be successful in swim lessons a child only needs to be able to do two things: (1) happily leave their parents to attend the class and (2) happily put their face and head in the water. Blowing bubbles and learning proper breathing and leg and arm movements can all be accomplished if these two simple criteria are met.

No one wants children to cry during swim lessons. This is upsetting to the child, instructor, others in the class, and others at the pool. A child who is sick, hurt, or temporarily overwhelmed is much different than one who is fundamentally afraid of the water. I want swim lessons to be successful so here are some suggestions to ready your child for swim lessons.

Why Learn to Swim?

The Austin area is filled with water recreation opportunities. With many neighborhood, city, private, and home pools, swimming is a regular part of summer activities in our hot climate. The area lakes also provide recreation and the need for swim safety at an early age is paramount. Please note that many of the suggestions are aimed to teach water safety as well as to create a relaxed and enjoyable time in the water. Also, be aware that just like crossing a busy street, most child experts warn that **NO CHILD UNDER THE AGE OF 7** should ever be left unsupervised in a pool (or bath), no matter how great a swimmer they are. It only takes a moment for a child to drown and young children should always be carefully supervised around water. Parents should be aware that children die every year around homes in shallow depths (less than 1 foot) of water.

Swimming Readiness Can Begin at Any Age

Many young children who are afraid of the water come from families which do not swim, often because the family moved to Austin from an area of the US or world where water recreation is not common. The family and child have simply not experienced pools. Another group of fearful children come from non-swimming parents where the parents admit themselves to being afraid of the water. Sometimes, fearful children come from swimming families. Almost always these children have had at least one specific experience which led to this fear. Sometimes this experience was through watching something on TV.

A child's first experience with water recreation is usually the baby bath. When parents say that the bath time is horrible with crying, I am sad as it can be a great time to enjoy time with the baby or toddler and allowing them to learn about the fun of water. Babies generally like baths as long as they are in a setting where the child does not get too cold. When bathing babies, have a cup of lukewarm water that you flow over their face and body. Get them used to feeling water all over their body, including their face and head. Be calm and cheerful. Don't hurry the bath, let it be a time of play and water exploration. As the baby becomes a toddler and has their bath in a tub again have a variety of toys that splash water on the face and head. It doesn't take much water in a tub for a toddler to be able to put their face in the water and blow bubbles. Having fun in the bath and associating water with good experiences goes a long way in helping young children associate water with pleasant times. Always teach your children **NOT** to drink bath, pool, or lake water. This is due to bacteria present in water.

Keys for bath play to help swimming:

- (1) keep the water and air a comfortable temperature
- (2) splash water on all body parts including head and face
- (3) let toddlers try blowing bubbles in their bath
- (4) make it fun and relaxing
- (5) always supervise bath time

It does not take a pool to practice beginning swimming. Let your child practice in the tub. Let them put on their swim suit and goggles and practice putting their face and head

in the water. Parents can join in by putting their suits on and showing the child how much fun it is.

Water Diapers and Floateies

Most commercial pools require children who wear diapers to wear a water diaper. The reason is quite simple, feces in the pool can shut it down and requires that the chlorine level be elevated to kill any bacteria. If for any reason feces escapes from your child into a pool, please immediately let a life guard know so the pool can be cleaned. Nothing is more uncomfortable for a child than water diapers filled with urine and poop, so help your child know at an early age that going to the bathroom in a pool is NOT ALLOWED. Encourage them to let you know if they need to make a trip to the bathroom and watch for the pooping signs and take your child out of the water.

Many parents put floaties or water vests on their young children to help them stay afloat on family outings. We are opposed to floaties and generally find they delay a child from learning to swim on their own. Removing floaties from your child will help the child learn when and how they need to move in the water. Also, some parents mistakenly think floaties will keep their child safe. Floaties only keep their arms up, not necessarily their head. Children with floaties must be constantly watched. **FLOATIES ARE TOYS NOT SAFETY DEVICES.** Even with water vests a child can be turned face down and may not be able to kick themselves over. **ALWAYS** watch young children in swimming pools. Safety Vests for children are a requirement for children on area lakes because of the undertows and the danger of falling out of a boat. Other times when a safety vests are desirable include when a child is in a large body of water or if a parent is watching several children at one time. Parents with young children in safety vests should always be within easy grab distance. Safety vests should be Coast Guard approved.

Going to the Pool

Keep in mind that these suggestions talk about what to do and not do at a swimming pool with your child. However, most hot tubs, kiddie pools, and bath tubs are plenty big enough to do these activities with a young child. The water just needs to be deep enough for their head to go under. Jumping in activities can only be done where the water is at least 3 ½ feet deep. Children should always jump into pools feet first.

Going to the pool, beach, or lake should be great fun for the whole family. Going with young children provides a wonderful opportunity to enhance their love of water and to help them prepare to learn proper swimming. Parents should always become familiar with a pool, lake, or beach before you enter with your children. Know how you get in and get out. Know where there are depth changes. Give your child information about this body of water prior to getting in.

(1) Teach children to only enter water after you are in place.

Young children should be taught to wait on deck until you enter the water first, then invite them to join you. It is extremely important that they see a cheerful and positive signal from you. Pick a place where they can sit on the deck with their feet in the water and you can stand up. You should swim with your child away from steps as they are often crowded and you don't want your child ever jumping on or over pool steps.

(2) Smile and be relaxed.

If the water feels a little cold do not comment on it, simply smile and say, "Mom is going to bob ten times then you can come bob with her." and then go under until you are comfortable always smiling and letting the child know this is the most fun thing ever. Young children love to do activities with their parents, especially when it is one on one. If at all possible a non-swimming child should be one on one with their parent.

(3) Help the child into the Water (Child who enjoys submersion)

Bring the child into the water by gently holding their hands. Have the child sit on the deck with their feet in the water and hold both their hands and gently pull them into the water letting their head go completely under the water. Slowly lift them out from the water. Stay calm, be deliberate, praise them as they surface. Children not afraid of the water will likely think this is the best game ever and be ready to do it again. With these children, stand facing the deck. Put your hand just under their stomach and lead them back to the wall. Show them how to climb out of the pool. Each time they enter the water, eventually lead them back to the wall as this is a basic water safety lesson. ALWAYS show your child how to exit pools.

(3) Help the child into the Water (Child who does not yet like submersion)

Lift your child into the water from a sitting position, holding them under their arm pits. Talk and comfort your child Explain what you will be doing, talk them through every movement. Let them know when you are going to put them under the water. Bring them into the pool without submerging their head. Talk to them that you are going to work up to going underneath the water. Always say 1-2-3 then go down. Each time go down a little farther until the head goes completely under. Be calm. Don't hurry. All motions should be smooth with no jerking. Go under with your child. Let them see that you go cheerfully under the water and explain to them this is important.

A child afraid of the water may come up sputtering, crying, and often clinging to you as though going under the water was the most horrible thing that has ever happened to them. Comfort the child. Let them know the water is fine, that you enjoy being in the water and you are going to teach them to enjoy the water. Then, be patient it takes some children many times in the water with their parent to begin to feel confident.

(4) Don't Drink the Water

Remind children to close their mouths when they are in the water. All young swimmers take in water. Teach them to spit it out. Pool water should not be drunk

(5) Blowing Bubbles & Water Games

Most children naturally hold their breath when they go under water. To properly swim, children learn to expel this air as bubbles. With these games encourage swimmers to blow bubbles when their mouth is in the water. No one likes to get water up their nose or mouth and teaching the child to blow bubbles out will prevent this. In these games, never put a fearful child under the water without warning. For a child very afraid to put their face or head in the water you might have to start without emersion and work up to it. Let the child know what to expect. In all of these games be calm and have movements in the water be slow and with purpose, not jerky.

Pouring - this game is popular with all toddlers and can use any container. You simply fill a container with pool water then pour the water over your arms, shoulders, and head. For a fearful swimmer start with a container that holds just a little water (1/3 cup). Take turns letting the child pour water on you, then you pour water on the child. Larger and larger containers can be used until you are pouring about a quart at a time. With this amount the child will gain the sense of water being around them and splashing them in a safe and fun environment. Always praise.

Bubbles - this game can be played on steps or shallow pool or bath tub. The child sits, stand, or lies on their stomach and puts their mouth and nose in the water and blows out. Parent and child can blow together. If the child is willing have them put their whole face to the hairline when blowing and parent should always put their face in to demonstrate how fun putting the face in the water can be.

Bubbles in a glass - this is a non-swimming game but helps children understand what blowing out means. Get a glass of water and plastic straw and let the child blow bubbles in the glass. They can see the bubbles their air is creating.

Ring Around the Rosy or Humpty Dumpty - You and your child can form a circle with arms extended and say the nursery rhymes. On all Fall Down OR Had a Big Fall you and your child go under the water and together come up slowly to the surface. When under the water keep your eyes open (it is OK to wear goggles) and focus on your child. If they come up sputtering or crying remind them about blowing bubbles and go back and practice that before another try underwater.

Tea Parties - Great chefs and carpenters work under water. Have a make believe adventure. You and your child go under the water and pretend to pour and drink tea. This game can be done in parts as you come up for air. Go down and make the cookies,

Go down and put the cookies in the oven. Go down and take the cookies out of the oven, Eat the cookies. Help the child concentrate on the details of the game and let the water not be the emphasis. What type of cookies? What color sprinkles?

Pick-Up - Children love pool toys. Place several sinkable toys on pool steps and have the child go under the water to collect the toys. Start with the top step and go to steps deeper and deeper. Some young children have trouble propelling their bodies downward and may need a parent to guide them. Guide young swimmers by having an arm on the stomach and back. Always be slow, methodical, and smooth.

Conclusion

Swimming is a great sport that toddlers and young children can learn and enjoy. Young children are NEVER to be considered completely water safe and should always be watched around water. It is imperative for tentative swimmers to have parents reinforce by practice the basic skills learned in lessons. I will work with fearful swimmers as should also the parent between lessons.

If at any time you have questions about your child's swimming please contact Martha Montoya at 830-693-1769 or mmontoya@ci.marble-falls.tx.us