**STRENGTH EXERCISES FOR SWIMMING**

Swimming is a sport that requires both muscular strength and endurance, and for this reason when training with weights you need to concentrate on developing strong muscles with high endurance capabilities.

Aim for either high reps (15+) with low / medium size weights ideally for 1-2 sets, to build good muscular endurance, followed by 1 set using a heavier weight, for 6-10 reps to build strength (not size), or the reps outlined below.

Training with weights 2-3 times a week, will give you good results, concentrate on the upper body for two sessions, the lower body for one session. Always remember to have a minimum of a day's rest between weight training sessions.

Read the notes on strength training, as well as the individual notes to obtain good technique. The below exercises are only examples, you do not need to do them all, however aim to increase the number of different exercises you do each week.

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**WARM UP AND STRETCH PRIOR TO DOING THIS CIRCUIT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exercise</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wide Arm Press-Up</strong></td>
<td>Take your hands out at double shoulder width, with your palms facing forward. Dependent on your fitness level, choose your style to work in, i.e. 3/4 position for intermediates and full position for advanced.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1 Arm Row</strong></td>
<td>Support your body by placing your left hand and knee on a bench, whilst placing the weight in your right hand, with the right foot securely on the floor. Aim to keep your back parallel to the floor, whilst lifting the weighted elbow from a straight position to an angle of 90 degrees or more, aiming to take the elbow high without rotation.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Biceps Curl</strong></td>
<td>Again if possible perform in a seated position to limit excessive body swing. For intermediates and advanced aim to perform the movement in the 3 following actions, normal / hammer / and reverse.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Triceps Dips</strong></td>
<td>Place your hands either side of your buttocks, with fingers facing forward. Bend at your elbows, taking them backwards. Perform on a secure bench with feet on the floor for intermediates, and feet on another bench for advanced. Focus on taking your elbows behind you.</td>
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Breast Stroke. Control the movement, ideally standing with feet shoulder width apart. Keep your head up looking straight ahead, with elbows at shoulder height. LIGHTWEIGHT

Make smooth controlled breast stroke swimming movements, whilst focusing on keeping your elbows at shoulder height.

Bench Press Aim to perform the exercises in either a close arm normal or wide stance exercise. Again you can adapt the exercise by using an incline / decline / or flat bench, whilst working with either dumbbells or a barbell.

Focus on a complete range of movement, lowering the weight down to your chest; however never use a weight that is too heavy so you can't lift it back up.

Triceps Kick Backs. Sit on a secure bench with your feet firmly on the floor, leaning over as far as possible, ideally to a position that enables your body to be parallel to the floor. LIGHTWEIGHT

Smoothly extend the arm back from a bent position, in order to straighten the arm, focusing on keeping your upper arm horizontal whilst keeping your elbow tucked into your side.

Reverse Fly's. Support your back on either an inclined bench or the thigh of one leg. Keeping a bend in your arms lift the weight up no higher than shoulder height in a smooth motion, before lowering under control. LIGHTWEIGHT

Lateral Raise. Holding suitable dumbbells in each hand, smoothly lift the weights up from your side, to a horizontal position out to your sides, aiming to keep a slight bend in your arms, hands inline with your shoulders.

For best results, certainly for beginners, aim to work on a declined bench so that you have some support for your lower back.

Close Arm Press-Ups. Beginners should perform in a box style press-up, as this is a hard exercise. Aim to make a triangle with your fingers and thumbs, taking your elbows out to the side. Your hands should be under your chest.

Normal Fly's. Work on either a flat or incline bench, taking the weights from a central position, out to your sides, in line with your shoulders.

Keep a slight bend in the arms at the elbow, lowering the weights no lower than your shoulders.
Shoulder Press. Aim to work in a seated position on an inclined bench for support for your back. Lift the weights from your shoulders, up above your head, keeping the palms of your hands facing forward. Make sure the weights are secure.

Swimming involves all major muscle groups, and for this reason any weakness, will result in poor performance. Throughout the year, you should combine some form of weight training into your training sessions, to keep your muscular strength.

Circuit training, especially using lightweights will also be highly beneficial for persons who wish to improve their fitness level for competitive swimming.

As always mentioned, prior to exercising, you should always warm-up and stretch. For swimmer's, it is vital that you spend quality time stretching both before and after all exercise routines, either weight training / circuits / swimming, in order to maintain good flexibility.

**LOWER BODY AND ABDOMINAL WORKOUT**

Use this lower body circuit, which has been taken from our home workout section - there is a suitable weights training program available in the members area, along with a number of abdominal training programs for all levels.

You should spend time stretching prior to performing any of these workouts, and certainly prior to your swimming sessions, as having a greater range of mobility will increase both the power and efficiency of your stroke.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SIDE LEG RAISE BL (BOTH LEGS)</th>
<th>WALL SQUAT</th>
<th>BL TOE TOUCH OPPOSITE HAND</th>
<th>1LEG SQUAT BL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Side Leg Raise BL (Both Legs)" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Wall Squat" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Bl Toe Touch Opposite Hand" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="1Leg Squat BL" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Bl Static Adductors" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Bl Pulsing Hip Extension" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Bl Pulsing Abdutors" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Bl Bent Leg Side Raises" /></td>
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Aim to work through all 12 exercises - giving yourself enough rest between each exercise so that you can perform the next. Look at working for a total of 45 - 60 seconds for each exercise, with a minimum of 15 seconds rest, and then repeat the next exercise for 45 - 60 seconds until all exercises have been completed.

Once you have completed all 12 exercises walk around for 1 minute to enable the heart rate to come down gradually, taking in some water if you need it, then repeat all the exercises again for a further 45 - 60 seconds with 15 seconds rest between exercises.

Remember the secret to fitness is consistency and variety - so keep up the good work.

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Remember strength training is one aspect to improving your swimming; however the key area is technique. If possible either get a coach to analysis your stroke, or have a colleague video you swimming, so you can see what you're doing wrong.