

# The Basics of Backstroke Swimming

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## General

Trunk rotation is crucial to allowing a deep catch at the start of the pull.

Palm should be facing downward.

Breathe on need.

No movement of the head.

No interruption to body position.

Early application of force in the catch.

Swimmers can develop aerobically on backstroke.

A great stroke to offset all the work done in freestyle.

## The Stroke

- As the swimmer's hand enters the water, the opposite hip rotates upward, ready for the recovery on that side.
- Following entry, the hand catches the water with the palm facing down, keeping a firm fixed-elbow position.
- The sweeps of the arms should be minimized as recommended for freestyle.
- The catch should be deep enough to position the arm to set the elbow (lock) on the water.
- The line of the pull is direct, with a minimum of sweeping.
- The rotations of the hips, trunk, and shoulders drive the body past the anchored arm.
- After finishing the upward phase of the stroke, the hand and arm are ready for the push phase.
- The body is in a flatter position ready for the rotation through the hips to the opposite side.
- As the swimmer completes the push phase, the hips rotate and the opposite hand enters the water.
- The right hand enters the water, and the palm rotates downward to get the catch on the water.
- The same sequence is repeated on the other side of the body.
- During this full sequence the legs make six propulsive upward kicks.
- As the legs kick upward they will straighten.
- The hand exits the water with the thumb or forefinger knuckle first.