

# Lap Pool Swimming Etiquette



## 1) When you first arrive, rinse yourself off in the changerooms first.

Showing before entering the pool send a clear message to your fellow swimmers: You follow the rules, and you're doing everything you can to keep clean. Despite this effort, the water will likely be filled with yucky things, but showering is a worthwhile gesture.

## 2) If there's an empty lane, swim in it.

No matter how fast or slow a swimmer you are, always take an empty lane if one is available. However, in some situations it makes more sense to share a speed-designated lane while leaving a different speed lane free. This way, if a swimmer arrives shortly afterward who needs the other speed-designated lane, they will get it, and the order imposed by the pool will be functioning.

## 3) If there isn't an empty lane, make it known that you're entering.

Trying to make eye contact with a swimmer in the middle of a long set is not the right approach. Forget the niceties of dry land. Hop down on your butt and dangle both legs into the lane, off to the side near the rope. If the swimmer doesn't acknowledge your existence by moving to one side after a lap or two, get all the way into the water and stand in the corner of the lane.

## 4) If the other swimmer is faster than you, don't push off in front of them.

Faster swimmers have priority in shared lanes. It isn't done to award athletic prowess, but rather to make the workout safer and more efficient for everyone involved. Pushing off in front of faster swimmers will inconvenience everyone, including yourself. Always wait for faster swimmers to turn or stop, then push off. However, don't follow a fast swimmer too closely behind all the way to the wall, as they may accidentally collide with you after a flip turn.

## 5) If more than two people are in the lane, swim in a circular pattern.

In order to avoid collisions, you must swim in either clockwise or counterclockwise pattern when more than three people are sharing a lane.

## 6) If a swimmer taps your foot, they're not flirting—they want to pass.

When your feet get tapped, don't be alarmed or embarrassed. Simply pull into the corner of the lane when you reach the wall so the swimmer behind you can pass. If they pass before the wall, get as close to the rope as you can and slow down, but you don't need to stop. Don't speed up while being passed. If you get passed twice by the same person, consider moving to a slower lane.

## 7) Stay away from the centre of the wall when taking a rest.

It's perfectly acceptable to take a rest at the wall on either end of the pool whenever you feel the need, just be sure to stay clear of the centre of the wall if you're sharing the lane. Give the active swimmers as much room as possible to turn. When you're ready to start swimming again, always yield to swimmers who are in motion.

## 8) Avoid wide strokes in crowded lap pools.

In a busy lap lane avoid doing the butterfly and the breaststroke. Only do backstrokes if you're confident you can keep up the pace in the lane, and you have enough control to swim in a straight line and not veer into oncoming traffic. If you're an extremely experienced swimmer and have excellent control of your butterfly, be courteous and tell the others in your lane that you're going to do it before you begin.

## 9) Be considerate of your lane partners if your workout includes intervals.

Workouts that vary in intensity are beneficial to your training, but intervals can be disruptive in crowded lap lanes. Sudden increases in your pace will throw off your lane partners, and confuse people who try to uphold the unwritten "let faster swimmers pass" rule. Feel it out. If it seems like a fast interval will disturb your lane partners, consider moving to a faster lane. Another option is to modify your intervals so they don't interfere with the others.

## 10) Just be nice.....)

The beautiful thing about politeness is the simplicity. The unwritten rules of the lap pool are somewhat complex, and it's easy to forget something—especially when your heart is racing, your goggles are fogged, and you're trying your hardest not to drown. The simple act of always being nice to your fellow swimmers, regardless of their ability, is the only rule you truly need to follow.