Swim Lesson Questions

A one-page list of questions to ask any swim program, for children or adults: instructor certification, lifeguards, class time in the water, cost and comfort.

Letter page · For parents, adults

Scan for the web page, sources and downloads

Look for instructors certified through a nationally recognized learn-to-swim curriculum and lifeguards on duty, says the American Academy of Pediatrics. Ask these on the phone or on a visit, and tick each answer you're happy with.

Safety and teaching

- [ ] Are instructors trained and certified through a nationally recognized learn-to-swim program?
- [ ] Are lifeguards on duty, with current CPR and first aid certification?
- [ ] Can I watch a class before I sign up?
- [ ] Do students spend most of the class swimming, not waiting for a turn? Does each get one-on-one time?
- [ ] How many sessions? Will lessons continue until basic water competency skills are learned?

For children under 4

- [ ] Is a parent in the water, or an adult within arm's reach, the whole time?
- [ ] Is the water kept clean and properly chlorinated, and heated to 87-94°F for children 3 and under?

Cost and comfort

- [ ] What does it cost, and is financial help available?
- [ ] What swimwear is allowed? Are there adult-only, women-only or family sessions?

What you can do today: call one program and ask three of these questions. Remember that lessons don't make anyone "drown proof," so keep watching. Find programs in how to find swim lessons near you.

Sources

1. Swim Lessons for Children: When to Start & What to Consider, American Academy of Pediatrics (HealthyChildren.org). https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-play/Pages/Swim-Lessons.aspx
2. Water Competency, Water Safety USA. https://www.watersafetyusa.org/water-competency.html

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