

Heartland Aquatics

New Swim Parent FAQs

General Swimming

Q. What is USA Swimming?

A. USA Swimming is the governing body of the sport. It is charged with the responsibility to formulate rules, conduct national championships, disseminate information, select competitors to represent this country in international competition, and insure the development of its' member clubs and age group swimmers.

Q. Why is a USA Swimming membership required?

A. As a USA Swimming licensed swim club, HLA is obligated to ensure all swimmers are members of USA Swimming, Inc. It is also necessary for participation in any USA sanctioned swim meet. USA Swimming also provides its member clubs with liability insurance in the event of an accident, and the swimmers medical insurance to cover catastrophic medical costs incurred during a sanctioned activity, including team practices and activities.

Q. What is Midwestern Swimming?

A. Midwestern Swimming is one of 59 Local Swimming Committees (LSCs) of USA Swimming. The geographic area includes all of Nebraska except the Panhandle region and includes the western two tiers of counties in Iowa. It is the governing body for the clubs in its geographic territory.

Q. What are the swimming seasons?

A. The swim year is divided into two seasons. The winter, or "short course", season runs from mid-September to mid-March. The meets are held in a 25-yard pool. The summer, or "long course", season runs from early April to mid-August. Meets are generally held outside in 50 meter (Olympic size) pools.

Q. What are the four competitive strokes?

A. The four competitive strokes are: freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly. Events are held in all of the competitive strokes at varying distances depending on the age-group of the swimmer. In addition, there is a combination of the strokes swum by one swimmer called the individual medley. The order must be: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Freestyle. Equal distances must be swum of each stroke.

Q. What are age group classifications?

A. There are seven different age group classifications recognized by United States Swimming: 8-Under, 10-Under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18, and Senior. A swimmer's age on the first day of the meet determines their age classification for that meet.

Q. What are the different time standards/levels of achievements?

A. Within each age-group there are different nationally recognized levels of achievement based on times. All swimmers begin as "C" swimmers. As they improve, they advance from "C", to "BB", "B", "A", "AA", "AAA", and ultimately "AAAA". In some cases, a swimmer may be in a different class in each stroke.

Some swim meets set certain qualification standards. In order to swim in a certain classification, a swimmer must have achieved the qualifying time for that particular classification. Standards can be found on the MWS website at www.mwswim.org.

Practices

Q. How are groups and swimmer placement determined?

A. Groups are designed to maximize coaching and meet each swimmer's needs. Swimmers are placed in a group based on many factors - age, ability, skills, goals, etc. Swimmers may move between groups at the discretion of the coaches in order to ensure the swimmer is receiving the appropriate level of training.

Q. How are practice times determined?

A. Practice times are decided based on a number of factors but the primary factors are pool availability and group numbers.

Q. What equipment is needed?

A. All swimmers will need a basic set of equipment, examples of which include goggles, a streamline kickboard, and a pull-float. Ask your coach for equipment needs as they can vary by group.

Q. How do I get information about the practice schedule?

A. The practice schedule is available via the website and the hotline (441-0599). The regular schedule and any practice exceptions known in advance will be posted on the website. In addition, the hotline is updated daily with the schedule. We encourage everyone to call the hotline before they leave for practice especially in cases of inclement weather.

Meets

Q. How is the meet schedule determined?

A. At the beginning of the season, the schedule is set by the head coach in an effort to provide meet opportunities for different levels of swimmers. There is an attempt to also to include meets that will give swimmers experience with different meet formats as well.

Q. Do you have to attend all the meets on the schedule?

A. The meet schedule reflects those meets that are best suited for our swimmers. A HLA coach will be present at each of the meets listed. Swimmers can choose which meets they want to attend. If you have questions about which meets to attend, you can always consult your child's coach for recommendations.

Q. How do I sign up/enter a meet?

A. Meet sign up can either be done online or by emailing the head coach. The "Meet Schedule" section of the website has further information and a link to the online form. In addition to the meet schedule, each meet listed will have a link to the meet flyer for specific meet information and event details.

Q. How much does it cost to swim in meets?

A. Meet fees vary and are determined by the hosting club. They generally include a per swimmer "splash" fee and individual and relay event fees which are typically a few dollars each. Price of event fees will vary based on the meet format with prelim/finals meets generally costing slightly more.

Q. How do I pay for meet fees?

A. Meet fees are billed to your account once you enter a meet and will appear on your next statement.

Q. What should I take to a meet?

A. Plan to arrive 15 minutes prior to warm-ups and bring: swim suit, 2 pairs of goggles, 2 swim caps (if you use one), towels, t-shirt or sweatshirt and shorts or sweatpants (to wear in between events so muscles don't tighten up if it's cold), deck shoes or sandals, snacks, drinks, and other items to pass the time like iPods, cards, games, etc.

Q. How can I find meet results?

A. Meet results are generally posted throughout the meet at the venue. After the conclusion of the meet you can find them on the HLA website.

Q. How can I find my swimmer's best times?

A. Swimmer's times can be accessed in two ways: via the Midwestern LSC website or via the US Swimming website. Both sites offer a searchable database function to find your swimmer's times as well as the ability to sort them by long course (meters) or short course (yards).

Fundraising and Volunteering

Q. Are there required fundraising activities?

A. The team does not require fundraising but appreciates the support of its members if fundraising activities are schedule (i.e., Swim-a-thon, meet hosting, etc.). These activities help to keep dues and fees reasonable for all members. We encourage all families to actively support and volunteer to make these activities successful and support the team.

Q. Are parents needed to volunteer?

A. HLA is a non-profit organization administered jointly by volunteer parents and the coaching staff. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the organization. Becoming an active member is a great way to learn more about the organization, the sport, and ensure the future success of the club.

Q. Who do I contact about volunteering?

A. The team has many opportunities to volunteer. Examples include: marketing, events, fundraising, apparel, board, etc. There is a list of club representatives and board members on the website. Contact anyone of the club representatives or board members for more information on volunteer opportunities.

Team Administration

Q. What are HLA's obligations and how does it support itself?

A. HLA provides pool availability through contracts with various aquatic facilities, coaching staff, pool equipment as necessary, and club activities to support the club. The coaching staff provides organized practices and professional swimming technique, training, and instruction to provide the best opportunity for your child's swimming success. HLA supports itself through membership fees, fundraising activities, sponsorships, and donations.

Q. What are the billing procedures?

A. Bills are sent at the beginning of each month via email or USPS. Monthly practice and other fees (i.e. meet entry fees) are billed in arrears based on attendance. Payments should be made to Heartland Aquatics and can be mailed to P.O. Box 67206, Lincoln, NE 68506. All billing questions should be directed to the treasurer at treasurer@heartlandaquatics.org.