



SHIVERERS SWIMMING CLUB

Fun, friendly and fast since 1920.



A guide for what to do at swimming galas

You will be advised by the gala secretary if your entry to a particular gala has been accepted and what the warm up times and start times will be for each session.

Make sure you let the gala secretary know if you are not able to attend the gala as once entered the organisers will be expecting you to turn up and in some cases the club can be fined if we do not give notice that a swimmer cannot make the event for whatever reason.

Equipment to take

Swimming bag to include change of costume, Shiverers hat and T-shirt and spare goggles and a couple of towels. Suitable poolside shoes preferably clean trainers and it's a good idea to bring a book or hand held game to play whilst waiting for your races. Do NOT bring any valuables onto poolside or any items of glass for obvious reasons.

We expect all swimmers unless there are extenuating circumstances to wear the Shiverers kit as it reinforces "team " ethics and advertises our club and makes it easier for our coaches to pick out swimmers to watch during warm ups and their races and to give feedback on performances etc.

Food and drink

Read our guide on what to eat at competitions and remember it's always best to stick to your normal foods and not binge on sugary drinks and sweets all day. Always have your own food with you in case there are limited facilities at some venues. Bring plenty of drinks (not fizzy) to maintain fluid levels and healthy snacks and be prepared to eat at times to suit your own warm up/race programme.

Arrival

Always make sure you turn up on poolside at least 15 minutes before the start of your warm up. If you know you are likely to be late make sure you get a message to the team manager on poolside otherwise you may be withdrawn from your race .Many galas now operate a "sign out" policy whereby your name is deleted from the start lists by the start of warm up. Failure to inform the organisers is frowned upon.

Once you are poolside you will be looked after by the coach/team manager and will not be allowed to leave poolside unless given permission to do so .It is expected that you will sit with your team members and join in the poolside support for fellow swimmers rather than just appearing before your own race starts having sat with parents. We expect parents to give support and encouragement but giving advice can confuse and mislead swimmers even though they may think they are helping.

Warm up - see warm up info sheet

Your coach will explain how long the warm up is and what you will be doing during the warm up .Warm ups are generally crowded and can last as little as 10 minutes or as long as 40 minutes so its important to listen to your coach and follow the exact warm up which will have been devised to maximise your preparation for the race. If

you have to wait to start your warm up do some mobilisation exercises before going into the water.

For the last few minutes of the warm up you may be able to practice sprints off the blocks in a designated lane where you will be watched and timed by your coach. PLEASE do what the coach recommends and ask before running back to your friends insisting that your parents have told you “not to wear yourself out in the warm up”. You are more likely to achieve more from a good warm up than not! After warm up, drink and put dry warm clothing on straight away to keep warm.

Before the race

If it has been a long time since your warm up your coach might suggest a further warm up in the swim down pool .Please always speak to your coach as they will be best suited to advise what is best to do.

The race

Be prepared and focused and don't leave it until the last minute to change costumes, and have all equipment and spares ready. It's a good idea to have studied the programme to see where you are seeded in relation to other swimmers in your age group. Heats in events are seeded slowest to fastest and you may be swimming against older or younger swimmers so really you are going against the clock. It's easy to feel you are doing well by winning a heat only to find that another 3 x 10 year olds for example are swimming in the next faster heat and may beat your time!

You will be asked by the team manager to go to the whipping area approx 2 races before the start of your event. Make sure, if you have not already done so, to speak to your coach before going up to race to go over any race plan or last minute advice etc.

In the whipping area stay focused and try not to get put off/distracted by other swimmers comments who may be very good at passing on their own worries/anxieties to you ! Do some limbering up and once behind the blocks it's a good idea to some short vigorous exercises to “wake yourself up” and get your heart rate up ready to race. Stay focused and swim to win!

Swim down

Always swim down after every race if a swim down pool is available. If not taking a shower and do some stretching exercises is a good idea. Ask your coach what you must do in your swim down and make sure at the end of swim down you do some preparation work on the stroke/event you will be doing next and prepare mentally.

ALWAYS talk to your coach as soon as possible after your race who will brief you on anything important that they have noticed to help improve on further performances and hopefully congratulate you on a fantastic swim or make you feel positive again even if it was not your best swim.

What next

Record all your times and achievements and dates in your log book. Write down any race skills which you have been told to work on and also how you felt before and during the race. This often gives you ideas on how best to prepare for your next gala. Reset your short term goals, if appropriate.