



# 5 Reasons Swimmers Should Jump Rope

*In terms of conditioning, developing better athleticism, and injury-proofing, using a skip rope is about the best bang-for-your-buck dryland activity for those looking to develop into a more explosive swimmer. Here are 5 reasons swimmers should pick up the skipping rope.*

Swimmers train hard in the pool. We spend hours and hours refining our technique, drilling the fundamentals, and doing the taxing and [tough swim sets](#) that our coaches task us with.

In our never-ending quest for improvement we do more work outside of the water, doing a myriad of activities ranging from running to core work to weight lifting.

All in an effort to gain a tactical edge over the competition.

Perhaps your coach has asked you to skip rope in the past and you never truly understood why, or maybe you are looking to find a way to add to your conditioning work in the pool with something that is not only low impact, but also still highly effective.

Whichever the case, here are 5 reasons that you should skipping to your training arsenal:

## **1. You don't need a gym to reap the benefits of it.**

Fast swimmers are also good athletes. You simply need to be in order to have an explosive start and fast walls. This means box jumps, [jump squats](#), and lifting weights in the gym.

**See Also:** [How to Improve Your Underwater Fly Kick](#)

And this also means having access to not only the equipment but the supervision and proper instruction. For those swimmers who are just getting started with dryland, or who lack the facilities to weight train a skipping rope can be a powerful alternative.

One [study](#) of collegiate-aged participants found that skipping rope three times per week over a ten-week period produced similar and sometimes superior results compared to a traditional high-impact plyometric training program.

## 2. Builds strong ankles.

Our ankles don't get the love they really need. And we can be forgiven for ignoring them; after all, we are spending so much time and focus on our catch, hand entry, and kicking from our hips that we can be forgiven for not giving them the TLC they deserve.

See Also: [How Swimmers Can Improve Their Ankle Flexibility](#)

Skipping can give your ankles a much needed boost in terms of strength. And this matters because strong ankles means a stronger and more punishing kick, and it also means that you can explode off of the start and turns with more power and speed.

## 3. It develops fast twitch fibers with low impact.

While battling ropes, stair running, sprints and plyometric exercises are popular among the dryland programs populating our swim clubs, jumping rope is a remarkably safe (provided you don't snap yourself in the face during a missed skip, obviously), and low impact activity that also improves strength in your ankles, calves, quads and butt.

Its benefits extend beyond your low body; turning the rope over also strengthens the [stabilizer muscles in your wrist, forearm and elbow](#), something you know is key in developing a more forceful catch in the pool.

On top of all that, skipping rope builds fast twitch fibers in your shoulders, deltoids and forearms, making it a great part of your workout as well as a powerful way to warm-up.

## 4. Gives you “quick feet” which you need for faster walls, faster starts, and a faster kick.

There is a reason that boxers are so fond of skipping rope—it helps them keep light and agile on their feet.

This sensation of lightness and quickness translates well to swimmers as well. We want feet and ankles that not only power our swim starts and [flip turns](#), but also fuel a [faster kick](#).

Developing a powerhouse kick requires a lot of stamina and work in the pool, but it also requires *fast feet*. After all, for sprinters their foot turnover is much higher than arm turnover, and doesn't have a recovery phase.

See Also: [The Top 6 Core Exercises for Swimmers](#)

Jumping rope is not only a powerful way to build hops and promote fast twitch fiber growth in your lower body, but it also promotes the stamina necessary to kick harder for longer.

## **5. Keeps our posture in check.**

If you ever want to see good posture go to die watch an athlete sit on a stationary bike. With shoulders rolled forward they will typically hunch over and quasi-lay across the bars of the bike.

The form that some swimmers have when they run can also leave a lot to be desired while also opening the window for injury (one [study of collegiate swimmers found](#) that 40% of their injuries incurred over the course of the season happened during dryland activities).

### **Skipping rope requires and encourages good posture.**

It's very difficult to turn the rope over and not have your back straight, shoulder rolled back, and eyes up. Swimmers have enough of a training burden to bear—and the injuries that go along with it—the last thing we need is performing a dryland activity that is likely to leave us injured.

## **The Takeaway**

As we have seen, jumping rope for even just ten minutes per session, three times per week can have a significant impact on our training and improve our fast twitch capabilities.

Skipping is also easy to progress and adaptable to your current level of conditioning; once you get better at it you can incorporate criss-crosses, side rope swings, criss-cross hands, and ultimately, double unders.