



7 Awesome Benefits of Competitive Swimming

If you have been a competitive swimmer for any length of time you don't need me to sell you on the **benefits of swimming**. Or maybe you have been swimming so long that you need a gentle reminder.

The sport provides us a lot. It serves as a proving ground for setting goals, learning resilience, and developing ridiculously good looking physiques. (“Hey everyone, come see how good I look!”)

There are a lot of reasons to celebrate the sport.

Here are just 7 of the benefits of swimming:

1. Swimming is low impact.

Yes, “low impact” means different things for different people. Someone who swims 1000m with perfect technique twice a week is going to experience a different range of impact than a swimmer who belts out 10k a day with sloppy and uneven form (hello there, [misuse injuries and swimmer's shoulder](#)).

The buoyancy of the water removes the jarring impact that comes from most dryland activities. Swimming is a resistance exercise without lots of impact, with [research showing that it can still provide bone strength benefits](#).



2. It's good for the brain.

Competitive swimmers are whiz kids when it comes to breaking down splits and stroke counts. All that lap counting in the water, adding of times, and continuous focus helps us better concentrate in other areas of life.

(Meaning we can be forgiven for losing count during a 200m once in a while. For the last time I'm sorry coach!)

[Research into young Australian, New Zealander and American kids has shown that swimming makes you smarter.](#) And who doesn't like to be better educated?

3. It gives you the vaunted swimmer's physique.

You don't hear members of the opposite sex swoon over Football Body. Or Golf Body. But you mention swimmer's body and people know exactly what you are talking about.

Boulder-shouldered, broad back, lean and strong, [swimming gives us a physique](#) that is the envy of the sporting world.

4. The whole safety thing.

Drowning is the [leading cause of death for kiddos](#) between the age of 1-4, and is the second leading cause of injury in children between the ages 1-14. Over the past decade the United States alone averages over 3,500 drowning deaths per year. That is about ten *every single day*.

Staggering when you think about.

The biggest benefit of swimming goes far beyond making a Speedo look good, or building up that voracious and legendary appetite, or growing over-seized shoulders and lats—it's being alive, man.

Learning to swim gives us the confidence, awareness and competency to better navigate the pools, lakes and streams in our lives.

5. It's a lifetime sport.

For most of us (particularly readers of this site), swimming came to us at an early age. We can hardly remember a time when the pool and all of the glory and misery that came along with it wasn't a major part of our life.

Whether a water baby or not, the sport is something that will always be there for us in life.

For some this means joining a Masters team, for others it means going down to the local YMCA to do some solo laps, and for others it means floating around the splash pool with the next generation of water babies.

See Also: [Do Swimmers Get Injured More Often Than Other Athletes?](#)

6. It can be done on your own or with a team.

The sport can be done quite easily solo or with a club.

You already know the perks to training on your own; going solo gives you the “masters prerogative” (i.e. write your own sets, include generous amounts of hot tubbing), and gives you the quiet and disconnect from day-to-day life.

On the other hand, swimming with a local team or organization provides you the structure and social kick that comes with training towards a common goal.

7. It's versatile.

Unlike most sports and physical activities, you can throw attention and effort at various parts of your body as needs dictate. Want a basic, full body workout? Swim. Want to hammer your upper body? Do some pull work with a band. Want some thicker stems? Throw on some fins. How about a deadly core workout? Roll on your back, streamline and dolphin kick your abs into submission.

This ability to target different parts of your body means that compared to sports and activities like running, biking, and most team sports, you can train somewhat easily around injuries.

The versatility extends to the type of training you want to do as well. For you endurance-based athletes there are endless laps and sets you can do to continue expanding your “base.” Similarly, for the short twitch monsters among us engaging in a series of blast 15-yard or 25-yard sprints can quite easily (and enjoyably) feed the beast.

The Takeaway

For most readers of this site these benefits of swimming will be old news. Or maybe you have been doing it so long that you have forgotten life without it.

Whichever the case, this is your daily reminder that swimming is kinda-sorta the best.