

MASTERS SWIM PROGRAM F.A.Q.

What is U.S. Masters Swimming?

USMS is a national membership-operated nonprofit organization that provides membership benefits to nearly 60,000 Masters swimmers across the country.

These benefits include insurance, *SWIMMER* magazine, sanctioned events, and many others. USMS and its 52 Local Masters Swimming Committees (LMSCs) provide direct support to more than 1,500 smaller clubs and workout groups. Structure and organization of USMS programs vary and are driven by factors such as pool availability, instructor or coach availability, community support, and finances. The majority of locations offering USMS programs have coaches on deck. Coaches write workouts and provide feedback and instruction.

The word "Masters" sounds intimidating...

The word *Masters* was first applied to adults who participated in track and field and was later adopted in organized adult swimming. In swimming, Masters simply means 18 and older.

Do I have to compete to be a Masters swimmer?

No. When organized adult swimming started to become popular in the 1960s and 70s—the early years of USMS—the intent was that adults would swim to stay in shape. But early organizers knew that some adults would want to compete, so it is offered. About 25 percent of our nearly 60,000 members enter pool or open water competitions. The greater percentage of USMS members does not compete.

I'm not fast enough (or in shape enough) to be a Masters swimmer...

This is something a lot of Masters coaches hear. However, most Masters coaches and swimmers don't care how fast you are. In nearly every program, there are others of similar ability, or those who started where you are and have improved. Don't let your perceived ability, or lack thereof, hold you back. Although it's important to have a physical examination before starting any exercise routine, you don't need to be in shape to start Masters swimming—Masters swimming will help you get there.

I swim on my own, why should I join USMS?

If you just prefer to swim on your own, you'll still receive many valuable, exclusive benefits of membership. Technique tips and articles are included in all our member publications: *SWIMMER* magazine, *STREAMLINES* e-newsletters, and at usms.org. You'll also have access to online workouts designed for specific groups, such as beginners, sprinters, triathletes, pregnant women, and more. Take advantage of the online Fitness Logs (FLOGs), where you can track your swimming and other fitness activities and participate in virtual events. You can even start a blog at usms.org, where you'll connect with thousands of swimmers of all ages and abilities, many of whom also swim on their own.

I'm a triathlete—why should I join USMS?

Many triathletes, including world-class triathletes Jarrod Shoemaker, Gwen Jorgensen, and Sara McLarty, join USMS programs because training with swimmers is the best way to improve the swim portion of the tri. Masters coaches provide technique instruction and interval training with a group. USMS membership also grants access to the triathlete-specific workouts posted regularly in the members-only Forums at usms.org.

What can I expect when I attend a USMS practice?

Check out our “Masters Swimming 101” article series for tips about what to bring, common swimming jargon, and how to circle swim, read the clock, and more. Try to swim in a lane that fits your ability and don't get discouraged! Swimming is different than running, cycling, and other endurance activities. Regardless of your fitness level, it can take months to get into good swimming shape. And don't be shy—ask for help; most Masters swimmers and coaches are happy to welcome new members. Camaraderie and new friends are two of the best benefits of swimming regularly with a group.

What about exercise as I get older?

Study after study has proven that regular exercise can significantly contribute to good physical and mental health. Swimming has continually been identified as one of the best ways to exercise. Stress reduction, weight control, cardiovascular fitness, reduced cholesterol, increased muscle tone, and endurance are all benefits of swimming regularly. The social benefits are equally important; the camaraderie found in most USMS programs helps to keep people in the pool well into their golden years.

Do I have to join USMS to swim in a Masters practice?

USMS provides insurance coverage for all individual USMS members and liability insurance for clubs and workout groups. For the insurance to be in effect, all participants within the activity, such as an organized practice or competition, must be registered with USMS. Thus, most USMS clubs and chapters require that all swimmers in their programs be registered with USMS. We strongly recommend everyone join by the end of the first month of joining the team.

What is our Club Name?

FWYS – Fort Wayne YMCA Sharks

Who are the coaches?

Dave Larsen

Austin Kelly

Bill Elizondo

Email: fwyscoach@gmail.com

Days and times of swim practice? (3x a week)

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS

6a-7:15a or

7:15p-8:30p

And SATURDAY MORNINGS

7:15a-8:30a

COST? (monthly)

\$30 Members

\$75 Program Members

Payment options include automatic draft or pay for the remaining season in full.