

Swim TO Stay Safe, Swim Safe

Stay, Play, and Learn at Home Swim: Beginner – Lesson Four

Today's Lesson: Side Glides and Kicking

[Build your swim terms knowledge base](#)

[Side Glide](#)

[Side Kicking](#)

[Side-to-Side Breathing Body Motion](#)

Swim Level: Beginner

Learn-to-Swim Levels: Preschool 3 and 4, Ultra 1 to 3, Youth and Adult 1

Safety Reminders: Caregivers should ensure that children **are supervised and never left unattended in and around water**. Adults and youth who practice any water activities should, also, **have a buddy close by**. Bathtub and shower **safety measures** should be **adhered to at all times**.

For all skills and drills, ensure that the area is free from obstruction and be aware of objects and people around you at all times. Caregivers should ensure that children are properly supervised at all times.

Remember that movement should be comfortable and should not cause any pain or discomfort in the joints or limbs. If discomfort is felt, please modify the movement so that it is comfortable for you. It is highly recommended to stretch prior to beginning any movement exercises.

Knowledge Goal: Word Challenge

Look online, choose from our resource page, or create your own word find, crossword or similar word game using some or all of following words:

Side

Resting

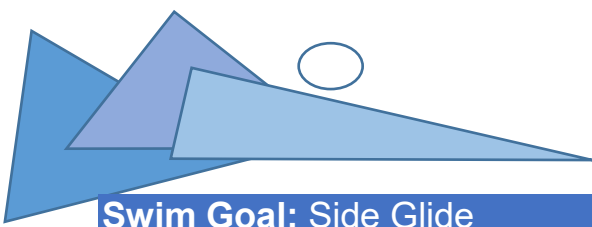
Breathing

Roll

Scissor

Ear

Before you continue with the lesson, do you know how these words relate to side swimming? Revisit these words at the end of this lesson and see if you were right.



Swim Goal: Side Glide

As swimmers will often be required to turn onto their side, either to move from front swim to back swim position or to take a breath when swimming on your front, knowing how to move through water on your side is an important skill to develop.

We start by learning to glide on our sides.

How to Start:

Complete as many activities that match your comfort, age and skill level or that of your child's.

Materials:

- An area free from obstructions
- Mat (optional)
- Bathtub

Steps:

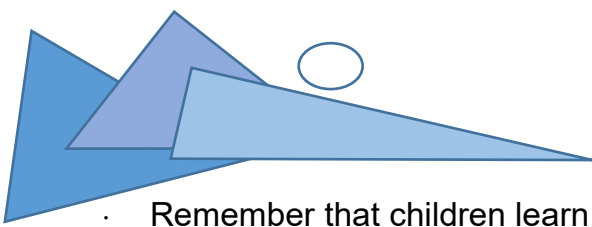
1. In an area free from obstructions on the floor, lower yourself onto one side. Extend the arm closest to the floor straight on the ground and rest the same side ear on the upper arm (bicep). The arm on top should be at your side or across your chest with your hand at your chin close to the shoulder touching the floor.
2. Your legs should be straight, hips angled so that one leg is directly on top of the other and your toes are pointed in the direction that you are facing.
3. Hold this position for 15 to 30 seconds.
4. Switch to the other side and repeat steps 1 to 3.

Progressions:

- Practice the exercise while taking big breaths to relax the body completely. Are your feet relaxed? Are your legs straight?
- Practice looking up at the ceiling while keeping your ear on your arm.
- Focus on maintaining your balance in the side position: keeping the leg straight, lift the top leg up and hold that position for 5 to 10 seconds or as long as you can.
- Repetition is the key to ensuring movements become more ingrained and your body is able to perform them more naturally. Repeat all movements at least 10 times before moving on to the next step or progression.

Variations:

- If proper safety supervision is available and space permits, try the side glide position in a bathtub filled with water. Your face should be out of water the entire time.



- Remember that children learn best through play. Use games and songs to encourage children to copy and interact with a caring adult.
- To incorporate a core strength workout for youth and adults:
 - Try balancing on an exercise ball or bench with legs and feet touching the ground, or lifted off the ground.
 - Try balancing with the upper part of your body on the bed and the lower body off the edge of the bed.
- For older children, youth and adults, incorporate some knowledge principles to provide greater understanding. See below for some 'Did You Know?' tips and encourage the older learner to expand what they know about the science of swimming by visiting the library or looking online.

Did You Know?

Side glide is considered a survival swim position because it allows you to see clearly in the direction that you are travelling and to swim with uninterrupted breathing. Most people will have a preferred side to swim on.

Tips and Reminders

Remember to practice movements on both sides to maintain your body's muscle balance.

Swim Goal: Side Glide with Kicking

Once swimmers are comfortable with the side glide position, we introduce some leg movement.

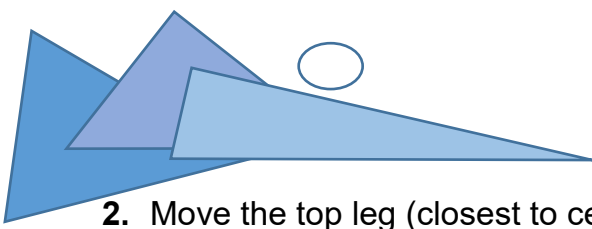
The following drills are aimed at getting swimmers used to side kick motions. For a more detailed breakdown of scissor kick see Intermediate-to-Advanced Lesson 3.

Materials:

- An area free from obstructions
- Mat (optional)
- Bathtub

Steps:

1. Lie on the floor in the side glide starting position, on one side, legs straight one on top of the other, the arm closest to the floor straight above your head with upper arm (bicep) by your ear and the arm on top straight by your side with the thumb at your hip or top of your thigh.



2. Move the top leg (closest to ceiling) forward and the bottom leg on closest to the floor backwards.
3. Bring both legs back together in line with your body at the same top.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 continuously so that your legs look like a pair of scissors opening and closing.

Progressions

- Are you able to keep your ear on your upper arm? Also, try it while looking at the ceiling.
- Your other arm should rest your side or may be used to help you balance by bending at the elbow and placing the palm flat on the floor by your shoulder.
- Repetition is the key to ensuring movements become more ingrained and your body is able to perform them more naturally. Repeat all movements at least 10 times before moving on to the next step or progression.

Variations:

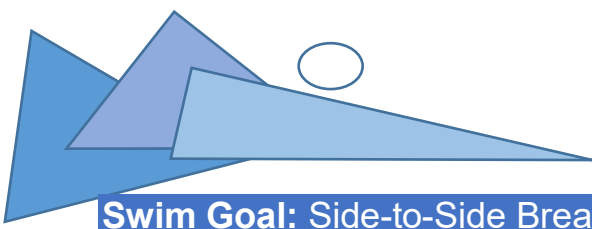
- Remember that children learn best through play. Use games and songs to encourage children to copy and interact with a caring adult.
- To incorporate a core strength workout for youth and adults:
 - Try balancing on an exercise ball or bench with legs and feet touching the ground, or lifted off the ground.
 - Try balancing with the lower part of your body on the bed and the upper body off the edge of the bed.
- For older children, youth and adults, incorporate some knowledge principles to provide greater understanding. See below for some 'Did You Know?' tips and encourage the older learner to expand what they know about the science of swimming by visiting the library or looking online.

Did You Know?

In a survival situation the glide and resting position is the most important to conserve your energy.

Tips and Reminders

When your legs are together, hold the glide position for as long as you can before starting the next kick motion.



Swim Goal: Side-to-Side Breathing Body Motion

Once swimmers are comfortable in side glide position and kicking, we introduce the body motion used in side-to-side breathing during front crawl.

The following drills are aimed at getting swimmers used to rolling from their front to their side. For a more detailed breakdown of side-to-side breathing see Intermediate-to-Advanced Lesson 1.

Materials:

- An area free from obstructions
- Mat (optional)

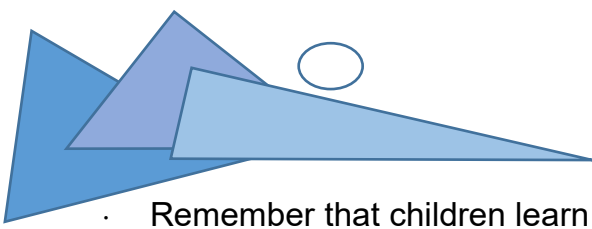
Steps:

1. Practice the side-to-side rolling motion:
 - a. Lie on the floor in the front glide position, with both upper arms by your ear.
 - b. Slowly roll onto one side and as you roll one keep the arm that will be closest to the floor up above your head and bring the other arm to rest on the side of your body. Try to keep your ear resting on the bicep of the arm that you will resting on.
 - c. Roll back into the front glide position bringing the arm at your side back up to the front glide position.
 - d. Repeat steps 1a-to-c rolling onto the other side.
2. Practice the rolling motion adding the kicking motion:
 - a. Roll from front glide position to side glide position (steps 1a-to-d). While in side glide position complete 10 sidekicks.

Progressions

- Try from a back glide position, bring one arm back to the chest and push your body into side glide position. Then add in the kicks in the side glide position.
- Are you able to keep your ear on your upper arm throughout the entire movement? Also, try it while looking at the ceiling.
- Try inhaling while in the side glide position and exhaling in the front glide position.
- Your other arm should rest your side or may be used to help you balance by bending at the elbow and placing the palm flat on the floor by your shoulder.
- Repetition is the key to ensuring movements become more ingrained and your body is able to perform them more naturally. Repeat all movements at least 10 times before moving on to the next step or progression.

Variations:



- Remember that children learn best through play. Use games and songs to encourage children to copy and interact with a caring adult.
- To incorporate a core strength workout for youth and adults:
 - Try balancing on an exercise ball or bench with legs and feet touching the ground, or lifted off the ground.
 - Try balancing with the lower part of your body on the bed and the upper body off the edge of the bed.
- For older children, youth and adults, incorporate some knowledge principles to provide greater understanding. See below for some 'Did You Know?' tips and encourage the older learner to expand what they know about the science of swimming by visiting the library or looking online.

Did You Know?

Side-to-Side body motion is the start of learning the advanced swim technique of bi-lateral breathing, taking breaths by turning side-to-side. It's been proven that a swimmer who breathes alternating sides is more efficient and therefore faster than a swimmer who only takes breaths from one side.

Tips and Reminders

Maintaining your body's muscle balance is important to swimming speed but, also, in preventing injuries which is why it is important to practice all swim techniques on both sides of your body, front or back, side-to-alternating side.

Next Lesson: Next Steps

Studies show that if you practice something once per week, you maintain your skills and if you practice something three or more times per week you improve.

Our stay, play and learn at home swim lessons are designed to help you stay and keep in practice the important skills needed to keep you safe in and around water.

Check out toronto.ca/rec to explore all our Stay, Play and Learn-at-Home aquatics activities.

Continue to follow us on the path to learning how to swim.