

Swim Assessments:

What is a swim assessment?

A swim assessment is an evaluation of a child's ability to swim. During the assessment, coaches will be looking to see if the child meets the requirements to be on the team or join the Junior Anacondas program if they are ages 3-8.

What does my child need to demonstrate to pass the swim assessment?

A child who is ages 10/under must swim 25 meters with their face in the water using the frontcrawl/freestyle stroke or a doggy paddle method. The child may stop up to two times. A third stop will end the assessment.

An child who is ages 11-18 must swim 25 meters with their face in the water using the frontcrawl/freestyle stroke. The child must swim the entire distance without stopping.

Children who do not pass the swim assessment may return on another scheduled assessment day and try again. If the child is ages 3-8, they can be considered for the Junior Anacondas program.

What should my child expect when they take a swim assessment?

At 6:30 PM a coach will gather all the children who intend to take a swim assessment in a group and explain the expectations/requirements. The children will line up behind the lanes and complete their assessments one at a time. Children ages 10/under will have a coach in the water to guide and assist them. Children who are 11/older will be directed into a lane and a coach will be on the side to support them.

When your child is about to swim, we ask that parents step aside, cheer on their child, and meet them at the opposite end of the pool. After completing the assessment, your child will be informed on whether they passed or are invited to join the Junior Anacondas program if they are the appropriate age.

What time are the swim assessments?

The swim assessment dates, times, and information can be found under the *Practice* tab on our website!

Does my child need to take the swim assessment?

All children who are completely new to Ashby Swim Team must perform a swim assessment. We understand there are children who have moved locations or have had prior swim experience; however, our coaches want to evaluate their abilities based on the team's standards.

What are alternative opportunities for my child who didn't pass the assessment but still wants to swim this summer?

There are many ways for children to continue swimming this summer! Getting a membership to a pool is a great way to regularly expose your child to the water; Ashby Pool has many types of memberships! Ashby Pool also offers individual and group swim lessons during the summer that are excellent for all ages and swim levels, many of which are taught by our coaches!

Commitment:

What if we have a vacation planned during the season?

We absolutely understand that summer is a time for family and vacations. If you have plans, just let your swimmer's age group coach know as soon as you can. When your swimmer returns, they'll simply jump back into the regular practice and meet routine.

My child plays a sport that overlaps with a part(s) of the season, can we still do swim team?

Yes! We love to see children being involved in sports. If your swimmer has scheduling conflicts with practices or meets, we ask that you communicate those with their age group coach as early as possible so the team can plan accordingly.

Can we miss practices?

Yes, we understand that families have busy summer schedules and other commitments. Additionally, we believe attendance is key to improvement! The more your swimmer participates, the more progress they will see and the more confident they will feel in the water. We encourage swimmers to attend as many practices as possible while still enjoying their summer. If your swimmer will miss a practice, we ask that you notify their age group coach ahead of time.

Meets:

Do we have to swim in the meets?

Your swimmer does not have to swim in meets, but are highly encouraged to do so! Meets are a great way for children to perform what they've learned in practice, start to grasp healthy competition and sportsmanship, build relationships with their peers, and discover new swim goals. If your swimmer is having a difficult time with meets, we encourage them to talk to their age group coach!

Can we miss a meet?

Yes, similar to missing practices, we understand there are other obligations and endeavors that families have. We want families to keep in mind that 2 meets are required to be eligible for Champs. If your swimmer will miss a meet, we ask that you notify their age group coach as soon as possible and declare them as *Not Attending* in Swimmingly.

How long are the meets?

Meets typically run for 2-2.5 hours from the start time at 6:00 PM, depending on the size of the team we are competing against. Swimmers who are 10/under will finish their events earlier in the evening than swimmers who are 11/older.

General:

I'm unsure if my child is ready to be on the swim team.

We work with swimmers of all capabilities and skill levels; from those who are just taking their first strokes to those who compete at the high school level, and everything in between. Attending a swim assessment is a great starting point to help determine if your child is ready for the swim team. It also allows you to talk with the coaches about questions/concerns in person.

How competitive is the swim team?

Our team is organized by age groups and swimmers practice and compete with others that are of similar age and swim level. As with any youth sport, there is a wide range of experience and skill levels; some swimmers are highly competitive, while others participate more casually.

We encourage all swimmers to set personal goals with their coach and always do their best, but to also remember that a summer swim team is a generally competitive environment that will require some effort and dedication.

What do I need to buy for the swim team?

Each swimmer will need a bathing suit and goggles. A swim cap and all other practice equipment is provided by the team.

What age group is my child in this season?

The age your child is by June 1st of the year will be the age group they compete in.

What are the best kinds of goggles and swim suits to buy for my child?

Our favorite goggles for children are the *TYR Swimple Tie-Die Kids' Goggles*. Our favorite goggles for preteens and older are the *Speedo Vanquishers*.

Our favorite swim suit for boys is the *Speedo Boy's Swimsuit Jammer Begin to Swim*. Our favorite swim suit for girls is the *Speedo Girl's Swimsuit One Piece Thin Straps*.

These products can be found on SwimOutlet.com and Amazon.com or at Walmart and DICK'S Sporting Goods.

What happens if it rains or if there is thunder/lightning during a practice or meet?

If inclement weather occurs, the Board of Directors and coaches will be in contact with parents on the decision and next steps; whether that be waiting for the storm to pass, rescheduling, switching to an alternative plan, or cancelling altogether.

What should I do if my child has a medical condition, allergy, or a need that requires extra attention?

If your swimmer has a condition, allergy, or special need, we ask that you inform the Head Coach and their Age Group Coach as soon as possible and discuss a specific course of action, accommodations, and other details that will help your swimmer succeed.

Champs:

What is Champs?

Champs is our team's final meet that culminates the entire season. At Champs, all of the teams that we competed against during the summer will be present and swimmers will have the opportunity to experience a bigger meet setting.

Does my child have to qualify to be in Champs?

Your swimmer must have swam in 2 meets prior to Champs. Their participation in those 2 meets makes them eligible to compete. There are no time requirements or special standards they must adhere to.

I'm unsure if my child should swim in Champs.

We encourage all of our swimmers to participate in Champs! We want to remind families that Champs isn't for just the "best" or "fastest" swimmers, but for everyone! It is meant to be a positive experience to end the season and allow the swimmers the opportunity to show how they've grown over the summer and represent Ashby!

When and where is Champs?

Champs is on August 1st, 2026 at Godwin Hall on James Madison University's campus.

Junior Anacondas:

What's the Junior Anacondas program?

Junior Anacondas is a new program that serves children ages 3-8 who are comfortable in the water and eager to swim, but have not yet demonstrated the endurance or skills to swim the entire length of the pool. The program aims to help swimmers develop technique, strength, and confidence! The goal is to have these swimmers achieve a swim level where they are ready to participate in meets and/or be able to join their age group by the end of the season.

What does my child need to demonstrate to be on the Junior Anacondas?

To be on the Junior Anacondas, a child must be able to swim 5 meters (wall to the flags) independently using a frontcrawl/freestyle stroke or doggy paddle method with their face in the water.