



Is this your first swim season?

Here're some tips for surviving your first swim meet in comfort and style.

Some meets are at country club pools. Others are at municipal pools. If you've been to our local Elks Pool, you'll have a rough idea of the types of pool we'll be visiting.

Below is a list of things many people bring. Veterans – please add to the list your special "must-have" items.

1. Team "uniform" – swimsuit, goggles, swim cap, water sandals.
2. If you have long hair, don't forget a hairbrush and pony-tail holders.
3. LOTS of towels.
4. Sweatpants/sweatshirts for swimmers. They often have to sit for some time between races and they WILL get cold as the sun goes down. Bring clothes that can get wet.
5. Plastic bags – you'll want bags with NO holes for all the wet gear you'll be hauling home.
6. Folding chairs – and umbrellas! – for the whole family. Sometimes we wait out a rain delay, so the umbrellas can come in handy for those NOT in swimsuits.
7. Food and drinks. Some of the pools have snack bars, but you can't count on it. The swimmers burn LOTS of energy swimming so they'll need healthy, filling snacks to munch between races. Same goes for drinks.
8. As soon as you arrive, ask any Otter coach who has the race sheets. The race sheet lists who will be swimming in which races. The races are numbered on the sheets – this is how your swimmer will know what races they are competing in.
9. Sharpie marker. Each race is numbered. Swimmers like to write their race numbers on their hand as a visual reminder.
10. Highlighter to mark your swimmer's races on race sheet.
11. Meets last 2 to 3 hours. If younger siblings are along, bring coloring books, Legos, cards, etc. to help pass the time.
12. Camera – you'll want a picture of your happy, wet swimmer!



Other "Good to Know" Information

- ② The driving directions are often...*how to put this...*creative! Allow plenty of extra time for windy side-roads – and in case you have to backtrack. If a meet starts at 6:00pm, it **STARTS** at 6:00pm. The kids will be in the pool warming up starting around 5:30pm.
- ② Backstroke – during warm-ups, remind your kids to count their strokes from the flags to the end wall of the pool. They don't want to run into the wall during the race, but you don't want them "pulling up" and looking for the wall.
- ② Dinner can be tricky to squeeze in. The kids shouldn't swim on full stomachs, but they shouldn't be hungry either. Think now about how to feed your swimmer while on-the-road.
- ② There are lots of ribbons handed out for each meet, but you don't get them until after the meet. The coaches will hand them out at a swim practice shortly after each meet.
- ② The team often meets at Dairy Queen after a meet – sometimes it's the Elkins Dairy Queen. Sometimes it's the Dairy Queen in the "away" town. If your swimmer has some energy left at the end of the meet, please drop by for a cone!