



RACING START CERTIFICATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why did the USA Swimming Board of Directors implement the Racing Start Certification Checklist?

Answer: The experience of the United States Sports Insurance Company (“USSIC”) and a recent racing start study commissioned by USSIC observe that teaching racing starts can potentially result in serious injury if not performed correctly. In response to these observations, the USA Swimming Board made changes to the existing six-foot depth rule for teaching racing starts. Those changes included making clear that the definition of teaching racing starts includes all racing start training until the swimmer’s coach certifies that the swimmer has the skill to perform a shallow racing start on demand into four feet of water. The Racing Start Certification Checklist establishes criteria for that certification.

2. What are the criteria for racing start certification?

Answer: In order for swimmers age 10 years and under and/or swimmers with less than one year of experience to be certified, the swimmer must have satisfactorily completed the racing start learning progression set forth in the American Red Cross Safety Training for Swim Coaches Manual also found on the Racing Start Certification Checklist. For swimmers age 11 and older with more than one year experience, certification is based on the coach’s observation that the swimmer is capable of safely controlling the depth of his or her racing starts. In all cases, the certification is based on the coach’s professional judgment—it is not and cannot be a guarantee.

3. What if a swimmer is certified at one club and then transfers to another?

Answer: The swimmer must be recertified at the new club.

4. Who is responsible for keeping copies of certification forms?

Answer: Each club is responsible for retaining, for three years, a certification form for each of its swimmers. There is no requirement that these forms be sent to an LSC or to officials responsible for any competition.

5. Does the certification process impose more liability on coaches?

Answer: No. A coach’s liability is already based on the coach’s exercise of good professional judgment in deciding whether a swimmer has the skills necessary to safely perform a racing start into less than six feet of water (including racing starts into the USA Swimming minimum starting depth of four feet). Certification simply documents that for each swimmer, such professional judgment was exercised. Similarly, coaches are also already responsible for following the progression set forth in the American Red Cross Safety Training Manual to teach racing starts to young or novice swimmers. Certification documents that the steps in the American Red Cross Safety Training Manual have been followed.

RACING STARTS CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST



FORWARD Racing Start Certification

1	2	3	4	5
				
Sitting	Kneeling	Compact	Stride	Shallow Start
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BACKSTROKE Racing Start Certification

NO LEDGE		WITH LEDGE	
			
Water Level Or Bar Grip	Date Completed	Water Level Or Bar Grip	Date Completed
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
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Based on personal observation, it is the professional judgment of the Coach that the swimmers identified above are capable of performing a shallow racing start on demand and can safely perform a racing start in four feet of water.
PRINT AND SIGN FOR EACH SKILL

Print:
Sign:

Print:
Sign:

Print:
Sign: