

BSA Swimming & Water Rescue Course Information

Purpose:

Training for *BSA Swimming & Water Rescue* provides BSA leaders with information and skills to prevent, recognize, and respond to swimming emergencies during unit swimming activities. It expands the awareness instruction provided by *Safe Swim Defense* training. Persons completing the training should be better able to assess their preparation to supervise unit swimming events. The BSA recommends that at least one person with this training is present to assist with supervision whenever a unit swims at a location that does not provide lifeguards. This training is open to any registered adult leader, Scout, Venturer, or Explorer who is age 16 or older. A council approved instructor must directly supervise all training. The course takes approximately eight hours and is valid for three years.

Although the training is consistent with training provided professional lifeguards, the *Swimming & Water Rescue* course is not a lifeguard training course and is not a substitute for *BSA Lifeguard* training for summer camp aquatics staff. On the other hand, this course addresses important information that may not be covered in generic lifeguard training programs such as: preventative measures, including the buddy system and swim classification tests; how to set up a safe swim area in diverse situations; the use of non-standard rescue equipment; and emergency action plans in remote settings. Therefore, BSA leaders with lifeguard training from other agencies are encouraged to complete this course prior to supervising unit swim activities in remote settings. A 'challenge' option is provided to foster cross-training of individuals with training from other agencies.

Adult and youth first aid training, including CPR, is an important safety consideration for all Scouting activities, not just swimming. First aid training is not included in the *Swimming & Water Rescue* course with the expectation the leader has addressed this need separately, as noted in the course material and on the training card.



Swimming and Water Rescue Requirements:

Prerequisites:

1. Age and Physical Fitness:

- A. Be age 16 years or older prior to training
- B. Submit written evidence of physical fitness

2. Swimming Ability:

- A. Complete the BSA Swimmer Test: Jump feetfirst into water over the head in depth. Level off and swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be completed in one swim without stops and must include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating.
- B. Recover a 10-pound weight from 8 feet of water.

Requirements:

3. Administer both the BSA *beginner* and *swimmer* classification tests.
4. Demonstrate reaching assists from deck, side and shallow water using items such as arms, legs, towels, rescue tubes, and poles.
5. Twice demonstrate throwing assists using items such as lines, ring buoys, throw bags, and free-floating supports. Successfully place at least one such aid within reach of a subject 25 feet from shore.
6. Demonstrate stride jump and compact jump entries into deep water.
7. Demonstrate an accompanied rescue for a conscious subject in deep water 20 feet from shore. Enter the water with a buoyant aid, present the aid to the subject, release it, and accompany the subject to shore. Speak to the subject throughout the assist to provide clear instruction and encouragement.
8. Demonstrate a contact rescue for an unconscious subject at or near the surface in deep water 20 feet from shore:
 - A. Approaching the subject from the front, use a wrist tow to move the subject to shore. During the approach, confirm that the subject is passive.
 - B. Approaching the subject from the rear, use an armpit tow to move the subject to shore. During the approach, confirm that the subject is passive.
 - C. With the assistance of one other person, and without the aid of a backboard, remove an unconscious subject from the water at the edge of the pool or pier and check for breathing and circulation.
9. Practice in-water rescues of both conscious and unconscious subjects using a variety of flotation aids.
10. Demonstrate the following defensive actions:
 - A. Front head-hold escape
 - B. Rear head-hold escape

11. Demonstrate a line-and-tender rescue as both the swimmer and the line tender.
12. Demonstrate in-line stabilization for a suspected spinal injury in shallow water:
 - A. For a face-up subject
 - B. For a face-down subject.
13. Correctly answer 80 percent of the questions on the *Swimming and Water Rescue* written exam covering Safe Swim Defense, emergency action plans, surveillance, victim recognition, and water rescue. Review any incomplete or incorrect answers.

NCAC Swimming and Water Rescue Course Information

The Swimming and Water Rescue course has 4 major components:

- 1) BSA Swim test
- 2) Classroom session
- 3) Written test
- 4) In-the-water session

The BSA swim test must be taken under the supervision of NCAC-approved aquatics personnel to meet the requirements of #1. NCAC Aquatics Committee personnel can conduct the swim test at a facility convenient to you.

Component 2 is held as a three hour classroom session. The *required* textbook for #2 & #3 is BSA Aquatics Supervision publication (old No. 34346, new No. 34737). It serves as the text for the course and is the standard reference on policies and skills covered during the course. Exam questions for BSA Swimming and Water Rescue are taken from the review questions of Sections I and II beginning on pages 43 and 133. If participants want to take the written test at the end of the classroom session they should be familiar with Sections I & II before coming to the class. Experience has shown that it is unlikely that the written test can be successfully completed without reviewing the appropriate sections in the Aquatics Supervision book since all the test material is NOT covered during the classroom session.

Component 4 takes about 4-6 hours of in-the water work. Participants will get wet during the session, so be prepared. The BSA swim test must be completed prior to participation in component #4. This course involves swimming and therefore abides by the Personal Health Review criteria of BSA's Safe Swim Defense guidelines.

Since the activity is not unduly strenuous and lasts less than 72 hours, only a health history (BSA Annual Health and Medical Record, Part A) is required. Participants must present their health history before taking the BSA swim test. Successful completion of all four course components results in a Swimming and Water Rescue course completion card being awarded. Cards expire 3 years after completion.

Register online for a particular session. Register early to ensure your place in the course. A minimum of three participants is needed one week before the course. If there are not sufficient registrations one week before the course it will be cancelled (we will attempt to contact you).

The \$25 registration fee includes the required textbook, the classroom session and the water session (water sessions are scheduled on an ad-hoc basis when enough participants have completed the classroom sessions).

Register at www.boyscouts-ncac.org/aquatics

Swimming and Water Rescue Course Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>
3 Dec 11	2 Dec
4 Feb 12	27 Jan
31 Mar 12	23 Mar
26 May 12	18 May
28 Jul 12	20 Jul
29 Sep 12	21 Sept
8 Dec 12	30 Nov

Classes are held at the Hylton Training Center, Camp William B. Snyder
6100 Antioch Road, Haymarket, VA 20169

Questions: Contact Mike Meenehan (703-400-2176) mmmeenehan@cox.net