Why use a pace clock

It is essential to use the pace clock if you want to progress in swimming.
The pace clock will allow you to:
- Be more autonomous at controlling the times yourself
- Control your effort, paces and intervals
- Gain experience and achieve your goals

Controlling pace, i.e. the ability to swim at a certain speed for a certain distance or time, takes a longer time to master. It is a matter of swimming repeat distances on a fixed time to see if you can "*make the interval*", i.e. hit the target time, consistently and repeatedly.

How to use the pace clock

The most common way to start a swim set is when the hand reaches 60 ("on the top")

1st: Learn to time yourself

Knowing your speed is the first step. The easiest way to get your time is to leave on "the top" (when the hand gets to the 60). After you've swum the distance that you want to time, glance back up at the clock. This will help you determine what your time is.

For example, if the hand was at 40 when you touched the wall, that means you swam the lap in 40 seconds.

It gets more complicated if you leave the wall at a different time (e.g. you are leaving the wall in 2nd or 3rd position or your interval is less or more than a minute basis).

For example, if you left the wall on the 00:10 and touched the wall on the 00:55, then you'll have to do some math to figure out your time. Take the second number and subtract it from the first number to get 45. This means you swam the lap in 45 seconds.

2nd: Use the clock for your swimming sets and intervals

Another instance where you'd use a pace clock is if you're using intervals in practice.

For example, 10 x 50 m. Freestyle on 1'00 means swimming 50 metres every one minute. You start when the first 50 metres is on 60 and the second 50 metres on 60 again.

Here are some practical examples of using the clock:

Swimming 100 m. on 2'00:
The clock finishes on 60 (or wherever it was when you started) for the start of the next 100 m.

Swimming 100 m. on 2'10:
The clock advances 10 seconds for the start of each 100 m. You start on 60, next time start when the hand is on 00:10, then 00:20, etc.

Swimming 100 on 2'05:
The clock *advances* 5 seconds for the start of each 100: You start on 60, next time when the hand is on 00:05, then on 00:10, etc.

Swimming 100 on 1'55: The clock retreats 5 seconds for the end of each 100 m. You start on 60, next 100 you start on 0:55, next 100 on 0:50, etc.

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