



Speed versus Technique?

Didn't you love watching the Olympics on TV? It is awesome to see Olympic swimmers make fast swimming look so beautiful and appear almost magically effortless. If you'd like to progress your strokes and improve your times, you should first focus on technique.

That's because water is roughly a thousand times denser than air. In fact, if you fire a bullet into the water, it will slow down to a speed that would not harm you at six to eight feet, depending on the weapon.

That means for every unit of speed that you achieve, you get a penalty of four units of drag to go along with your speed. In swimming, it is crucial to have great technique so that you can reduce your drag before focusing on endurance and speed.

The basic progression in becoming a better swimmer can be summarized in three steps:

Step One: Mastering excellent technique

It is vital that you learn proper technique before you focus on endurance and speed. Proper technique is the fundamental building block for great swimming. It doesn't matter if you swim at school or if you want to be nationally ranked or the next Michael Phelps.

To reach your potential, you should have a solid foundation in proper stroke technique that progresses to your desired goals.

Step Two: Swim drills

Once you have a solid foundation of proper stroke technique, your next step is to be able to hold your excellent technique while building your endurance. At Aquazone, we teach our swimmers their "Key Drills" - the drills that are most impactful and will give them the most benefit for each stroke. Your Key Drills will change as you progress, and they will most likely be different from the drills other class levels may do.

Step Three: Race drills

If you chose to have a test at some races and competition, or want to join our Freyberg Squad, you will begin incorporating race strategies for each distance event and stroke. You will learn about the importance of distance per stroke, stroke efficiency, cycles per second, breakout for starts and turns, the importance of underwater fly kick and mental training techniques—among many other techniques.

Summary

Regardless of how good a swimmer you are and want to be, it is crucial to understand that great technique comes first! So, to unlock that magic of fast swimming, focus on technique improvements and be patient. Think in terms of a learning curve.

Once you have a solid stroke foundation, you will begin climbing the learning curve, and you may drop your times, especially in longer events. But your focus should be on excellent technique, not time drops. The final step is swimming fast with excellent technique and holding that technique at race pace. With persistence, patience and hard work, the results will be magical!

