

SWIMMING RULES: COMMON ELEMENTS and DIFFERENCES (as of August 15, 2024)

COMMON ELEMENTS WITH GOVERNING BODIES	Start	Freestyle	Backstroke	Breaststroke	Butterfly	I.M.
	• Whistle preparatory commands; • Verbal preparatory "TAKE YOUR MARKS" • No recall; • Forward - after TYMs – foot/feet at front of block (see USMS); • Back – feet can be above water; not above lip of gutter or curling of toes over gutter. • Requires a stationary starting position.	• All common	• All common except backstroke turn and use of starting ledges – See NFHS	• All Common	• All Common	• All common except NFHS Backstroke turn.
DIFFERENCES – see specific rule book for exact wording						
AQUA; USA-S; YMCA; NCAA	See <u>POOL DEPTH COMPARISON</u> chart for differences		• Backstroke ledge permitted. If adopted by State Association – See Below.			
NFHS	• Verbal or whistle preparatory commands - State option.		• Kick/glide is permitted <u>before</u> and after turning action. • Backstroke starting ledge device authorized by state assoc. adoption, in pools with a min of 6'(1.84m) depth measured from the starting end through 16 feet, 5 inches (5 meters) from the start end wall.			• See Backstroke differences.
USMS	• Use back start for in-water free start; • At least one foot at front of block before TYM • In water relay exchanges permitted. • At least one foot must remain in contact with the wall prior to the exchange				• Allow breaststroke or whip kick exclusively or interchangeably • Only one breaststroke or whip kick per arm pull permitted. • On 9/25/13, adopted the "separated" rule wording interpreted to be identical in meaning to the USA Swimming Interpretation.	• See stroke differences.