



Unit Swim Test Procedures

The swim classification of individuals participating in a Boy Scouts of America activity is a key element in both Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat. The swim tests must be renewed annually, preferably at the beginning of each outdoor season. Traditionally, swim classification tests have been conducted upon arrival at Summer Camp. However, there is no restriction that this is the only place the test may be conducted. It may be more useful to conduct the swim classification prior to a unit's arrival at summer camp. This document outlines the procedure to be incorporated by units choosing to conduct the swim test prior to arrival at Camp Manatoc.

****The Swim Test Administrator MUST be approved by the Great Trail Council prior to the administration of the Unit Swim Test****

Special Note: Although swim tests may be conducted prior to summer camp, the Aquatics Director is expected to review or retest any Scout or Scouter whose skills appear to be inconsistent with their classification. Additionally the aquatics program director is authorized to retest any Scout or group of Scouts when they are reasonably concerned that pre-camp swim tests were not properly administered.

Questions relating to this document should be addressed to aquatics@manatoc.org.

Purpose of this Policy

The Great Trail Council has adopted the Unit Swim Test policy to promote the purposes of BSA aquatics.

The BSA aquatics program has five basic objectives.

- To give youth self-confidence and skill in aquatics
- To instruct youth in self-preservation, the care and use of aquatics equipment and rescue methods
- To promote aquatics recreation
- To develop physical strength and coordination
- To aid units in planning and conducting a safe year-round aquatics program

The Great Trail Council requires that swim classification tests be conducted after January 1st of the current year prior to the units arrival at camp.

Administration of the Swim Test

All persons participating in BSA Aquatics are classified according to swimming ability. The classification tests and test procedures have been developed and structured to demonstrate a skill level consistent with the circumstances.

The BSA Aquatics swim test classifies Scouts and Scouters into three swimming ability groups. The three swimmer ability groups are swimmer, beginner and non-swimmer.

- The swimmer test demonstrates the minimum level of swimming ability required for safe deep-water swimming.
- The beginner test demonstrates that the Scout is ready to learn deep-water skills and has the minimum ability required for safe instructional and recreational activity in a confined swimming area in which shallow waters, sides, or other support are less than 25 feet from any point on the water.
- All Scouts and Scouters who do not complete the beginner test or who choose to not participate in any test are classified as non-swimmers. All non-swimmers should be encouraged to take swim lessons to improve their swimming ability and become comfortable participating in water activities.

The BSA Swimmer and Beginner Test

• Swimmer Test

Jump feet first into water over the head in depth, level off and begin swimming. 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.

• Beginner Test

Jump feet first into water over the head in depth, level off, swim 25 feet on the surface, stop, turn sharply, resume swimming as before, and return to starting place.

Who can administer the test outside of camp?

The swim classification test is done at a unit level should be conducted by one of the following council-approved resource people: Aquatics Instructor, BSA; Cub Scout Aquatics Supervisor; BSA Lifeguard; ARC certified lifeguard; or a Swimming & Water Rescue trained personnel. **The swim test administrator MUST be approved by the council aquatics committee before the test is administered.**

To become a council approved swim test administrator:

1. Hold a current certification in any one of the following: Aquatics Instructor, BSA; Cub Scout Aquatics Supervisor; BSA Lifeguard; ARC certified lifeguard; or an Aquatics Safety: Swimming & Water Rescue trained personnel.
2. You must attend a Swim Test Administrator training session. This training session is offered annually by the Great Trail Council Aquatics Committee.

Note: This training is only valid as long as the primary aquatics certification is valid.

The Great Trail Council requires that swim classification tests be conducted after January 1st of the current year prior to the units' arrival at camp. The signed form must be presented upon arrival to camp.

Examples of Reasons for not Passing the Test

A successful Scouting activity is accomplished only by carefully planning the activity. The BSA swim test is one tool in planning a successful and safe aquatics activity. The BSA has identified several reasons for a Scout or Scouter to not successfully complete the BSA swim test.

The following are reasons a Scout or Scouter **WILL NOT** pass the BSA swim test:

- Underwater swimming
- Dog paddling
- Resting in the middle of the test
- Treading water and not maintaining a forward motion
- Not floating at the end of the test
- Swimming too fast and appearing to be too tired at the end of the test.

Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat

All eight points of the Safe Swim Defense and all nine points of Safety Afloat must be followed at all times when including aquatics activities in the unit's activities.

The eight points of Safe Swim Defense include: Qualified Supervision; Physical Fitness; Safe Area; Lifeguards on Duty; Lookout; Ability Groups; Buddy System; Discipline

The nine points of Safety Afloat include: Qualified Supervision; Physical Fitness; Swimming Ability; Personal Floatation Equipment; Buddy System; Skill Proficiency; Planning; Equipment; Discipline.



