



Evaluating Technique

Russell Mark

National Team Division

High Performance Consultant



Freestyle

- Front view reveals if athlete has good catch
- Hand in line with the shoulder
- Elbow bent and wider than hand/shoulder
- Fingers facing down or inward
- Hand entry and extension in line with shoulder
- Rotate forward
- What happens during breath?
- Too much rotation? Too late rotation?



Backstroke

- Entry points – above shoulder, pinky first
- If too narrow and with back of hand, how is rotation timing? Is entering shoulder staying up too long?
Can you see arm pits?
- After entry, look for hands going wide
 - Fingers pointing to the side
 - Arm is out to the side



Breaststroke

- Evaluation is a little more elusive
- Looking at overall quality of the movement rather than specific checklist
- Does the body always move forward?
Or is it stop-and-go / up-and-down?
- Look for good attack on the water with body/head/arms during recovery
- Upperbody gets forward / in-line
 - Hands not smashing on insweep
 - “Triangle” space between arms at start of recovery
 - Palms turn down on recovery
- Hips stay high
- Appearance of late timing is likely slow feet or not getting body in line



Butterfly

- Similar to breaststroke, primarily making a judgement on the movement during the forward press
 - Hand entry, head entry, 1st kick (hips popping) all working together
 - Good forward attack on entry
 - Is head timing in sync with arms?
 - Do arms enter in front of shoulders? Or too narrow?
 - Press forward, not down
- Two kicks
- If hands are getting stuck at finish (or start of recovery):
 - Are the hands finishing too far back?
 - Lifting up too much for the breath? Arching the back?



For more information:

- Tips & Training
- High Performance Tips

The screenshot shows the USA Swimming website with a blue header and navigation menu. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- TIPS & TRAINING**: A list of links including High Performance Tips, In-Water Training Videos, Coaches In The Know Videos, Strength & Conditioning, Nutrition Center, Psychology of Swimming, Injury Prevention, and Doping Control.
- DIGITAL SPLASH**: A section for the digital edition of the March-April 2012 issue of Splash, available online and as a mobile app.
- USA SWIMMING RSS FEED**: A section for subscribing to USA Swimming's RSS feed.
- STAY CONNECTED**: A section for customized e-mail newsletters for parents, swimmers, and coaches.
- T-SHIRTS, JACKETS, BOOKS & DVDs, BAGS, SWEATSHIRTS, MEET SUPPLIES**: A section for merchandise, featuring a blue t-shirt with the text "WE POSSESS SUPER WATER POWERS".

On the right side, there are several featured articles and performance tips:

- HIGH PERFORMANCE TIPS**: A section with links to In-Water Training Videos, Coaches In The Know Videos, Strength & Conditioning, Nutrition Center, Psychology of Swimming, Injury Prevention, and Doping Control.
- PERFORMANCE TIPS**: A section with a weekly summary of performance tips.
- FEATURED ARTICLE**: A section with a featured article titled "World Performance Comparison: Is the U.S. Ready?" and another titled "Following Routine: Should I Do a Wake-Up Swim?".
- LONG AXIS STROKES: FREESTYLE AND BACKSTROKE**: A section with a list of articles related to freestyle and backstroke.
- SHORT AXIS STROKES: BREASTSTROKE AND BUTTERFLY**: A section with a list of articles related to breaststroke and butterfly.
- SKILLS: STARTS, TURNS, DOLPHIN KICK, FINISHES**: A section with a list of articles related to swimming skills.