



BUDGETS

1. The budget must be consistent with your team's vision, mission, philosophy and goals. If your team mission says something about "allowing an athlete to compete to their highest level", there might be a line item for club reimbursement to athletes who compete at the USA Swimming Sectional, US Open and National meets.
2. Budget according to what you want to achieve. Start with an ideal budget, and then be creative in developing the revenue and resources to make it work. The statement, "This is what we want to do. How will we get the money to accomplish this?" is very different from, "This is how much money we have. How shall we spend it?" People will sacrifice to reach their goals or common goals that they agree with.
3. The two main fixed expenses in most clubs are coaching salaries and pool rental.
 - Salaries-It is much easier to budget when coaches are on a salary versus an hourly basis. This could also include assistant coaches.
 - Fixed coaching expenses should also include:
 - A. Insurance
 - B. Retirement/benefits
 - C. Coach certification
 - D. Continuing education
 - Pool Rental-the club should have a long-term contract with a facility so there are no surprises every year.
4. Variable expenses might include coach travel, athlete travel and equipment replacement. However, clubs should be reimbursing the coaching staff to attend all meets that the club officially attends. This includes full reimbursement for the coach who attends Nationals or US Open even if only one athlete is attending. Some clubs even send coaches to Nationals for coach enrichment even if the club does not have any athletes attending.
5. The Head Coach, who ideally is responsible for day-to-day financial operations, should be an integral part of developing and managing the budget.
6. Are your fees competitive with other area clubs? Should/could they be higher? "You get what you pay for" can be used as a positive club attribute.
7. How do your fees compare with other sports or after-school activities? You may want to do a per hour price comparison with other sports and youth activities. Especially compare the cost per hour of piano or other musical instrument lessons, gymnastics, tennis, or golf, to the cost per hour to swim with a professional swim coach.
8. Special programs such as the Swim America Learn-to-Swim program can build the club with both revenue and with swimmers. In most of the world, learn to swim is the background for both the financial stability of the team and the breeding ground for future competitive swimmers. The United States is one of the few countries in the world where swim club budgets are built almost solely from competitive swimmer fees.
9. The first part of a budget should include fixed expenditures. Without these items, your team could not exist or function. Fundraising should not cover these items unless the fundraising is such a definite that no one would question its success. Teams should not be fundraising to pay the coach or rent the pool.

10. Swim club fees should cover the basic expenses you are planning.
11. A “program enrichment” budget should also be submitted for both short-term and long-term goals of the program.
12. Nonprofit governance literature suggests that a swim team should have a minimum of 50% of their yearly fixed operating budget in “reserves”. Therefore, it is okay for a team to plan to “make a profit” at the end of year to build up reserves.

The [Sample Club Budgets](#) include two different sample budgets.

1. The first budget includes items for program enrichment.
2. The second is an actual budget worksheet that was presented to a board of directors a number of years ago for approval. Every page of this budget includes:
 - actual budget expenditures for two years prior
 - budget for the current year
 - actual expenditures for the current year
 - proposed budget for the following year

The first section of the budget is a summary report of major categories in the budget. The second section of the budget is the detail report that lists all expenditures under each category. While not every club may wish or need to have a budget this detailed it might give you an idea of things to consider when preparing a budget. There are explanations throughout the budget of items included in the budget.