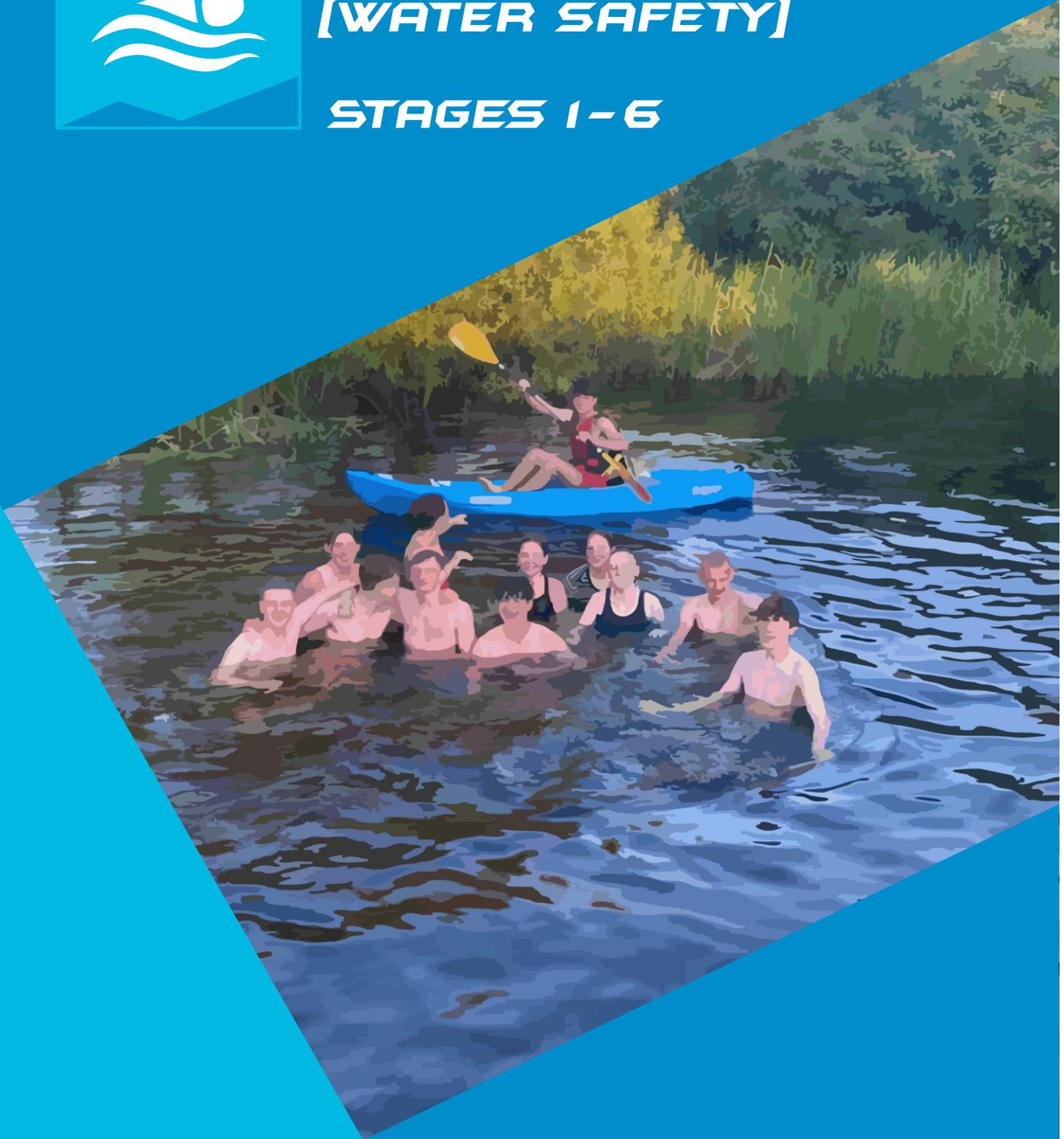




SWIMMING ADVENTURE SKILL [WATER SAFETY]

STAGES 1-6



ADVENTURE SKILLS





SWIMMING ADVENTURE SKILL [WATER SAFETY]

Swimming Adventure Skill - stages 1 to 6

The Swimming Adventure Skill helps Scouts develop water confidence, swimming ability, and an understanding of water safety. As they progress through the stages, Scouts move from basic water confidence to open water leadership and rescue awareness, encouraging safe and responsible participation in aquatic activities.

The aim is to build confident swimmers who respect water, understand risk, and can support and protect others in aquatic environments. Progression should focus on safety, confidence, and good decision-making rather than speed or competitive performance.

Activities should take place in environments that suit the Scout's experience and the facilities available - pool, lake, river, or sea - with later stages progressing to open water environments, and always following Scouting Ireland Safety Afloat guidance and local water safety advice.

All rescue skills and scenarios outlined in this Adventure Skill are to be conducted in a controlled, supervised, and simulated environment appropriate to the Scout's age, ability, and training level. Scouts should never be placed in real danger for the purpose of assessment, and non-swimmers must never be used as 'casualties' in these scenarios.

Queries to: swimming@scouts.ie



STAGE 1

To complete Stage 1 a Scout must be able to:

- Travel 5 metres on the front using a basic movement or stroke.
- Enter and exit shallow water safely.
- Demonstrate a safe and confident push and glide from the pool wall.
- Float on the back in a pool and demonstrate proper buoyancy while wearing a PFD.
- Explain the Buddy System and follow basic pool safety rules.
- Call for help and signal for assistance in an emergency.
- Recognise different types of water -pool, river, lake, sea - and identify at least one hazard for each.

Skill Requirements:

- Travel 5 metres on the front using a basic movement:

The Scout should use a basic flutter kick and simple arm action, maintaining a roughly horizontal body position. Aids may be used for confidence if appropriate.

- Safe Entry and Exit:

The Scout should show controlled entry into shallow water and exit using steps, ladder, or a stable push-up without slipping or jumping unsafely.

- Push and Glide from wall:

Demonstrate a safe, streamlined push-off and glide from the pool wall, showing confidence and control.

- Floating / Personal Flotation Device [PFD] float:

The Scout should remain afloat on their back in a relaxed position in a pool and demonstrate proper use of a Personal Flotation Device [PFD] to stay buoyant.

- Buddy System & pool safety:

The Scout should explain why swimming with a buddy is essential and follow simple rules, such as not running, not pushing, and listening to instructions.

- Calling for help:

The Scout should show how to use a clear voice and a simple arm signal to attract attention in an emergency.

- Water types and hazards:

The Scout should be able to identify different water environments - e.g. pool, river, lake, sea - and name at least one hazard associated with each - e.g. depth, currents, cold water, waves, and slippery edges.



STAGE 2

To complete Stage 2 a Scout must be able to:

- Swim 10 metres on the front using a recognised stroke.
- Swim 10 metres on the back in a controlled and relaxed manner.
- Turn from front to back while floating, without losing control or panicking.
- Tread water for 30 seconds while maintaining a safe body position.
- Throw a simple rescue aid e.g. ring buoy or rope to a person in difficulty.
- Identify lifeguard flags at the beach and explain their meaning.
- Explain how to keep safe at the water's edge (pool, river, lake, or sea).
- Demonstrate the 'Float like a Star' technique for 60 seconds and explain when it should be used.

Skill Requirements:

- Swim 10 metres on the front:

The Scout should swim 10 metres using freestyle or another suitable front stroke, showing improved coordination of arms and legs and some control of breathing.

- Swim 10 metres on the back:

The Scout should swim 10 metres using backstroke or a back float with propulsion, keeping the face clear of the water and maintaining a relaxed body position.

- Turn from front to back:

The Scout should demonstrate a calm and controlled turn from a front float to a back float without submerging or showing distress.

- Tread water (30 seconds):

The Scout should maintain an upright position using gentle sculling with the hands and a simple leg action to stay afloat.

- Throw rescue aid:

The Scout should throw a ring buoy or rope so that it lands within reach of the casualty, demonstrating awareness of personal safety and avoiding entry into the water.

- Lifeguard flags:

The Scout should identify and explain:

Red flag = danger / no swimming

Red and yellow flag = supervised bathing area

Black and white checkered flag = surf area no swimming

- Water-edge safety:

The Scout should explain and demonstrate safe behaviour, such as no running or pushing, being aware of slippery edges, sudden drop-offs, and changing conditions.

- Float like a Star:

The Scout should demonstrate a relaxed, star-style float for approximately 60 seconds, showing calm breathing, and explain that this technique is used to regain control and conserve energy if in difficulty in the water.



STAGE 3

To complete Stage 3 a Scout must be able to:

- Swim 25 metres on the front with controlled breathing and good body position.
- Swim 25 metres on the back at a steady pace using a consistent kick.
- Demonstrate a basic breaststroke over a short distance.
- Tread water for 1 minute while signalling for help.
- Explain the key safety differences between indoor and outdoor swimming.
- Inspect an unfamiliar swimming area and identify safe entry and exit points before swimming.
- Apply Leave No Trace principles to outdoor swimming activities.
- Explain the causes, signs, and basic treatment of hypothermia and afterdrop.
- Coil and store a safety rope ready for use.
- Recognise blue-green algae and understand what to do when water-quality warnings are in place.

Skill Requirements:

- Swim 25 metres (front):

The Scout should swim 25 metres using freestyle or another front stroke, showing improved technique, a steady kick, and controlled breathing with a streamlined body position.

- Swim 25 metres (back):

The Scout should swim 25 metres using backstroke, maintaining a horizontal body position, relaxed head position, and continuous alternating arm action.

- Basic breaststroke:

The Scout should demonstrate the basic timing of pull, kick, and glide over a short distance with reasonable coordination.

- Tread water and signal for help:

The Scout should maintain an upright position for one minute, using efficient sculling and leg action, and raise one arm and call out to signal for assistance.

- Indoor vs outdoor safety:

The Scout should be able to explain differences such as water temperature, visibility, currents, depth changes, weather, wildlife, and access/exit points.

- Inspect unfamiliar water:

The Scout should show how to check depth, clarity, hazards, and safe entry and exit points before entering the water.

- Leave No Trace:

The Scout should demonstrate respect for the environment by not littering, avoiding disturbance to wildlife, and leaving the area as they found it.

- Hypothermia and Afterdrop:

The Scout should explain common causes of hypothermia (such as cold water, wind, and prolonged exposure), recognise early signs (e.g. shivering, confusion), and understand that a person removed from cold water may continue to cool after rescue (a process known as afterdrop), and describe basic treatment (remove from cold, insulate, and warm gradually and gently).

- Safety rope:

The Scout should be able to coil a rope neatly, store it safely, and explain how to deploy it quickly for a rescue.

- Blue-green algae:

The Scout should recognise typical warning signs or notices and explain that swimming should be avoided when alerts are in place due to health risks.



STAGE 4

To complete Stage 4 a Scout must be able to:

- Swim 50 metres on the front using an efficient stroke.
- Swim 50 metres on the back at a steady and controlled pace.
- Swim 25 metres breaststroke with correct timing and coordination.
- Demonstrate the basic skills of snorkelling in a pool or confined water using a mask and snorkel (fins may also be used).
- Identify rip currents and explain how to spot them.
- Enter the water using a straddle jump safely and under control.
- Demonstrate CPR and the recovery position.
- Explain what clothing and equipment help protect against cold-water immersion.
- Explain how to reduce the risk of illness from contaminated water.
- Raise the alarm and recover a simulated casualty using a rope.
- Exit the pool without using the steps and assist another person to exit safely.

Skill Requirements:

- Front crawl, backstroke, breaststroke:

The Scout should show improving efficiency, controlled breathing, and good body alignment over the stated distances.

- Snorkelling basics:

The Scout should correctly fit a mask and snorkel, clear the snorkel, and practise relaxed breathing in shallow or confined water.

- Rip currents:

The Scout should describe common signs such as darker or deeper channels, fewer breaking waves, or water moving seaward between waves.

- Straddle jump:

The Scout should demonstrate a controlled, feet-first entry, maintain balance, keep the head above water, and resurface safely.

- CPR and recovery position:

The Scout should demonstrate hands-only CPR at an appropriate level and place a casualty in the recovery position while maintaining airway safety.

- Cold-water protection:

The Scout should explain the role of wetsuits, thermal layers, swim hats, and wind protection, and understand the importance of appropriate clothing for conditions.

- Contaminated water:

The Scout should explain basic precautions such as avoiding swallowing water, rinsing after swimming, covering cuts, and following local health or council advisories.

- Rope rescue:

The Scout should demonstrate raising the alarm, using a rope or similar aid, and recovering a casualty without entering the water.

- Exit without steps / assist another:

The Scout should demonstrate how to climb out using the pool edge and how to assist another person in exiting safely using a stable, supportive technique.



STAGE 5

To complete Stage 5 a Scout must be able to:

- Swim 100 metres continuously using a recognised stroke.
- Swim 50 metres breaststroke with an efficient glide.
- Tread water for 30 seconds while wearing light clothing, then remove the clothing and continue treading water for a further 90 seconds.
- Explain and demonstrate safe non-contact rescues.
- Throw a line accurately to a distance of 10 metres (at least 2 out of 3 attempts).
- Demonstrate the Talk–Reach–Throw–Row rescue sequence.
- Show familiarity with Scouting Ireland Safety Afloat guidelines.
- Explain the causes and treatment of cold water shock.
- Explain how to escape from a rip current.

Skill Requirements:

- 100 metre swim:

The Scout should swim continuously without stopping, demonstrating steady pacing and controlled breathing.

- 50 metre breaststroke:

The Scout should show improved timing of pull, kick, and glide with efficient forward movement.

- Treading water in clothing:

The Scout should begin wearing light clothing (e.g., T-shirt/shorts), maintain a calm, upright position for 30 seconds, then remove the clothing safely without panic, and continue treading water for a further 90 seconds using efficient sculling and leg action.

- Non-contact rescues:

The Scout should explain and demonstrate the principle of self-safety first, using voice, reach aids, or throw aids before considering entering the water.

- Throwing a line:

The Scout should demonstrate accurate throws to a target approximately 10 metres away and be able to retrieve and re-pack the line for repeat use.

- Talk–Reach–Throw–Row:

The Scout should explain and demonstrate the correct order of this rescue hierarchy and understand why it is used to minimise risk to the rescuer.

- Safety Afloat:

The Scout should show awareness of supervision, ratios, equipment, and basic safety planning as outlined in Scouting Ireland Safety Afloat guidance.

- Cold water shock:

The Scout should explain the gasp reflex and rapid breathing response, and describe simple management such as controlling breathing and gradual acclimatisation.

- Escaping rip currents:

The Scout should explain that they should float to live and/or swim parallel to the shore to escape the current before returning to shore.



STAGE 6

To complete Stage 6 a Scout must be able to:

- Swim 200 metres continuously using a recognised stroke.
- Swim 25 metres while wearing a long-sleeved top.
- Tread water for 2 minutes while wearing a top, then remove it, inflate it for flotation, and continue floating or treading water for a further 1 minute.
- Participate in a **simulated** rescue of a non-swimmer from 50 metres using a float or buoyant aid.
- Demonstrate defensive swimming and safe casualty control.
- Demonstrate the H.E.L.P. (Heat Escape Lessening Posture) and huddle survival positions.
- Complete a basic risk assessment for a swimming activity.
- Explain the effects of surface water temperature and wind chill.
- Assess weather, tides, and currents before an activity.
- Explain the dangers of floodwater.
- Take part in a supervised outdoor snorkelling activity using appropriate equipment.
- Use a tow-float and whistle for safety and signalling.

Skill Requirements:

- 200 metre swim:

The Scout should swim continuously without stopping, showing pacing, efficient breathing, and sustained effort.

- Swimming in clothing:

The Scout should demonstrate awareness of the effect of clothing on movement, buoyancy, and fatigue while swimming 25 metres in a long-sleeved top.

- Treading water and shirt inflation:

The Scout should maintain an upright position for 2 minutes while wearing a top, using calm breathing and efficient sculling and leg action. They should then remove the top, trap air in it to create flotation, and continue floating or treading water for a further 1 minute, maintaining control and avoiding panic.

- Simulated rescue with a float:

The Scout should demonstrate a safe approach, keeping the float between them and the simulated casualty, and, where possible, assisting the casualty back to safety without direct contact.

- Defensive swimming and casualty control:

The Scout should keep a float or aid between themselves and the casualty, maintain a safe distance, and demonstrate calm, controlled support of the casualty.

- H.E.L.P. and huddle:

The Scout should demonstrate these positions and explain how they reduce heat loss in cold water, both individually and in a group.

- Risk assessment:

The Scout should identify hazards, assess risks, describe control measures, and provide a simple go/no-go decision for a swimming activity.

- Temperature and wind chill:

The Scout should explain how cold water and wind increase heat loss and affect safety and endurance. They should also explain the concept of afterdrop, where the body's core temperature can continue to fall after a person is removed from cold water due to the movement of colder blood from the limbs back to the body's core.



STAGE 6 skill requirements continued...

- Weather, tides, and currents:

The Scout should demonstrate basic awareness of conditions and how they influence safety, entry/exit points, and activity planning, including wind, tides, and currents.

- Floodwater dangers:

The Scout should explain the risks of contamination, hidden debris, strong currents, and unstable surfaces.

- Outdoor snorkelling:

The Scout should participate in a supervised snorkelling activity under suitable conditions, demonstrating safe behaviour and environmental awareness while using appropriate equipment such as a mask, snorkel, fins, and wetsuit. A tow-float or buoy may also be used for visibility and safety where appropriate.

- Tow-float and whistle:

The Scout should demonstrate correct use of a tow-float for visibility and flotation and a whistle for signalling for assistance.



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