

How Much Should I Train??

Ben's Bubbles Part 1

The structure and criteria for joining a squad are based on a number of factors, including attendance and level of skill. The level of attendance that is regarded standard for each squad level is:

Squad	Sessions Per Week
National	8 – 10
State	6 – 7
Junior	4 – 5
Development	2 – 4

The sport of swimming does require a strong commitment to training just like rowing, gymnastics and tennis. 15 years ago there was a trend in swimming to over-train, with the old saying "miles equals medals" being the wisdom of the time. Fortunately we have learnt to train with more quality than just quantity. However, success and reward from swimming still requires a certain amount of commitment. For a child whose main sport is swimming, the recommended number of session below will give them the opportunity to compete and develop their skill to a high level.

Age Group	Sessions Per Week Summer	Sessions Per Week Winter
6 – 8	2 – 4	1 – 3
9 – 10	5	4
11 – 12	6-7	5-6
13 – 15	8-9	8
15 – 18	9-10	8-9
Open	10	10

There are still clubs which have 7 year olds swimming 9 sessions a week. We do not agree with this approach but at the same time we must compete against them. With the recommended number of sessions above we can remain competitive and also avoid early burnout. If started early, a child attending this many sessions in a quality program could expect to achieve Australian Age National qualifying times. The above guideline is to highlight what is needed for a child to share in some form of success in the sport of swimming.

It is sad to see "little Billy" who is 10 years old and only training 2 times a week race against 10 year old children that have been training 4 – 6 times a week for the last few years. When Billy performs poorly compared to the other children it is not often understood by the child that this is a natural result of lack of training and NOT ability, and unfortunately Billy often loses self-confidence due to this.