

## Backstroke: Making your stroke efficient

### Correct body position is paramount

- Head back -eyes looking up
- Strong core - hips up. No back arch – slightly hollow banana body shape
- Continuous kicking - A strong propulsive kick anchors body rotation
- Kick – turn 2 big toes in – gives good foot position
- For beginner backstroke – put hands on thighs to feel straight leg kick

### Rotation before elevation

- Rotation of shoulders occurs before elevation of arm.
- Rotate around arm pits. Armpit out of water ROTATE UP!
- Rotating slightly earlier can help with cross-over on catch entry


### Catch and Pull *Grab hold of water, pull through and ACCELERATE through stroke*

- Entry is directly in front of the shoulder with arm fully extended and little finger first.
- The arm moves in a sweeping catch downward and outward (palm first faces down – can only be achieved with good rotation). Then an up-sweep and in-sweep follows maintaining the elbow lower and forward. The arm at 90-degree angle at side of body. The palm faces downward and inward for completion in preparation for recovery.

### Arm Recovery

- Back of hand or thumb exit, relaxed wrist firming when arm is perpendicular. *Take time at end of stroke, relaxed recovery*
- Straight arm – For swimmers with bent arms, remind them to think of lifting *whole arm* out of water, not just hand.

## Backstroke Drills

Drill	Why?	How
<b>Rotation</b>	Rotation of shoulders occurs before elevation of arm	arms by side, rotate shoulders slowly Right Shoulder, Left Shoulder, Right Shoulder – then left Right arm vertical and return to start position with hand by hip, Repeat with other arm.
<b>Single Arm</b>	To practise rotation, underwater pull	1 arm extended above head, other arm completes 1 arm stroke.
<b>6-3-6</b>	Practise kick and rotation	As FR drill. Catch arm extended back, 6 kicks and rotate to side, 3 strokes, rotate to other side.
<b>Periscope</b>	To build strong core	Arms extended straight up. Kick!
<b>Accelerator</b>	Practise rotation and accelerating through pull	Arms at 6 and 12 position, bring recovery arm up to ½ way and pause, pull arm completes underwater stroke, accelerating through to reach 12 and 6 position at the same time.
<b>Scissor Arms</b>	To practise arm recovery (straight and stretched) And hand entry (feel the catch position)	Arms in 6 and 12 position, change to swap arm position arms move out of water, crossing ½ way. No underwater pull. Feel the catch: extend arm in catch position -reach for other end of pool (causing rotation).
<b>Catch Entry</b>	To stop over extension in reach	 Hold 1 arm in the following position and stroke with other. It makes it very difficult for the hand to over-extend and reinforces the correct entry position in line with shoulder.