



Athens Bulldog Swim Club

—a non-profit USA-Swimming team based in Athens, Ga

August 2023 – July 2024

The logo is a red oval with the words "ATHENS SWIM CLUB" in white at the top and "BULLDOG" in white at the bottom.	<h2>The Athens Bulldog Swim Club</h2> <p>Mail: 139 Hope, Athens, GA 30606 www.athensbulldogs.com</p>
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Dear Swimmers and Parents,

On behalf of the entire coaching staff, I'd like to welcome you to the Athens Bulldog Swim Club and another exciting season of swimming. We are glad you are with us. I'd like to take a moment to tell you a bit about our club's philosophy and how that relates to you and your child.

From the Gups group to the Senior 1 squad, at ABSC we believe in emphasizing the development of the whole child. This means that in terms of swimming, we believe that technique-work and aerobic training go hand in hand. In our developmental groups, we place a strong emphasis on learning technique while also building aerobic endurance; both of which are necessary to develop the swimmer's fullest potential. The aim of our club – a 501c3 non-profit organization – is to provide our swimmers with the skills and background necessary to achieve their individual swimming goals.

But swimming is not an end in and of itself. Learning sportsmanship and developing good character are two of the most important things a child can gain from participating in athletics. Though success in the pool is important, ABSC swimmers learn to value a strong work ethic, a commitment to self-improvement, and display of respect for others. You will find that at ABSC winning or losing takes a backseat to preparation and doing one's best, values which will help your children succeed not just in swimming, but in life.

We also believe that it's fun to be a member of the team! ABSC swimmers forge strong friendships as they train, travel, compete, and participate in team activities together. Swim meets and team social events help build a sense of community and foster relationships that will last long after your child has left the world of competitive swimming.

At ABSC our coaches strive to instill these values in their swimmers, both by instruction and example. We also maintain an open-door policy and encourage communication between swimmers, parents, and coaches. If you ever have a question or concern about your child's involvement with the team, please don't hesitate to email, or give his or her coach a call. Though we prefer not to meet with parents on the pool deck during practice, we are more than happy to take time, either before or after practice, to address any questions that you may have. Once again, we are happy to have you with us and are looking forward to the season. See you soon at the pool and Go Dawgs! "Tater!"

-Harvey Humphries
Head Coach

Table of Contents



Athens Bulldog Swim Club

—a non-profit USA-Swimming team based in Athens, Ga

Contents

What is ABSC?.....	2
Mission, Vision, and Philosophy	3
Core Coaching Staff	4
Practice Group Descriptions	4
IM Development Goals.....	5
Athlete Development Triangle	6
ABSC Volunteering Policy	7
Become an ABSC Official to Support the Club!	7
ABSC Parent Code of Conduct	9
ABSC Swimmer Code of Conduct	10
Swim Meet 101.....	14
Long Course vs. Short Course	16
Moving up to a new practice group	16
ABSC Photography & Media Consent & Policy.....	17
Other Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)	18
ABSC Practice Locations	18

What is ABSC?

The Athens Bulldog Swim Club (ABSC) is a competitive swimming club team and swim lesson organization located in the Greater Athens, GA area (Athens and Watkinsville). Our club has two main branches, the competitive swim club, and the Bulldog Swim School by ABSC.

ABSC’s club team is a [USA Swimming](#) affiliated club, and we swim as a part of the [Georgia Swimming LSC](#). Much like within the USA federal government there exists 50 states with their own governments, USA Swimming is also federal. The larger USA Swimming Organization consists of 59 LSCs (Local Swim Committees) which are the “states” to USA Swimming’s “nation.”

There are over 70 swim clubs in the Georgia Swimming LSC alone, and ABSC operates as a medium-large sized club. Within Georgia Swimming, our club competes in the Northeast Division, which is why our team championship is the Northeast Divisional Championships in March of each year.

We are not affiliated with the University of Georgia; however, we do partner closely with UGA. We rent lane space from UGA to run practices and meets. Furthermore, the UGA Swim Coaches register with ABSC as their USA Swimming affiliate club, and some UGA Swimmers choose to affiliate with ABSC



Athens Bulldog Swim Club

—a non-profit USA-Swimming team based in Athens, Ga

when they compete at non-NCAA events, such as Olympic Trials or US Nationals where they must compete as USA Swimming Club swimmers rather than NCAA athletes.

Finally, our newest branch, Bulldog Swim School (BSS), launched in March of 2021. BSS is led by Coach Gabby Matthews, who is a level-5 certified coach through the American Swim Coaches Association, the highest possible certification level, and who teaches using “Swim American” lessons curriculum.

Mission, Vision, and Philosophy

Who We Are:

- The Athens Bulldog Swim Club is a non-profit USA-Swimming registered swimming club based in Athens and Watkinsville. We offer programs ranging from learn to swim lessons program to training groups focused on competition at the highest level. We are committed to maintaining a positive, healthy, and safe environment for our athletes. We have served the Greater Athens area for over 40 years and our philosophy has remained the same - at ABSC we believe that swimming is a sport for life!

Vision (purpose):

- To serve our community by providing a transformational experience for our swimmers and families that allows them to grow in leadership and character.

Mission Statement (Method):

- Building enthusiastic team members and athletes of character through swimming.

Motto:

- “Tater.”
 - The “Tater” as our fearless leader Coach Harvey calls it, better known by most as the “fist-bump” gesture, symbolizes ABSC’s core values in one action. When one person gives another person a tater, they are all at once demonstrating connection with that person, support for that person, and belief in that person’s abilities to succeed.
 - Likewise, just as 5 fingers closed together make a fist which packs a stronger punch than one finger ever could, the team as a unit is stronger than the sum of its parts. We’re not a bunch of individual swimmers, coaches, and families, but we’re one team.

Core Values:

- Develop Character
 - Fostering personal growth for our athletes through the sport of swimming.
 - Coaches lead athletes in a way that builds them up in self-confidence and conviction.
- Sport for life
 - Programs for babies through adults.
 - Building a love of the sport our families will always take with them.
- Team
 - Swimming is a team sport, not an individual sport. We all get better together.



Athens Bulldog Swim Club

—a non-profit USA-Swimming team based in Athens, Ga

- Coaches work as a team to lead the organization.
- Parents work as a team with the coaches to support the swimmers and help the club through volunteering at meets and team events.

Core Coaching Staff

- **Head Coach:** Harvey Humphries
- **Associate Head Coach:** Jonathan Foggin
- **Head Senior Coach:** Adam Sasso
- **Head Age Group Coach:** Mike Radford
- **Assistant Age Group Coach:** Lydia Scharff
- **Bulldog Swim School Director:** Gabby Matthews
- **Lead Masters Coach:** Laura Templin
- **Treasurer:** Clayton Foggin

Practice Group Descriptions Developmental Program

Gups “Learn the Sport”	Pups “Learn to Race”	Superpups “Learn to Train”
Age: 10u, Grades: K-4 Workouts: 3x/week, 60 min. Focus: Foundational stroke technique & practice habits	Age: 7-11, Grades: 2-5 Workouts: 3x/week, 75 min Focus: level 2 stroke technique, starts, turns, and finishes.	Age: 9-11, Grades: 4-6 Workouts: 3x/week 75 min, 2x/week 90 min. Focus: Challenging practice sets

Age Group Program

Dawgs Flex “Focus and Add Skill”	Dawgs 2 “Expand and Grow”	Dawgs 1 “Train for Success”
Age: 12-14, Grades: 6-12 Workouts: 3x/week 75 min, 2x/week 90 min Focus: Training to Improve technique and fitness.	Age: 11-14, Grades: 6-8 Workouts: 3x/week 120 min, 2x/week 90 min Focus: Refining Stroke Technique and developing the aerobic base.	Age: 11-14, Grades: 6-9 Workouts: 5x/week 120 min, 1x/week 90 min Focus: Rigorous aerobic training, advanced technique, and skill work.

Senior Program



Athens Bulldog Swim Club

—a non-profit USA-Swimming team based in Athens, Ga

Senior Flex “Focus and Add Skill”	Senior 2 “Refine and Excel”	Senior 1 “Lead and Achieve”
Age: 14-18, Grades: 8-12 Workouts: 3x/week 75 min, 2x/week 90 min Focus: Training to Improve technique and fitness.	Age: 14-18, Grades: 9-12 Workouts: 5x/week 120 min, 1x/week 90 min Focus: Training to compete at the state level & college prep.	Age: 14-18, Grades: 9-12 Workouts: 5x/week 120 min, 2x/week 90 min Focus: Training to compete at the national level & college prep.

Additional Practice Groups

Junior Homeschool Group “Practice Mid-Day”	Senior Homeschool Group “Practice Mid-Day”	Adult Masters Group “Connect with Swimming”
Age Range: Elementary School Workouts: 3x/week for 60 min. Focus: Differentiated training to meet swimmers at their experience level	Age Range: Middle & High School Workouts: 2x/ week 75 min, 2x/week 90 min. Focus: Differentiated training to meet swimmers at their experience level.	Age: 18+ (registers with USA Masters Swimming) Workouts: up to 6x/week for 60 Focus: Technique and fitness for adult swimmers in our community, whether they want to swim for fitness or competition.

IM Development Goals

The list of swimmer goals below comes from [USA Swimming’s IMX and IM READY](#) motivational tool to encourage swimmers to compete in all strokes and distances, and the “IM TOUGH” designation comes from an initiative of S. Carolina Swimming LSC that we liked and have copied!

All goals are “Complete” when a swimmer swims the designated races in a USA swimming-sanctioned meet. Coaches will recognize athletes for achieving these goals in front of their peers at practice.

IM Tough (For Pups Group)

- 50 of each stroke, 100 of non-free, 200 free, 200 IM,

IM Ready:

- 10 & under
 - 100 free, 50 back, 50 breast, 50 fly, 100 IM
- 11-12
 - 200 free, 50 back, 50 breast, 50 fly, 100 IM
- 13 & Over
 - 200 free, 100 back, 100 breast, 100 fly, 200 IM

IMX:



Athens Bulldog Swim Club

—a non-profit USA-Swimming team based in Athens, Ga

10 & under

- 200 free, 100 back, 100 breast, 100 fly, 200 IM
- 11-12
 - 500 free, 200 back, 200 breast, 200 fly, 200 IM
- 13& Over
 - 500 free, 200 back, 200 breast, 200 fly, 400 IM

Athlete Development Triangle

ABSC's Athlete Development Triangle: At ABSC, we believe in the development of the whole athlete. With that in mind, we help athletes develop in three crucial areas for high performance, both in swimming and in life. **They are the Mental Aspect, the Technical Aspect, and the Physical Aspect.**

1. **The Mental Aspect.** Before an athlete can succeed in the pool, they must learn how to think like a champion! Therefore, we emphasize positive self-talk, goal setting, and visualization as ways for athletes to develop belief in their own potential.
 - a. **Positive Self-Talk:** ABSC athletes learn how to talk themselves into success by thinking and speaking affirmative statements over themselves at practice and at meets. They learn to speak positively in both success and setback and to treat their own minds with respect and care.
 - b. **Goal Setting:** ABSC swimmers learn how to begin with the end in mind. Our older swimmers learn how to work backward from the results they want to achieve to set realistic but challenging milestone goals along the way. Our younger swimmers learn the basics of goal setting and having a long-term, goal-oriented mindset. They learn to ask, "What do I need to do today, to improve in the future?"
 - c. **Visualization:** ABSC swimmers practice visualization in multiple ways. They learn how to visualize their races before meets, picturing a great swim in their minds before they ever swim it. Older swimmers learn how to picture their long-term goals and visualize themselves achieving them in the "present tense," training their subconscious minds.
2. **The Technical Aspect:** ABSC swimmers practice stroke technique from their first day in our beginner groups until they graduate from our program!
 - a. **Technique is perpetual:** Swimmers are constantly refining stroke technique at all levels, in all phases of the season plan. Even as they move up through the groups and encounter more rigorous aerobic training, the emphasis on refining the technique of all four competitive strokes, starts, turns, and underwaters never dwindles.
 - b. **Swimmers take ownership of their technique:** Swimmers learn to have a growth mindset, always self-evaluating their technique, and looking for ways to improve under guidance of the coaching staff.
3. **The Physical Aspect:** ABSC swimmers grow physically through a progressive physical program as they move up through the practice groups.
 - a. **Building through the groups:** The Pups and Gups groups work on developing baseline techniques and learning how to control their bodies through disciplined and routine movements in the water. The Superpups group introduces swimmers to aerobic training, and their aerobic base expands as they move up into the Dawgs and Senior groups.



Athens Bulldog Swim Club

—a non-profit USA-Swimming team based in Athens, Ga

- b. Dryland and Strength Training:** “Dryland” training takes place for every group, starting with the Gups group where swimmers learn basic coordination and core strength. Progressive on-land strength training becomes increasingly rigorous as swimmers move up through the groups.

ABSC Volunteering Policy

Hosting swim meets is a huge part of ABSC’s club philosophy. We love hosting meets so that our families can travel less, and it helps offset our lane rental costs which allows us to keep our member fees lower than they otherwise would be! But hosting meets is a big responsibility, and it takes many more people than our coaching staff to execute.

While many clubs implement points systems, pre-pay escrow systems, or even implement financial penalties to make sure families work as timers at swim meets, ABSC would like to avoid doing that if we can help it! We always have, and here’s how we can continue to avoid that:

Policy Summary: If your child swims in a meet, a representative from your family must volunteer for at least one session of that meet.

Implementation:

- Volunteers will serve as lane-timers unless they are part of our staff of officials!
 - Representatives of your family can include parents, siblings 12&older, grandparents or other family members, babysitters, etc.
- Our volunteer coordinator will send out a sign-up genius during the week prior. You can pick which session you’d like to work.
 - If all sessions are full, then you will be expected to sign up for the next meet.
- We will track how many sessions each family works through officiating and timing.
- If families never sign up or do sign up and then “no show” their obligation, our Lead Coaching staff will reach out directly after the meet asking that family to be mindful of the policy. ** Those with extenuating circumstances should reach out to our staff in advance to form a volunteering plan that fits their need.**
- Those who repeatedly avoid volunteering may lose their swimmer’s ability to participate in future swim meets until they can fulfill the obligation. Furthermore, if we have repeat offenders, we will explore the options of penalty fees for non-participants in the future.
- If you miss your requirement due to a last-minute or unexpected reason, please contact our volunteer coordinator as soon as possible. Volunteer Coordinator: Christian Trotter. christiantrotter@comcast.net.

Become an ABSC Official to Support the Club!

All competitive swimming events held under USA Swimming sanction must be conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations established by USA Swimming. These rules are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition and to promote uniformity in the sport so that no swimmer has an unfair advantage over another. To that end, we at ABSC are always in



Athens Bulldog Swim Club

—a non-profit USA-Swimming team based in Athens, Ga

need of certified officials to order to conduct swim meets, both at home at the Ramsey Center, and at away meets hosted by other swim clubs. **Without certified officials, we cannot have a swim meet.**

Officiating at swim meets is one of the best ways to actively participate in your child's sport. By becoming an official, you will learn a lot about swimming, help your local swim club, meet people from all over the state of Georgia, and get to watch the competition up close. There are several positions for which one can obtain certification. These include Stroke and Turn Judge, Starter, Chief Judge, Referee, Administrative Referee, and Clerk of Course. Beginning officials must first get certified as "Stroke and Turn Judges".

Requirements become an official

1. Take about 3 hours of coursework and pass a test.
2. Register as a USA swimming apprentice official and complete 5 apprenticeship sessions at swim meets, with at least one meet having to be a prelim/final meet.

A few small perks we'll offer as "thank-you" for your dedication to our program.

- **Meet Fee Discount.** We will waive the swim meet surcharges for the kids of an official for every meet at Ramsey the official works. (Per event fees will still apply, but surcharges will be waived, usually \$18 per swimmer).
- **Reimbursement.** All expenses incurred by officials for training, such as background check and USA Swimming membership, will be reimbursed by ABSC (not all clubs do this).
- **Dinner.** Officials will be invited to a dinner with ABSC coaching staff once per season as a thank you!
- **Advancement.** Officials who advance in training beyond the entry position of "Stroke & Turn Judge," will receive a free 30-minute lesson with Coach Mike for their child/children, once per semester!
 - Qualifying advancement levels include:
 - Chief Judge
 - Starter
 - Deck Ref
 - Meet Ref

Step-by-Step Instructions to become an official

1. Email [Astrid De Leon](mailto:Astrid.DeLeon@athensbulldogs.com) and ask for the training videos for Stroke & Turn Judge (which is the entry level position). Astrid is the Georgia Swimming official in charge of training.
2. Register with USA Swimming as an Apprentice Official using this link: <https://omr.usaswimming.org/omr/welcome/065049D291FC62>
3. Watch the videos Astrid sends and complete the test.
4. Apprentice for at least 1 session at 5 different meets, one of which must be a prelim/final meet.

Email Mike Radford (mike@athensbulldogs.com) with questions and to update him on your progress. Go Dawgs!



Athens Bulldog Swim Club

—a non-profit USA-Swimming team based in Athens, Ga

ABSC Parent Code of Conduct

As a parent member of ABSC,

I will understand and endorse the purpose of the program, which is: *To help swimmers grow in character through the sport of swimming as they become swimmers for life!*

I will support the coaches by applauding behavior in my child and his/her teammates that demonstrates characteristics of integrity, empathy, sacrifice, and responsibility.

I will acknowledge and appreciate my swimmers' growth toward maturity and their effort toward establishing stronger relationships with their teammates, coaches, and themselves.

I will affirm my child and their teammates when good character, healthy sportsmanship and any other centered behaviors are displayed. I will not *only* affirm my child's athletic performance or a victory.

I will serve as a role model for my athlete: speaking politely and acting courteously toward coaches, officials, other parents, visiting team parents and spectators at practices and meets.

I will model good sportsmanship. I will acknowledge and applaud the efforts of team members and opponents. I will accept defeat graciously by congratulating members of the opposing team on a game well-played.

I will support the team regardless of the time standards my child achieves, the events the coach chooses, or which relay they are a part of.

I will encourage my child and their teammates with positive statements even when they make mistakes. At every practice they grow physically and emotionally. At every practice they are learning moral and ethical lessons. At every practice they are developing character.

I will refrain from boasting about my child's accomplishments, particularly in comparison to other athletes.

I agree that when problems or questions arise, I will have my child present the problem to their lead group coach. We want our athletes to develop self-advocacy. After meeting with the lead coach if the issue requires more clarity, I will contact the head coach.

Because I am a parent with the power and platform to make a positive difference in the life of my swimmer and others, I commit to this code of conduct. When failing to live up to these standards I will allow for accountability and take responsibility for my actions.

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____



Athens Bulldog Swim Club

—a non-profit USA-Swimming team based in Athens, Ga

ABSC Swimmer Code of Conduct

*Note** While the principles herein are for all ages, this form will be completed by ABSC swimmers in the Superpups group and up. Pups and Gups will not sign this code of conduct.*

As an athlete member of

ABSC,

I will accept responsibility for my behavior on and off the pool deck. I understand that what I do or say affects my teammates, my team, and other people either positively or negatively.

I will act with respect toward myself and the people and things around me, including my parents, coaches, teammates, opponents, and spectators. I will listen to my coaches at practice and will not talk while they are talking to the group or distract my peers during times of instruction.

I will act with empathy. I will try to understand what is going on in the hearts and minds of others and what is causing those feelings, so that I can be supportive and encouraging.

I will not put people in boxes according to their race, religion, gender, neighborhood, or abilities. I will judge people by the content of their character.

I will be inclusive to all swimmers on the team, loving and respecting others regardless of their differences. I will refrain from bullying others, and I understand that bullying may lead to removal from the team.

I will avoid using foul or inappropriate language. I understand that language is important, I will speak in ways that are life-giving to others, rather than hurtful.

I will serve as a role model by speaking politely and acting courteously toward coaches, teammates, opponents, officials, and spectators. This also includes people of authority at practices, such as building managers, lifeguards, and custodial staff.

I will give 100% effort to practices, games, and events. I understand that my effort demonstrates my commitment to the team, and my respect for my coaches and teammates.

I will display good sportsmanship. I will acknowledge and applaud the efforts of others and encourage my teammates with positive statements. I will refrain from boasting to my teammates and trash talking opponents. I will accept defeat graciously by congratulating my opponents.

I understand that it is a privilege to represent my family, team, and community as a student/athlete. Because I represent my family, team, community, and myself, I will abide by the policies, rules, and guidelines of the team and coaches.

Athlete Name: _____

Athlete Signature: _____



Athens Bulldog Swim Club

—a non-profit USA-Swimming team based in Athens, Ga

ABSC Financial Policy 2023-2024 Season

ABSC Swim Year:

ABSC operates on an 11-month fiscal calendar, and each billing cycle runs from September of a given year through July of the following year. The month of August is off.

- Within the 11-month calendar year is the short course season (September – March) and the Long Course season (April – July). With our monthly billing setup, you can swim either or both seasons, and can start or stop your billing any month.

Practice Group Pricing

Practice Group	Monthly Fee	Semester/Trimester Fee
Gups	\$125/mo. 11 month** schedule.	\$460/ Trimester** after discount
Pups	\$140/mo. 11 month** schedule.	\$485/ Trimester** after discount
Superpups	\$175/mo. 9 month schedule.	\$750/ Semester after discount
Dawgs 2	\$190/mo. 9 month schedule	\$810/ Semester after discount
Dawgs 1	\$220/mo. 9 month schedule	\$940/ Semester after discount
Senior & Dawgs Flex	\$160/mo. 9 month schedule	\$685/ Semester after discount
Senior 2	\$220/mo. 9 month schedule	\$940/ Semester after discount
Senior 1	\$245/mo. 9 month schedule	\$1045/ Semester after discount
Masters	\$140/mo. 11 month schedule**	\$450/ Trimester** after discount
Junior Home School	\$120/mo. 9 month schedule	\$510/ Semester after discount
Senior Home School	\$175 mo. 9 month schedule	\$750/ Semester after discount



Athens Bulldog Swim Club

—a non-profit USA-Swimming team based in Athens, Ga

** Most ABSC Groups operate on a 9-month billing schedule. **The Gups, Pups, and Masters operate on an 11-month billing schedule. Therefore, their discounted option is a “Trimester” option rather than a “Semester” option.**

Annual Registration Fee:

Each ABSC swimmer will be charged a non-refundable Annual Registration Fee of \$125 for ABSC. Team t-shirt and Swim Cap are included. You will also pay an \$84 USA Swimming Annual Registration Fee, which you will complete independently through the USA Swimming registration link we send you.

- Families with multiple swimmers will only be charged a \$40 ABSC Annual Registration Fee for the second swimmer and beyond.
- On February 1st, each year, this fee will drop to \$80 for the first swimmer for all groups, and \$20 for subsequent swimmers. **Masters don't pay the Annual Registration Fee.**

Monthly Invoices:

- Monthly tuition for **Superpups, Dawgs 1, Dawgs 1, Senior 1, and Senior 2, Senior & Dawg Flex, and Home School** billed **in 9 monthly instalments (September-May)** or further if membership is suspended or started later). This includes 11 months of membership (we typically take August off). If all monthly fees have been paid from September – May, June and July are free. If one month was missed, then only July is free.
- **Gups, Pups, and Masters: monthly tuition billed in 11 monthly installments (Sept. – July).**

Pay by Semester/Trimester option:

Families will also have the option to pay by semester (Supers and above) or trimester (Gups, Pups, & Masters) for a 5% discount in fees off each bill. (note** Masters is larger than a 5% discount for pay by trimester).

- For example, a family with a swimmer in the Dawgs group can pay once in September and again in January and receive 5% off each bill. (Registration fee not included).

Billing Dates and Payment Deadlines:

All monthly invoices are created at 12:00am on the 1st day of each month. Each month's invoice must be paid by the 10th of the month.

- Pay by trimester billing dates for Gups/Pups/Masters: Sept 1, Jan 1, May 1.
- Pay by semester billing dates for Supers/Dawgs/Senior groups: Sept 1, Jan 1.

Payments:

Billing invoices can be paid one of two ways:

- Pay with master/discover/visa card. A valid card added to your account can be processed automatically on the 1st day of each month for tuition dues and any meet fees from the previous month (if any).
- Pay with a checking/savings account (ACH Direct Draft). A bank account can be added to your account to be drafted on the first day of each month for tuition dues and any meet fees from the previous month (if any). There is NO convenience fee for this electronic payment method.



Athens Bulldog Swim Club

—a non-profit USA-Swimming team based in Athens, Ga

Electronic payment requires being enrolled in the Auto-Pay system (Visa/MasterCard/Discover Card or ACH Direct Deposit Bank Account).

Athens Bulldog Swim Club does not accept partial payments.

Multi Swimmer Discount:

Families with multiple active paying swimmers will receive a discount on the additional swimmer's monthly dues. There is a 10% discount to the 2nd swimmer, a 20% discount to the third swimmer, and the fourth swimmer per family and beyond will receive a 100% discount. Discounts apply to the swimmers paying the lesser amount each month. Multiple swimmers must be registered on the same account and must be living in the same household. The multi-swimmer discount applies to monthly dues only and does not apply to meet fees or any miscellaneous fees.

Meet Fees:

Families will be auto-billed all meet fees once registration closes. Once a swimmer is committed online for any swim meet or team event; and the online commitment withdrawal/sign-up deadline has passed, **the account holder of the swimmer is financially responsible and will be billed.** *Specifically note swim meets missed for illness will not be credited for any reason; fees are incurred prior to the meet and cannot be refunded.*

Changing Roster Groups:

If your swimmer moves to another roster group mid-season, your new monthly rate will be reflected on the following month's invoice. (ex. Henry F moves from the Gups group to the Pups group on October 15th. His Pups group rate will first appear on the next billing period, Nov. 1st).

Suspend/Reactivation for Registered Members:

- Swimmers may opt to suspend their memberships for one or more months. **Team treasurer Clayton Foggin must be notified via EMAIL (Clayton@athensbulldogs.com) before the 27th day of the month PRECEDING the month you wish to suspend your swimmer's membership.** (ex. If Johnny wishes not to swim in the month of February because he's taking a month off to play basketball, Clayton must be notified by email before January 27th).
 - **Note: Those who fail to notify by the 27th will owe a 5% "refund fee."**
- Account balances must be paid in full to suspend a swimmer's membership. Suspended members may not participate in Athens Bulldog practices or meets.
- Please email Clayton@athensbulldogs.com with your and your swimmer's full name as well as the desired month(s) to suspend your registered member. Please also email her before the 27th of the month if you wish to re-activate a previously suspended swimmer's membership. Your account will be invoiced for the full month's dues for the month your swimmer returns.

Canceling Memberships:

If you wish to cancel your membership for the remainder of the season, please email Clayton@athensbulldogs.com with your swimmer's name and statement of cancellation. Your monthly invoices will be discontinued, **effective the following month.** Account balances must be paid in full to cancel a registered swimmer's membership.



Athens Bulldog Swim Club

—a non-profit USA-Swimming team based in Athens, Ga

Holidays / Breaks:

In March or April, there may be a week vacation for the coaches and staff that aligns with the Spring Break for the major public-school district in the ABSC location's area. Your normal monthly payment would still be due in March/April because the monthly payment for each practice group is based upon the total amount of practice time during the season. In addition, the total practice time for each team is added up for the entire season (all practices for September through July) and divided by monthly payments for your convenience. ABSC takes holiday breaks into consideration, and the monthly rate cannot be adjusted due to individual schedules.

For any further questions, please email Clayton Foggin at Clayton@athensbulldogs.com, or contact Coach Mike Radford at Mike@athensbulldogs.com.

Swim Meet 101

1. What is a normal meet season like?

- a. ABSC's season goes from September – July each year. We usually have one, and sometimes two meets per month. Meets typically occur on weekends and are typically multiple days. Sometimes Friday-Sunday, sometimes just Saturday and Sunday.
- b. ABSC is a USA-Swimming Club, and like all USA Swimming clubs, our "Short course season" (25 - yard format, like summer league) goes September – March. Our "long course" goes April – July.
- c. We typically have our "Red & Black" intrasquad meet in September, then we'll host a meet in October, travel in November, and host in December as well as go to Senior State/Junior Nationals in December. We host again in January, travel to a meet in February and travel again to 14&under state in February for qualifying swimmers.
- d. Our preeminent "short course" swim meet each year is the Northeast Divisional Championships at the end of March. It is a championship for all the teams in Northeast Georgia. There is a team score and a team spirit award, and ABSC strives to win both. In 2022, we won both!
- e. Then we usually swim one or two long course meets per month April – June and have the state long course state championship for both 14&under and Seniors in July. Then we're off in August!

2. Swim Meet Goals and Expectations.

- a. ABSC asks swimmers to swim in more meets as they age up through the program. For Gups we encourage at least one meet per semester. For Pups we encourage 2 per semester, and Superpups 3 per semester. For Dawgs, Senior 1, and Senior 2 we ask for participation in as many meets as possible. For Senior Flex, meets are optional.

3. Success and failure at meets. We focus on character building and "Process over results."

- a. **Coaches.** A successful meet for our coaches is one in which the swimmers have fun, try their best, and leave the meet having learned and improved their process. We serve the swimmers through our support, positivity, and engagement in their process. Meets are meant to be fun!
- b. **Swimmers.** Process over results! The goal for each swim is to let the Big Dawg Eat! "E.A.T"
 - i. E = Effort. We dignify ourselves, our competition, and the event itself by giving 100% effort every time we race. We show respect to ourselves and others through our effort!
 - ii. A = Attitude. We race with a positive attitude. If we are tired, we remember the training we've put in. If we are nervous, we focus on positive self-talk.



Athens Bulldog Swim Club

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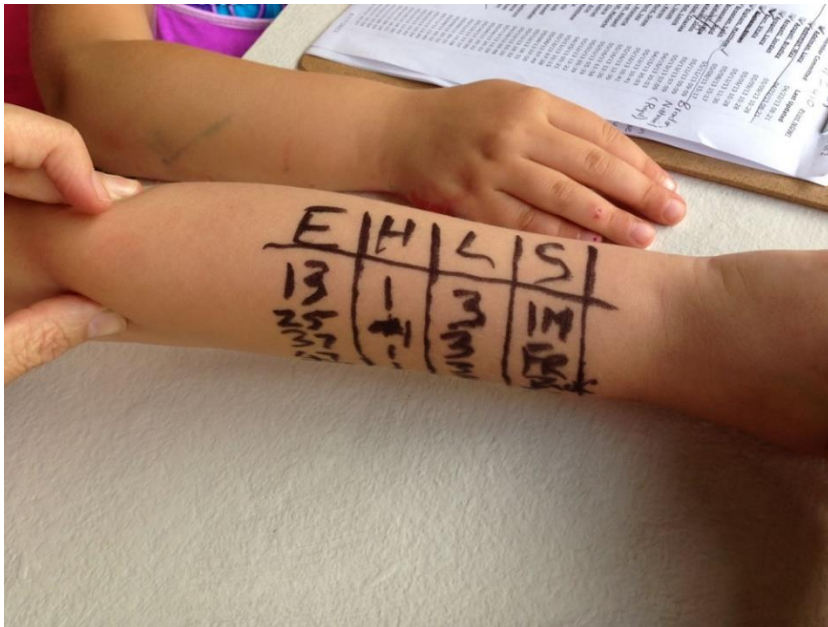
- iii. T = Team. We don't just race for ourselves; we race for our teammates! We push those around us to be great by giving our best. We give our all for the team, even at meets where points aren't scored, or relays aren't swum.

c. Parents. Supporting your athletes.

- i. For parents, a meet is successful when the communicate to their athletes with love, support, and encouragement regardless of how the meet goes.
 - 1. Parents focus on saying "I love to watch you swim" rather than on praising swimmers for their results.
 - 2. Parents avoid coaching from the stands.
 - 3. Parents support the ideals of Letting the "Big Dawg E.A.T." Be proud of swimmers for giving maximum effort, maintaining a positive attitude, and supporting the team.

4. Heats and lanes.

- a. Each event separates into individual heats and lanes. Let's say there are 32 swimmers in event #1, 13–14-year-old 100 freestyle.
- b. If the meet is being held at the Ramsey Center, which is an 8-lane pool, only 8 of the 32 swimmers can swim at one time. So, the swimmers will be divided into 4 "heats" of 8, and will be assigned a lane, between lane 1 through lane 8.
- c. Before each meet, swimmers will receive their heat and lane assignments. For example, Johnny's event list may look like this:
 - i. Event #2, 10&under 100 free. Heat 2, lane 5
 - ii. Event #6, Heat 4, Lane 1
 - iii. Event #12, Heat 7, Lane 2
- d. Heats and lanes, for example photo. Before each meet, coaches will send out heat and lane assignments. In this example photo, we see "E," "H," "L," & "S," which stands for: event, heat, lane, and swim, respectively. In the picture, the swimmer's first event would be #13, and they'd be swimming in Heat number 1, Lane Number 3, and the "Swim" would be "IM."





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5. What else does my swimmer need for meets?
 - a. **Checklist:** Team swim cap, goggles, suit, towel(s), snacks, several drinks, a sharpie pen to write their events, some cards or small games, and a bag to put it all in!
6. When do swimmers interact with coaches at meets?
 - a. Swimmers will follow the same pattern for every race.
 - i. Talk to coach -> Swim my race -> do my cooldown laps -> talk to coach again. This pattern is crucial in the development of an athlete at swim meets.
7. Is there a bullpen? How will my swimmer be on time for their race?
 - a. Most of the time there will NOT be a bullpen at club meets. Swimmers are responsible for arriving at their heats and lanes on time. All meets will have a scoreboard which keeps track of events, so swimmers and parents can make sure they don't miss races.
 - b. Swimmers should talk to their coach about 2-4 events before they swim and get behind the blocks 1-3 events before they swim.
 - c. If they do miss a race, they should find a COACH, NOT THEIR PARENTS! Coaches will take them to the officials, and the officials will allow them to swim in an empty lane in a later heat IF there is an open lane.

Long Course vs. Short Course

While ABSC's season lasts 11 months, September – July, it's broken down into two different competition format seasons. The first season is the "Short Course" Season, which goes from September – March. April – July makes up the second season, the "Long Course" season.

- **Short Course: 25-yard format.** A 50-yard swim requires two lengths of the pool, down and back. In the United States we typically use the "yards" distance rather than meters, though the short course meters format does exist. Summer league swimming, high school swimming, and NCAA swimming all use the Short Course Yards format, so this is the format most familiar for most swimmers starting out.
- **Long Course: 50-meter format.** A 50-meter swim requires one length of the pool. Long course is double the distance of short course, but even a little longer still because meters are slightly longer than yards. Long course is the format used most around the world, and it is the format used for most major international swimming competitions, such as World Championships and the Olympics.

Moving up to a new practice group

While we seek to collaborate with parents and find the best fit for each swimmer, **coaches always hold the final discretion when it comes to practice group placement.**

When a swimmer joins ABSC, they are evaluated by the coaching staff and placed into a practice group that meets their needs. Each practice group has entry-standards that must be met for swimmers to be placed into that group. From the time a swimmer joins the team, they should be working toward moving up to the next practice group, until they have reached the highest group they can.

Each group also has loose move-up standards, mostly based upon commitment level and performance in the PRACTICE setting (rather than having fast meet times).



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In placing swimmers in practice groups, coaches must strike a balance between meeting the needs of individual swimmers and maintaining the practice group's quality. When placing the swimmers, we aim to challenge them, while also allowing them to experience success over time.

There are three levels of practice groups:

- Elementary (Gups -> Pups -> Superpups)
- Middle School (Dawgs Flex -> Dawgs 2 -> Dawgs 1)
- High School (Senior Flex -> Senior 2 -> Senior 1)

Swimmers can move either up to a new level (i.e., Superpups -> Dawgs 1) or horizontally within their level, (i.e., promotion from Dawgs 2 -> Dawgs 1 or a decrease in commitment and moving from Dawgs 2 -> Dawgs Flex).

When do move-ups take place?

- Most move-ups happen in September with the beginning of each new swim season.
- Other times a swimmer may move up are in April after Divisionals and the conclusion of our short course season, or sometimes in January for Gups and Pups swimmers.

ABSC Photography & Media Consent & Policy

I hereby acknowledge that the Athens Bulldog Swim Club may use my child's photograph or likeness, and his/her name in connection with:

- Social media presentation on Facebook & Instagram (i.e., shoutouts for meet results or swimmer of the month honors, etc.)
- The ABSC website
- Printed promotional materials.

[To opt in, or out, please fill out our google form.](#)

Photography at Swim Practices & Swim Meets

ABSC will have a parent photographer taking photos at each swim meet. These photographers are professional swim meet photographers and are familiar with photography decency standards, such as no photos taken from behind the starting blocks.

After each swim meet, parents will be sent a link with photos taken at each meet. Those photos are vetted and sorted before being sent out. Parents can also upload photos they've taken themselves at swim meets, which will also be vetted before publishing.

The link will only be available for ABSC members.

At practices, coaches may take photos and videos of athletes from time to time for the same purposes and will be vetted in the same manner before publishing.



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Other Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. **What are all the costs associated with swimming for ABSC?**
 - a. **Registration Fees.** Upon registration, you'll pay a registration startup fee of \$125, and a USA Swimming registration fee of \$84. These fees are due once per swim year. We bill for them in August, but if you join after August, you'll be billed for them upon joining.
 - b. **Monthly or Semester/Trimester Dues.** These are listed above and are self-explanatory. They differ by practice group.
 - c. **Swim Meet Fees.** All swim meets have registration fees, whether we host them or not. Meets can cost anywhere from \$20 to over \$100 for high-level state meets, but typically you pay per event and an average range would be \$30-\$60 for a multi-day meet. Meets occur once or twice per month.
 - d. **Swimsuits, Caps, and Gear.** We require a team cap, and team suits are encouraged but not required. Each practice group also has a gear-kit they will purchase preseason. For Gups and Pups, it's only a kickboard, fins, and mesh bag. For Senior 1 on the other hand, its Kickboard, fins, mesh bag, snorkel, buoy, and paddles.
2. What should I do if I have a concern about my swimmer?
 - a. You should talk with your lead group coach! After speaking with your lead group coach, if the situation persists, reach out to Coach Mike, Coach Jonathan or Coach Harvey!
3. **Is volunteering required? If so, what are the parent-work positions.**
 - a. We require volunteering at all hosted swim meets. If your swimmer swims in the meet, you should expect to work as a timer for at least one session. You also have the option to work as an official.
4. **When do the meets take place, and are they required for my swimmer?**
 - a. Meets take place once or twice per month, and typically on weekends. Sometimes they last one day, sometimes they last multiple days.
5. **What are the obligations other than practices and meets?**
 - a. We have several team events throughout the year, like our preseason new family orientation, our back-to-swim team potluck, our monthly team dinners at Jason's deli, and our end of season awards ceremony.
 - b. These events typically aren't mandatory but are strongly encouraged for members.

ABSC Practice Locations

- [Ramsey Center at the University of Georgia](#)
 - Address: 330 River Rd, Athens Ga, 30604
 - Primary Senior & Dawgs Location, and primary location for hosted swim meets.
- [Oconee Aquatics & Recreation \(OAR\)](#)
 - Address: 1545 S. Bishop Farms pkwy, Watkinsville, Ga 30677
 - Primary Location for Gups, Pups, & Superpups
- [Summer Hill Recreation Club](#)
 - Address: 1020 Chestnut Hill Rd, Athens, Ga 30606
 - Primary Location for Dawgs Flex & Senior Flex
- [Athens YWCO](#)
 - Address: 562 Research Dr, Athens, Ga 30606
 - Primary Location for the Gus & Pups Clarke Groups



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Important Links for ABSC Members

1. [Current Practice Schedule](#)
2. [Master Calendar & Key Dates](#)
3. [Events & Meets Schedule](#)
4. [Team Store for Gear & Apparel with our vendor, Reddiset](#)
5. [ABSC Coaching Staff](#)