

BREASTSTROKE

Forward start; remain on breast; touch wall with two hands simultaneously at any level(s).

Longest rules of any stroke. It can help to think in terms of **exceptions**:

Breaststroke is the ONLY stroke in which:

- 1. There is a mandatory stroke cycle:** *“Throughout the race the stroke cycle must be one arm stroke and one leg kick in that order.”* (101.2.2) Other strokes: any number of kicks and pulls in any order (except during backstroke turn).
- 2. The swimmer may totally (re)submerge past 15 meters of each length:** *“During each complete cycle, some part of the swimmer’s head shall break the surface of the water.”* (101.2.2) [**except during the first cycle of each length – see below**] Other strokes: must swim on surface after the first 15 meters of each length.
- 3. Corresponding parts of each arm/leg must move on the same level:** *“All movements of the arms/legs shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.”* (101.2.2, 101.2.3) [does not include unintentional drifting motion with the water currents] Other strokes: no requirement (freestyle), or shoulders must merely be past vertical toward back or breast.
- 4. There is a foot-position requirement while kicking:** *“The feet must be turned outwards during the propulsive part of the kick.”* (101.2.3).
- 5. The elbows must remain under the water** (during forward recovery – Interpretation 6/1995): *“The elbows shall be under water except for the final stroke before the turn, during the turn and for the final stroke at the finish”* (101.2.2).

FIRST CYCLE (“pulldown”) of each length is the ONLY cycle in which the swimmer:

- 6. May pull completely back to the legs:** *“The hands shall not be brought back beyond the hip line, except during the first stroke after the start and each turn”* (101.2.2).
- 7. May remain totally submerged:** *“After the start and after each turn ... The head must break the surface of the water before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke.”* (101.2.2)
- 8. May take one butterfly kick during or at the end of (not before) first arm pull:** *“After the start and each turn, a single butterfly kick, which must be followed by a breaststroke kick, is permitted during or at the completion of the first arm pull”* (101.2.3) [**Interpretation 12/2008:** only for purposes of timing the optional butterfly kick, the first arm pull begins with any lateral or downward movement of the hands or arms (but not with a mere sculling motion).] Other breaststroke cycles: *“A scissors, flutter or downward butterfly kick is not permitted except as provided herein.”* (101.2.2).

VIDEO