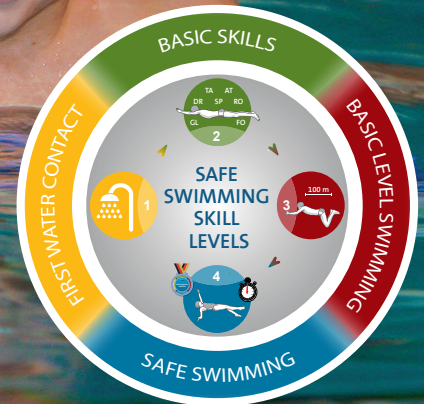


Teaching and learning swimming in primary school

Information and tips for parents



Greeting.....	2
Preface.....	3
Welcome.....	4
The importance of water.....	5
Influencing factors by and in the water	6
The skill level concept	7
The school swimming passport.....	8 - 9
Early experiences with water	10
The discoveries waiting to be made	11
The 7 basic swimming skills	13
Swimming lessons	14
Swimming lesson structure.....	15
Swimming certificates	16
Buoyancy aids, goggles and co.....	17
Key rules of conduct for children.....	18
What needs to be in the swimming bag?	19
Health and safety during swimming lessons	20
Participation in swimming lessons.....	21
Statutory Social Accident Insurance.....	22
Questions and answers about accidents	23
FAQ - What parents often ask	24
Preparatory exercises at home.....	26
Preparatory exercises outdoors	28
Having confidence in your child is key	30 - 31

Dear parents,

Water is a wonderful element and being able to swim is a basic cultural skill which affects numerous areas of life. What is more, swimming is an important way of staying healthy at any age. That is why people of all ages enjoy going to swimming pools and water parks, relaxing by a lake and exercising in the water. Sadly, this enjoyment is often overshadowed by swimming accidents. Too many people have accidents because they cannot swim well enough or even at all. It is particularly tragic where children are involved.

By learning to swim, children and young people gain confidence in a unique space and in doing so open up new opportunities to learn other watersports or swim at an athletic or amateur level or simply as a pastime. It takes a long time to learn to swim, and ideally children should start to learn at home, in a swimming club or swimming school before starting school. That is where we need the support of parents.

In the coming years, the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs of Baden-Württemberg, the Social Accident Insurance Institution of Baden-Württemberg (UKBW) and the swimming associations shall therefore focus especially on swimming lessons at an early age. The joint goal is to effectively promote children's ability to swim at a young age. Children and young people can only enjoy the water without risk and experience the positive health benefits alone or with others, for the rest of their lives, if they can swim safely.



Dr. Susanne Eisenmann
Minister for Education, Cultural Affairs, Youth and Sport
Baden-Württemberg

Siegfried Tretter
Managing Director UKBW
Baden-Württemberg



Dear parents,

With this brochure, we want to keep you informed about your children's swimming lessons and provide you with answers to your questions about swimming lessons and learning to swim. It also offers suggestions and recommendations about how you can actively encourage and support your child before, during and after school swimming lessons.

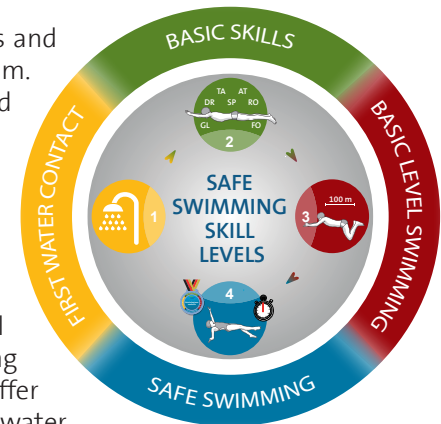
Being able to swim safely is an important cultural skill for all of us and opens up unique and irreplaceable opportunities. That is why "Safe swimming" is included as a core skill in all curricula in Baden-Württemberg.

As of this year, your child has the opportunity to participate in "Safe swimming - Skill level concept" swimming lessons. This concept is the result of many years' experience in teaching swimming and is based on the latest knowledge about teaching and learning. It seeks to offer diverse experiences with the element water, raise awareness about safety in and near the water, and give your child special development opportunities. The school swimming passport is a perfect way for parents and children alike to keep track of their progress. The school swimming passport also motivates children to move up to the next skill level.

Communication is also very important in learning and teaching swimming. New, unfamiliar and challenging situations await your child, requiring orientation, support and care not only from us swimming instructors but also from you. This brochure aims to help you to provide that support. Learn the rules for swimming lessons together with your child, teach them to pack their own swimming bag and how to get changed and dressed quickly. And most importantly: have confidence in your child's learning abilities and in my colleagues' qualified skills.

I hope you and your child will have lots of fun and success on your "Safe swimming" journey.

Thomas Gundelfinger - Centre for School Quality and Teacher Training





Hello,
I am your child's swimming
instructor!

Dear parents,

The time has come! Your child will soon learn to swim and take an important step towards discovering the water and all it has to offer. For them to be successful, it is helpful for you and your child to have all the necessary information before their first swimming lesson.

This brochure seeks to provide that information. Please discuss these subjects regularly with your child.

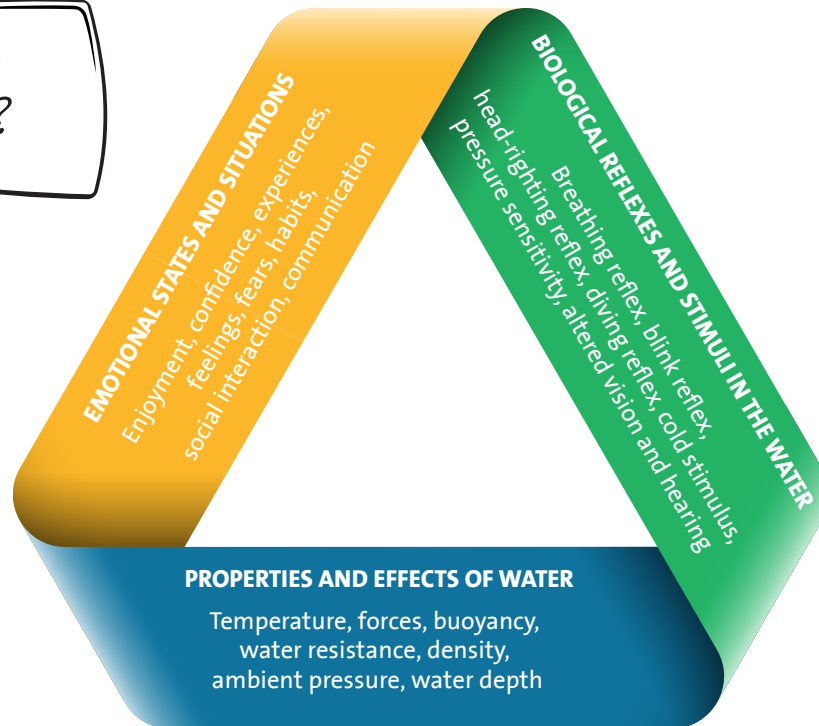
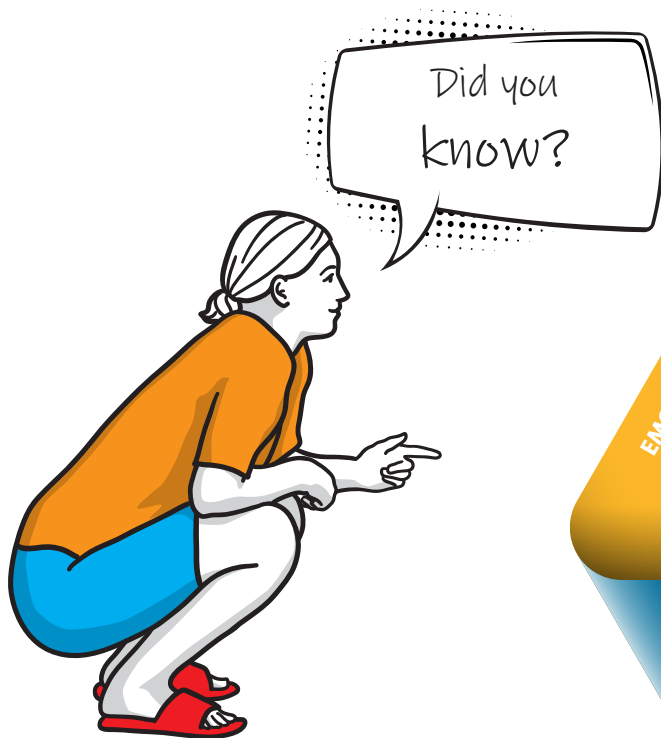
If any questions come up, we swimming instructors are always happy to answer any questions you may have and help you and your child to enjoy learning to swim, with the necessary discipline in the swimming baths.

Your swimming instructor



Being able to swim
will open many
doors for your child!



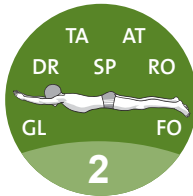


Positive experiences of water are particularly encouraging for children who are starting to learn to swim

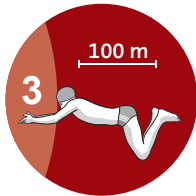
The skill level concept forms the foundations of learning to swim in Germany. The four skill levels are easy to understand with simple symbols and standardised colours. Progress is continuously documented and noted in the school swimming passport.



Familiarisation with water is all about the bodily perception and adaptation to the physical characteristics and effects of water. It is fundamental to effectively learning basic swimming skills and offers varied opportunities to enjoy the experience and perception of water.



The **basic skills** (breathing, diving, jumping in, rolling, turning, gliding, propulsion) are key to successfully learning to swim. These basic skills are tested in a complex exercise.



The focus of **basic level swimming** is on learning one or more swimming techniques. The control objective is any kind of jump into the water, swimming 100 m in any stroke with no time limit, and independently getting out of the deep end without any assistance.



The **Safe swimming** award is given after successful completion of swimming lessons. The requirements of the “German Bronze Swimming Badge” have to be fulfilled.

The school swimming passport is **proof of** your child's current **skill level in swimming lessons**. The speed and time at which the different skill levels are reached differs from child to child and is very individual. The better your child has mastered the previous skill level, the sooner they will learn to swim safely.



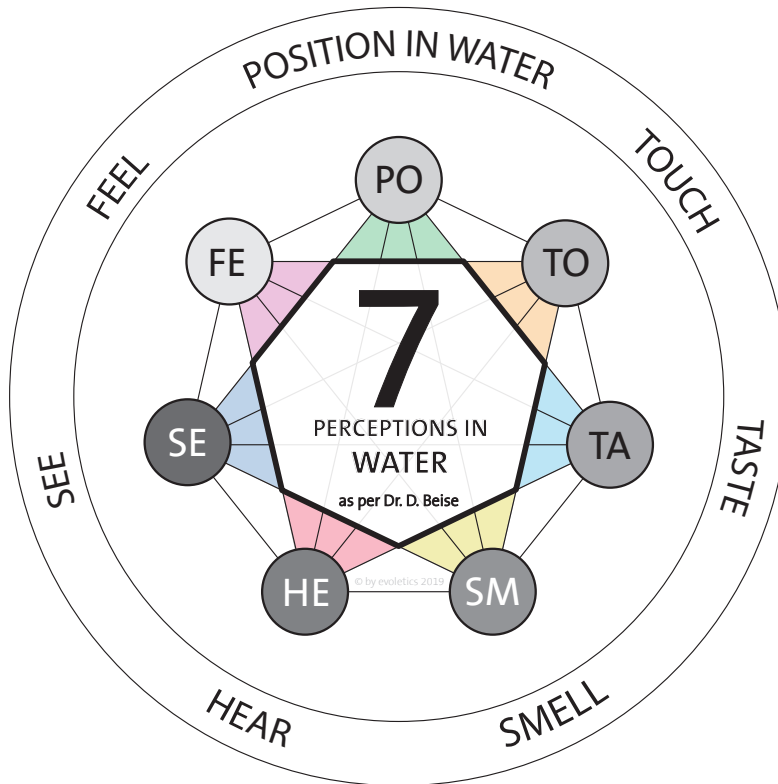


Fun with water begins at home. The **wash basin**, the big **bathtub** and the **puddles** outdoors are a **great play area for your child**. They can learn to **interact freely and openly with the water there**. Varied and playful experiences can awaken your child's curiosity and enjoyment of the water.



You can find ideas for activities at home on pages 26 to 29.

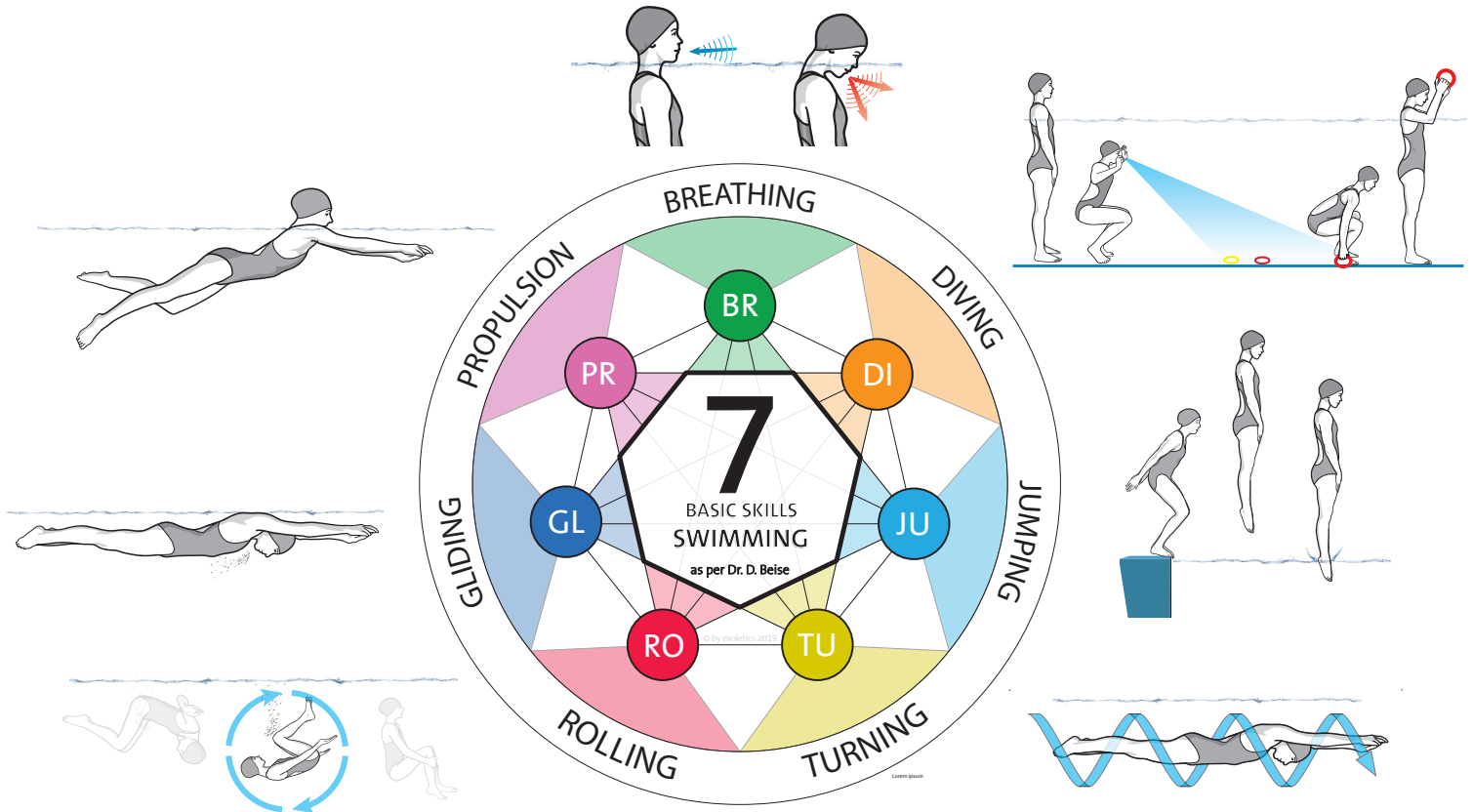
Thoroughly getting to know the properties, stimuli and effects of water at an early age is incredibly important for your child and their development. Allow your child to **interact with water in a playful, open, curious and careful way** at all times. You'll see that there is an awful lot for all **7 senses** to discover!



Splashing, standing, walking, clambering, being gently pushed and pulled and floating in shallow water are the first steps to getting used to water. You will soon find out what your child enjoys. Your child's emotional state should be your main guide. Allow space for fun and enjoyment and comfort and encourage your child. And the rule applies here too: "insensitive", excessively demanding and inappropriate encouragement can risk making your child scared and should be avoided at all costs.



In preparation for swimming lessons, you as parents should regularly provide appropriate and varied opportunities for your child to gain experience with water. Along with learning to enjoy moving about by and in the water without fear, the 7 basic skills (breathing, diving, jumping in, rolling, turning, gliding and propulsion) are the foundations of learning to swim.

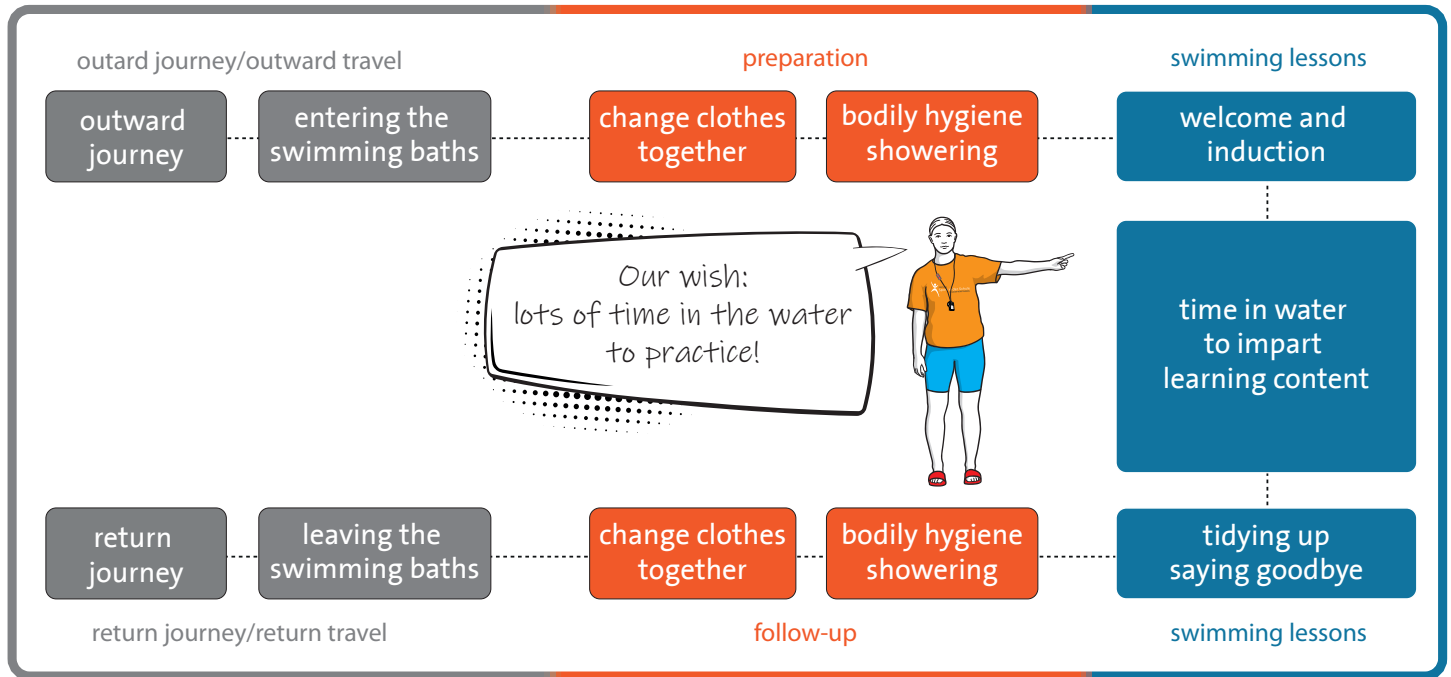


Parents often ask me “How can I help my child to learn to swim?”. The answers are very simple: **1)** Have confidence in your child and their abilities **2)** Encourage them to enjoy and be curious about water **3)** Look at the examples on page 28 or ask your swimming instructor. However, you should leave it up to my experienced colleagues to teach swimming.



The educational partnership between schools and parental homes also includes teaching pupils to swim safely. It is important for us swimming instructors to maximise the valuable time in the water. The best way to ensure this is with routines on the way to the swimming lessons and fast preparation in the swimming baths. We therefore ask that your child is familiar with the necessary routines (e.g., getting changed, showering, hygiene) and regularly puts them into practice.

Period insured by Social Accident Insurance institution



16 Swimming certificates

The national standard for assessing swimming skills will be introduced in Baden-Württemberg in school year 2021/2022. The school swimming passport provides a clear and practical overview of your child's swimming skill level. The "Safe swimming" certificate (4th skill level) also fulfils the requirements for the German Bronze Swimming Badge.

<p>Niveaustufen</p> <p>Grundschwimmen (Niveaustufe 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anpassung an die Eigenschaften und Wirkungen des Wassers Sinken, Gehen und Schwimmen im Wasser Aufblasen mit und ohne Hilfsmittel Arbeiten mit und gegen den Wasserwiderstand Fremde beim Aufblähen und Bewegen im Wasser <p>Grundschwimmen (Niveaustufe 2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Atmen - Ausatmung ins Wasser Tauchen - mit geöffneten Augen Springen - in tiefe Wasser Rollen - um die Längsachse Drehen - um die Längsachse oder Tiefenachse Gleiten - in gestreckter abwärtsgerichteter Körperposition nach Abstoß Fortbewegen - durch koordinierte Bein- und Armbewegungen <p>Basistaufschwimmen (Niveaustufe 3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> beliebiger Sprung ins tiefe Wasser und anschließend 100 Meter Schwimmen in einer beliebigen Schwimmart ohne Zeitbegrenzung (Wechsel der Schwimmart/Schwimmlage erlaubt) Wasser ohne Hilfsmittel selbstständig verlassen <p>Sicheres Schwimmen (Niveaustufe 4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Springen ins tiefe Wasser und anschließend 15 Minuten Schwimmen und mindestens 200 Meter in einer beliebigen Schwimmart zurücklegen oder Kopfgang im tiefen Wasser und anschließend 100 Meter Schwimmen in einer Schwimmart mit Zeitbegrenzung von höchstens 3,30 min (ab Klassenstufe 8 gilt eine Zeitbegrenzung von $\geq 2,30$ min bzw. $\geq 2,45$ min) 100 Meter Schwimmen in einer anderen Schwimmart ohne Zeitbegrenzung 	 <p>Baden-Württemberg MINISTERIUM FÜR KULTUR, JUGEND UND SPORT</p> <p>Dieser Schulschwimmpass gehört</p> <p><i>Elisa</i> Vorname</p> <p><i>Mustermann</i> Nachname</p> <p><i>Stuttgart, 27.3.2014</i> Geburtsdatum</p> <p>Liebe Eltern, weitere wichtige Informationen zum Start in den Schwimmunterricht finden Sie in der Elternbrochure.</p>	<p>MINISTERIUM FÜR KULTUR, JUGEND UND SPORT BADEN WÜRTTEMBERG Theuerstr. 6, 70173 Stuttgart www.kv.bwl.de sport@kv.bwl.de</p> <p>Schulschwimmpass Baden-Württemberg</p>  <p>KMK ZSL UKBW Baden-Württemberg</p>	 <p>Baden-Württemberg</p>	<p>RO GL FD 2</p>	<p>3. NIVEAUSTUFE</p>  <p>100 m</p>	<p>4. NIVEAUSTUFE</p> <p>Sticker 4</p>	
<p><i>Braunster</i> Schwimmlehrkraft <i>Stuttgart, 17.4.2021</i> Ort, Datum</p> <p>Musterschule Schulstraße 1 • 12345 Musterstadt P +49 123 45678901 www.musterschule.de F +49 123 45678910 info@musterschule.de</p>		<p><i>Braunster</i> Schwimmlehrkraft <i>Stuttgart, 18.6.2021</i> Ort, Datum</p> <p>Musterschule Schulstraße 1 • 12345 Musterstadt P +49 123 45678901 www.musterschule.de F +49 123 45678910 info@musterschule.de</p>		<p><i>Braunster</i> Schwimmlehrkraft <i>Stuttgart, 12.9.2021</i> Ort, Datum</p> <p>Musterschule Schulstraße 1 • 12345 Musterstadt P +49 123 45678901 www.musterschule.de F +49 123 45678910 info@musterschule.de</p>		<p>Schwimmlehrkraft</p> <p>Ort, Datum</p> <p>Schwimmtempo</p>	

Please note: The current German Swimming Examination Regulations (last amended 1st January 2020) list the "Seepferdchen" (seahorse) award as the beginners' certificate. We expressly inform you that it does not constitute proof of safe swimming abilities. Parents should therefore continue to supervise and closely assist their children.

Why are buoyancy aids (“water wings”) not used in swimming lessons?

“Water wings” have two particularly negative effects on the learning process. 1) The use of “water wings” causes a vertical body position in the water and therefore conveys a false perception of being in the water at an early stage. A horizontal body position is needed to correctly learn swimming movements. 2) What is more, children are often later scared of going into the deeper water on their own without buoyancy aids. That is not a good prerequisite for swimming lessons.

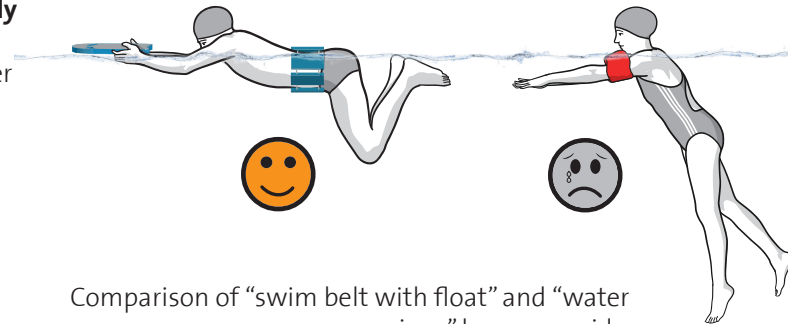
Why are exercises done in deep water conditions from an early stage?

Do not be alarmed if swimming lessons are held in deeper water from an early stage. Your child will quickly get used to it with our methodological approach. Praise your child for this great achievement, rather than expressing concerns or fears.

Are goggles allowed during swimming lessons?

Goggles are there to protect the eyes during long distance swimming. From a methodological point of view, wearing goggles as a beginner is not helpful. Overcoming the blink reflex is part of learning to swim, which is why wearing goggles from an early stage can severely slow down the learning process. It is important to get used to keeping your eyes open in the water at an early stage. It is important for orientation and can, in severe cases, be key to survival.

Summary: Your child is only safe by and in the water if they have mastered all 7 basic skills and can swim with stamina. That is why the ultimate goal of swimming lessons is skill level 4 (safe swimming).



Comparison of “swim belt with float” and “water wings” buoyancy aids.

In the swimming baths

- No running!
(risk of slipping)
- Observe jumping rules!
- No pushing, barging or shoving!
- Get changed and showered quickly

School things

- Fully pack swimming things the day before
- Appropriate clothing
(hat, warm clothes)
- Public transport ticket
- Food/drink

- Increased attention to instructions (volume)
- Follow instructions immediately
- Active and focussed listening when given tasks

Communication

- Use marked entry and exit points to the swimming baths

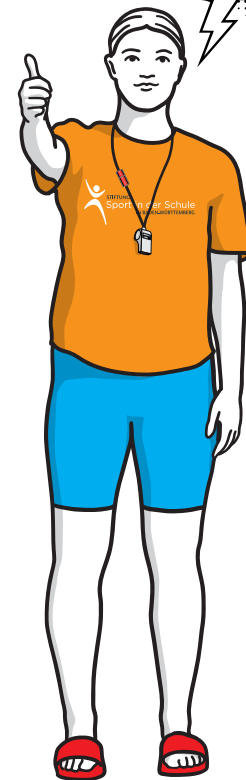
- Observe traffic rules

- Inform instructors immediately of health problems!

- Report hazardous situations

Safety

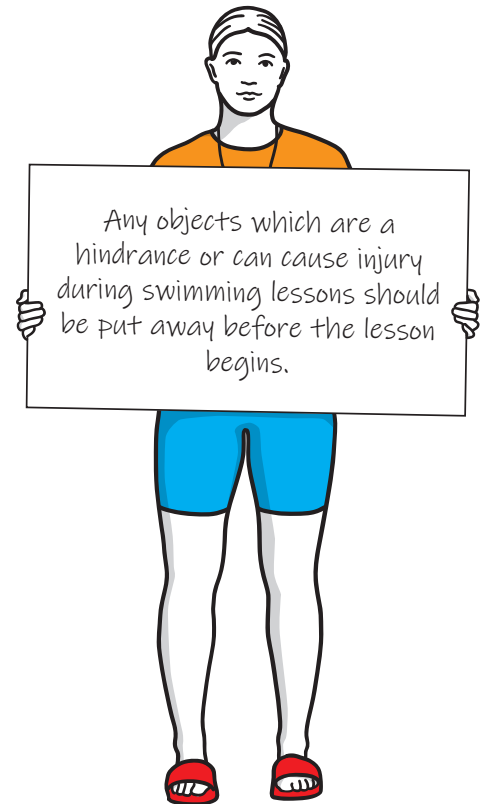
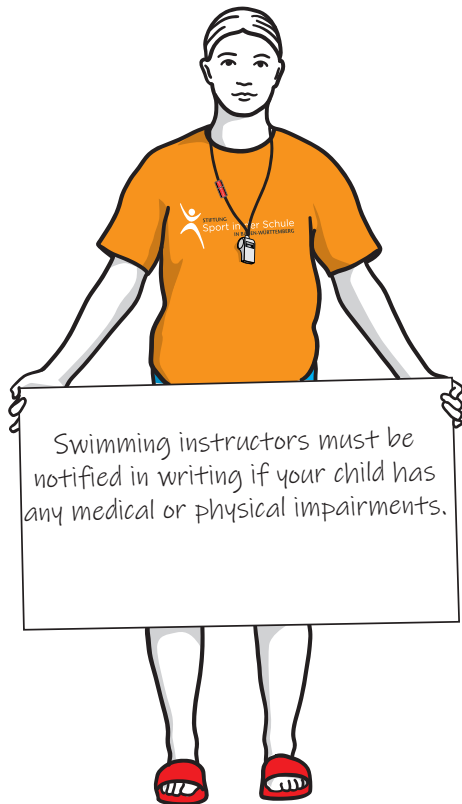
Your child ought to know this!



Tight-fitting swimsuits (see picture) are generally recommended because they have less water resistance. Swimsuits with high collars and fixed head coverings (burkinis) are recommended for Muslim girls. Swimming shorts, sports shorts, underpants under swimsuits, boxer shorts, and bikinis are not suitable for swimming lessons.



Swimming lessons require your children to concentrate a lot and use up a lot of energy. High energy foods (e.g., fruit, vegetables, wholemeal bread, nuts etc.) and unsweetened drinks are therefore especially important after swimming lessons! Make sure your child is appropriately dressed for the weather after swimming lessons.



Your child's health and safety during swimming lessons is always our utmost priority. The risk of injury is very low if all rules are followed. Your child's realistic assessment of their own abilities and being considerate of others also contributes significantly to accident prevention.

Participation in swimming lessons is fundamentally mandatory for all pupils!

Exemption from swimming lessons should only be requested on medically justified grounds.

Excuse from participation in swimming lessons

A written note excusing your child from swimming lessons should be provided if they cannot actively attend.

Exemption from swimming lessons with doctor's note

Longer-term exemption from swimming lessons can only be requested on medically justified grounds and requires a doctor's note.

Attendance of lessons remains mandatory irrespective of the grounds for exemption from swimming lessons. Even if your child is unable to actively participate in swimming lessons, they should nevertheless participate in swimming lessons in appropriate clothing (e.g., as referee, game master, to assist the swimming instructors or as a watchful spectator).

Excuse from swimming lessons

Dear _____,

My son / daughter _____
is unfortunately not able to participate in the swimming lesson on
_____ for medical reasons.

Please excuse him/her from the swimming lesson.

Kind regards,

Signature

Like at all school events and on their way to school, your child is also covered by statutory insurance during swimming lessons. This insurance is free of charge for you as parents. In case of accident, pupils shall receive comprehensive care and all necessary support to regain full health.



Who is insured in a school accident?

Pupils have mandatory insurance cover through the school authorities.

Which insurance institution is responsible in the event of a school accident?

The Social Accident Insurance Institution of Baden-Württemberg (UKBW) is your point of contact for all matters concerning the health and safety of pupils, and benefits and rehabilitation in case of a school accident. More info at www.ukbw.de

When does an accident have to be reported?

Accidents should be reported if your child has to see a doctor or go to hospital. This notification can be made via the UKBW online portal at www.ukbw.de.

Who is responsible for reporting an accident?

The head of school or an authorised person is responsible for reporting an accident pertaining to statutory social accident insurance. This duty cannot be transferred to parents or third parties!

Do minor injuries have to be reported?

Minor injuries such as small cuts or grazes simply have to be noted in the first aid book with a brief description of the accident. That serves as evidence should there be any later consequences.



Why should goggles not be used in school swimming lessons?

Good orientation underwater is essential when swimming (underwater) and when jumping into the water. Wearing goggles from an early stage makes it very difficult to overcome the blink reflex later on, meaning that none of the basic skills (except breathing) can be learned properly. Furthermore, fast and safe orientation underwater is key to survival in emergencies where your child unexpectedly submerges below the water surface. There are therefore a number of reasons not to wear goggles in swimming lessons. Please therefore help your child to get off to the best start possible and do not let them wear goggles.

Why does my child have to attend swimming lessons if they are excused?

Even if active participation in swimming lessons is not possible, swimming instructors will always try to actively involve your child in the lesson plan: as a referee, to help with apparatus, or simply to watch their classmates from the poolside. All of those tasks are important learning situations for your child and another step towards learning to swim, albeit without water contact.

Why does my child have to go underwater?

This question often reflects a serious fear held by parents or children. In most cases, the child in question has never learned to consciously overcome the blink reflex and keep their eyes open underwater for orientation. It is important to understand the severe health implications that this can have in an emergency. It only takes a canoe to capsize, a lilo to accidentally flip over or a fall from a jetty for a serious swimming accident to occur. And imagine that the people close by have also never learned to swim underwater with their eyes open.

Can my child participate in swimming lessons if they have allergies?

This question can only be answered if you know what allergen causes the allergy and how severe it is. Being in water can provide relief to people with pollen allergies because there are fewer allergens immediately next to water. However, in severe cases or in cases of high sensitivity, the chlorine can also exacerbate problems. Please therefore always consult your doctor and make a joint decision with your child about participation in swimming lessons.

What swimwear is allowed?

Movements in water only generate forward propulsion if water resistance is as low as possible and the necessary movements can be carried out without restrictions. That is why tight-fitting swimwear (swimming trunks, swimming costume) are preferable to looser

fitting textiles with lots of fabric. Moreover, the water-saturated fabric is heavy and can make it harder to get out of the water. Please always feel free to discuss any questions you may have with your swimming instructor to find a suitable solution.

Why are water wings not suitable when learning to swim?

Water wings create buoyancy which in turn causes an almost vertical body position in the water. This fundamentally goes against the aim of learning to swim because no effective forward propulsion can be generated. Furthermore, the apparent safety often later leads to a deep-seated fear when no longer wearing water wings. Along with the unfavourable body position, learning to swim then becomes a difficult undertaking and requires much more time and energy from the swimming instructor when teaching in a class setting.

What rules are there regarding piercings and other body jewellery?

The answer here is very simple. The same rules apply as for sports lessons. Any body jewellery has to be removed beforehand to prevent injury.

My child has earache after swimming lessons. What should I do?

If your child regularly has ear pain during or after swimming lessons, please consult an ear, nose and throat doctor to examine the underlying medical cause, as there can be a number of causes.

Is it necessary to also report minor injuries?

Minor (superficial) injuries without direct resulting expenses are documented in the “first-aid book”. This entry provides proof if claims are made with the insurance institution due to later complications.

Holding your breath

People who can hold their breath for a long time are well prepared for later activities in the water (swimming, diving, surfing) and in everyday life. Who can hold their breath the longest? Who can run the furthest while holding their breath?



Out of the water:

1. breath out slowly and deeply
2. breath in slowly and deeply
3. hold your breath calmly
4. calmly breath in again

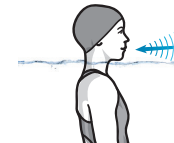
Breathing out against resistance

Blowing objects away through a straw, blowing up balloons, blowing bubbles, blowing a table tennis ball away in water. They all help to strengthen the lungs!



Breathing out into water

Try to simulate lots of breathing out exercises into the water. Ideally breathing out through the mouth and nose at the same time.



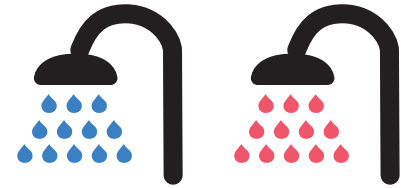
Vary breathing rhythms

Practice various breathing rhythms at home in different ways. Here are some examples [Breathing exercise 1](#), [Breathing exercise 2](#) etc.



Experience changing water temperatures

Whether in the shower, bath or wash basin. Changing water temperatures are important for the circulation and blood vessels. And for swimming as well!



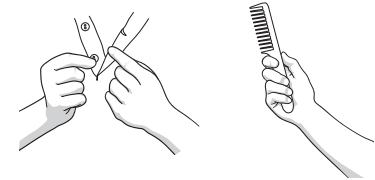
Soap, shower gel and co.

Swimming pool hygiene is important Practice getting showered quickly and using and rinsing off soap with your child.They will have to be able to do this on their own without supervision at the pool.



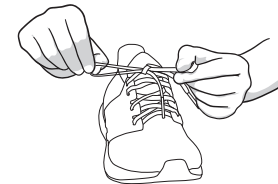
Getting changed quickly

Experience tells us that children take most time getting changed. The rule here is also: Getting undressed and dressed quickly means more time in the pool.



Tying shoelaces

Your child should be able to tie their shoes correctly by the time they start school. That often also leads to noticeable delays after swimming lessons.



What floats, what sinks?

Discuss the subject of water with your child in all imaginable situations. Only if your child knows why ducks float and stones sink can they later apply that knowledge to themselves in swimming lessons.

The garden hose

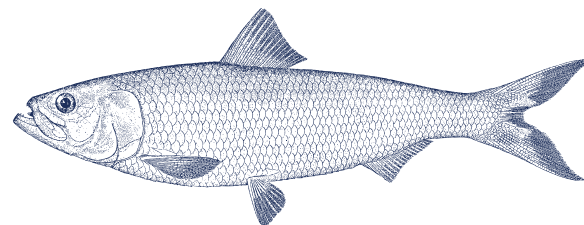
Nothing is more fascinating to children than a garden hose. Your child can also learn a lot about water and its properties there, too. Water pressure, water temperature, holding your breath: all important experiences for learning to swim.

How do fish breathe?

A simple question, but sometimes difficult to answer. Prepare yourselves as parents for typical questions that children ask! Be a role model and if at times you don't know the answer, look into the subject in more depth. There is plenty to discover and learn.

Safety by water

Look around and explain to your child why there might be a sign banning something by a lake. Or why jumping into unknown waters is absolutely forbidden and what to do if something does happen!



Downpour

What can you do if the water is running down the road after a rain shower? Of course, go outside with your children to see what water can do all by itself.



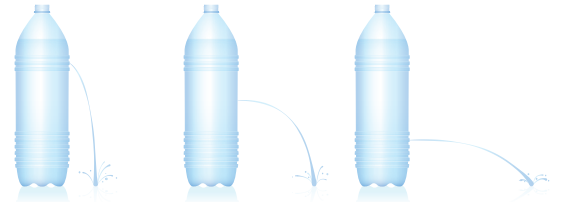
There's nothing quite like a boat trip!

Activities on the water are great fun. But you should nevertheless always be aware of the possible dangers. Supervision, caution and suitable clothing (life vest) are the perfect recipe for exciting adventures by, in and on the water.



Physics is also fun

Water is fascinating Whether an ice cube in a cup of tea, rain falling from the sky, in Grandma's tasty soup, or a snowflake in winter. Explore the world with your child and look into the physical links between things.



The swimming pool

Take your child to the swimming pool as often as possible. Varied experiences in the water are important and offer perfect opportunities to practice the techniques that will be used in swimming lessons with your child.







Title:	Teaching and learning swimming in primary school Information and tips for parents
Publisher:	evoletics® media - ein Verlag der science on field GmbH
Editors:	Dr. Detlef Beise, Hans-Jürgen Gruner
Authors:	Dr. Detlef Beise, Hans-Jürgen Gruner
Cover design:	Illustration: evoletics®
Copyright:	science on field GmbH, 2021

This publication and all its component parts are copyright protected. No unauthorised use without the permission of the publisher and authors. This applies in particular to electronic or other reproduction.