

What is Franco's Fit Swim?

Franco's Fit Swim is an organized program of swimming for adults 19 and older. Members practice together several days a week as a team, with coaching at every practice. The special benefits of joining Franco's Fit Swim include the expertise and personal attention received from the coach, the motivation and camaraderie of swimming with a group, and the flexibility of service to all levels of swimmers.

Regardless of whether you are just starting out as a new swimmer, or are a current or former competitive swimmer, participating in Fit Swim will make you a better swimmer and increase your overall fitness level. You will see dramatic results that are simply not achievable by swimming laps on your own.

Who are Fit Swim members?

Any Franco's member, 19 or over can join Fit Swim. Franco's Fit Swim has over 25 members that range between the ages of early 20s to late 70s and ability ranges from brand new swimmers who have never trained in the pool to competitive swimmers with former collegiate experience.

Franco's Fit Swim program is committed to the needs of its members who range in age from 19 to 90 and with 6 months to 70 years of swimming experience. Because we all have careers and families, our time is precious. Therefore, each member's ability to participate in the program will vary based on other commitments, needs, and obligations. Although practices are offered every day except Sunday, you may choose to participate in practice on fewer days than those offered. Our program comprehends these realities and values each individual's participation regardless of skill or number of activities attended. Our coaches will work with you to understand and help you achieve your objectives.

What are the benefits of membership?

Franco's Fit Swim provides year round opportunities to increase physical fitness, improve stroke technique, receive regular coaching, and participate in social activities. Also, Franco's Fit Swim provides a setting to further develop swimming skills and physical conditioning. It is also a great program for experienced swimmers and those interested in competing. Participation in competitive events is NOT mandatory. The coaches are capable of working with swimmers who have just begun to swim as a fitness activity as well as those who have competed at the highest levels. The workout schedule is intended to accommodate the time demands of busy adults.

Do I have to compete?

Everyone has his or her own reason for belonging - health, fitness, camaraderie, fun, the thrill of competition, travel and coaching are but a few. Those who wish to compete become members of United States Masters Swimming. "Masters" does not imply any skill level, but simply the fact that the swimmer is at least 19 years old. Here's a link to the United States Masters website for more information: <http://www.usms.org/>

The local masters swimming organization is Southern Masters Swimming, which is comprised of all competitive masters swimmers in Louisiana and Mississippi. Southern Masters Swimming offers three major swim meets each year, short course yards, held in March/April, long course yards, held in June/July, and short course meters, held in December. These meets are typically conducted in New Orleans, Baton Rouge or Lafayette. For more information on local meets, the Southern Masters website is <http://www.southernmastersswimming.org>.

About 60% of our Fit Swim swimmers compete in swimming meets and triathlons on a regular basis. For those who are serious competitors, there are an incredible number of opportunities to test your skill and conditioning. In addition to the local Southern Masters meets, there are national competitions, lake and ocean open water swims, postal meets, triathlons, special events and international championships.

A recent U.S. Masters Swimming national championship meet drew 2,400 participants. It was the largest swimming meet ever held in North America. An international Masters championship in Japan ranks as the largest swimming meet ever. But if competing isn't your style, there's no need to feel pressured. Many Masters swimmers are simply interested in the regular routine of working out.

Tell me a little more about the competition.

Masters swimmers compete against others of the same sex in their age group. The age groups are organized by five-year increments (19-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, etc. to 95 and over). Events include 50, 100, 200, 500, 1000 and 1650 freestyle (400, 800 and 1500 in meters) 50, 100 and 200 backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly and 100, 200 and 400 individual medleys. There are also freestyle and medley relays for men, women and/or mixed teams. Open water swims are held in most locales during the summer and can range in distance from one to ten miles. Special events such as seeing how far you can swim in one hour are contested locally with results mailed in so you can see how you stack up against others from across the country.

While masters swimmers swim their hardest at meets, the primary emphasis is on teams rather than individuals, and on having fun. In fact, the majority of those swimming at meets were never competitive swimmers before they became adults.

USMS hosts two national championship meets a year. A short course (25 yard pool) championship is held in May and a long course (50 meter pool) championship is held in August. These four-day events rotate to different locations around the country.

International championships are conducted periodically by Masters swim organizations in countries throughout the world.

While health and physical fitness are the biggest rewards, proficient competitions can garner a host of awards and recognition. World and U.S. records, Top Ten and All America rankings, All Star status and national champion are accomplishments recognized by USMS. Medals, ribbons and trophies are a part of many competitions and are awarded to all age groups.

How are the workouts organized?

One of the greatest benefits of Franco's Fit Swim is to be able to practice with an organized group. Practices are structured to accommodate beginners, tri-athletes, and experienced swimmers with the use of interval training which allows you to practice with the team as a group, but at a pace which is suitable for your level. No matter how slow or fast you are, you will stay part of the group during practice.

There is no question that the motivation and instruction a coach provides is a powerful advantage. Research has also shown that interval training has innumerable benefits over simple lap swimming, and structured workouts will produce far superior results as compared to simple lap swimming on your own. It is important to remember that you're in charge of your own program. From the most rudimentary of lap swimming routines to training for competitions or special events, Franco's Fit Swim is structured to support you.

What does it cost and how do I sign up?

Just come try it out for a week. If you like it, and wish to continue the coach will have you sign a registration form. The monthly fee of \$40

When are the practices?

- Monday Tuesday Wednesday and Friday mornings at 6:00am -7:00am
- Tuesday Thursday evenings at 6:00pm – 7:00pm (winter)
5:30pm -6:30pm (summer)

- Saturday morning at 7:00am – 8:00am

Is it healthy to exercise that hard as you get older?

It's true that the thrill of competition can produce some anxiety in the form of "butterflies," but study after study has proven that regular exercise can significantly contribute to your health. Swimming has continually been identified as the best way to exercise. Stress reduction, weight control, cardiovascular fitness, reduced cholesterol, muscle tone and endurance are all positively influenced by exercise. Adult swimmers swear by it.