

WOODBINE SWIM TEAM

Parent & Family Handbook

Tri-County Summer Swim Season

Welcome to the Woodbine Swim Team

Dear Woodbine Swim Families,

Welcome to another exciting summer swim season! Whether your family is joining us for the first time or returning for another year, we are thrilled to have you as part of our team.

The Woodbine Swim Team is more than a competitive swim program. It is a community built on teamwork, sportsmanship, hard work, friendship, and fun. Summer swimming teaches children valuable life lessons that extend far beyond the pool deck. Swimmers learn discipline, perseverance, goal setting, accountability, and confidence while creating friendships that often last a lifetime.

This handbook has been developed to help families understand how our team operates, what to expect throughout the season, and how you can help make the experience positive for every swimmer.

We encourage you to read this handbook carefully and refer to it throughout the season.

Go Gators!

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Woodbine Swim Team is to provide a safe, positive, and competitive environment where swimmers can develop their athletic abilities, build character, strengthen friendships, and foster a lifelong love of swimming.

We strive to:

- Develop swimmers of all skill levels.
 - Promote sportsmanship and respect.
 - Encourage teamwork and personal growth.
 - Teach responsibility and commitment.
 - Create a welcoming environment for all families.
 - Celebrate effort, improvement, and achievement.
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Team Philosophy

Winning is important, but development is our priority.

The Woodbine Swim Team believes that every swimmer contributes to the success of the team. While some swimmers may qualify for championship meets and others may be learning their first legal stroke, each athlete deserves encouragement, support, and opportunities to improve.

Our coaches focus on:

- Technique development
- Skill progression
- Confidence building
- Goal setting
- Team spirit
- Love of the sport

Success is measured not only by ribbons and medals, but also by personal improvement, sportsmanship, and dedication.

About Tri-County Swimming

The Tri-County Swimming Association is the governing organization for summer swimming in Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester Counties.

The league consists of 34 summer swim clubs, including Woodbine.

Tri-County oversees:

- League rules
- Divisional alignments
- Championship qualification standards
- Meet administration
- Official training and certification

The Tri-County Championship Meet is held annually during the first weekend of August and brings together the fastest swimmers from all participating clubs.

For league information, records, qualifying times, and championship updates, visit:

www.tricoswim.org

Team Organization & Communication

The Woodbine Swim Team is operated through the combined efforts of coaches, parent volunteers, club leadership, and the Tri-County Representative.

Primary Team Contact

Molly Woltjen

Tri-County Representative

Email:

Tricorep@woodbineswimclub.com

Questions regarding schedules, meets, volunteering, and general team operations should be directed to the Tri-County Representative.

Families should regularly monitor:

- Team emails
- Website announcements
- Practice updates
- Meet information

Communication is critical during the short summer season.

Age Groups & Swimmer Development

Swimmers are grouped according to age.

Practice groups include:

- 5–8
- 9–10
- 11–12
- 13–14
- 15–18

Most swimmers experience alternating "up years" and "down years."

Up Year

The swimmer is among the oldest in the age group.

Down Year

The swimmer is among the youngest in the age group.

Both experiences are valuable. Younger swimmers learn from older teammates, while older swimmers gain confidence and leadership opportunities.

Practice Expectations

Consistent practice attendance is one of the strongest predictors of swimmer improvement.

Practice schedules are posted on the Swim Team page.

Parents Are Welcome

Parents may observe from the designated seating area.

To allow coaches to focus on instruction:

- Avoid conversations with coaches during practice.
- Save questions for before or after practice.
- Allow swimmers to focus independently.

Practice Attire

For practices:

- Any appropriate one-piece swimsuit is acceptable.

For meets:

- Team suits are encouraged.
- Team suits are updated approximately every two years.
- To purchase the team suit, visit our shop: <https://www.swimoutlet.com/collections/woodbine>
- Swimmers who choose not to purchase a team suit may wear a black or navy competition suit.

Summer Camp Conflicts

Evening practices are offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays for swimmers unable to attend morning practices.

Meet Types & Competition Structure

Throughout the season swimmers may participate in several types of meets.

Dual Meets

Dual meets are competitions between two swim clubs.

Woodbine generally participates in:

- Five A Meets
- Approximately three B Meets

Invitational Meets

Additional meets may include:

- Bob Rueppel Mini Meet
- Joe Crick Midi Meet

These meets provide excellent racing opportunities and are highly encouraged.

Tri-County Championships

The Tri-County Championship Meet concludes the season.

Qualification is earned by achieving established time standards.

Swimmers may compete in:

- Up to two individual events
 - Up to two relay events
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Understanding A Meets and B Meets

A Meets

A Meets are the league's primary competitive meets.

Results determine divisional standings for the following season.

Characteristics include:

- Saturday mornings
- All age groups
- 66 events
- Official scoring
- Relay competition

Coaches select swimmers based on performance and team needs.

B Meets

B Meets focus on development and participation.

Characteristics include:

- Wednesday evenings
- Primarily ages 12 and under
- No relays
- Kickboard races
- Less formal atmosphere

B Meets are excellent opportunities for swimmers and families who are new to competitive swimming.

Meet Day Expectations

Meet days require preparation and flexibility.

Swimmers Should

- Arrive on time
- Check in with coaches
- Bring water
- Eat nutritious meals
- Get adequate sleep
- Listen for event announcements
- Support teammates

Parents Should

- Arrive early
- Volunteer when assigned
- Help swimmers stay organized
- Encourage effort over results
- Cheer positively

Typical meet duration:

- B Meets: 2–2.5 hours
 - A Meets: 2.5–3 hours
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Relays, Scoring & Awards

Relays

Two relay formats are used.

Medley Relay

1. Backstroke
2. Breaststroke
3. Butterfly
4. Freestyle

Freestyle Relay

All four swimmers swim freestyle.

Relay assignments are determined by coaches.

Team Scoring

Individual Events

- 1st Place = 5 points
- 2nd Place = 3 points
- 3rd Place = 1 point

Relay Events

- 1st Place = 7 points
- 2nd Place = 0 points

Awards

A Meets

- Individual ribbons through 4th place
- Relay ribbons for winning teams

B Meets

- Participation ribbons for all swimmers
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Parent Code of Conduct

Woodbine families are expected to represent the team with integrity and sportsmanship.

Parents agree to:

- Support all swimmers.
- Treat coaches respectfully.
- Respect officials and volunteers.
- Demonstrate positive sportsmanship.
- Encourage effort rather than criticize performance.
- Allow coaches to coach.
- Avoid discussing officiating concerns directly with officials.
- Model respectful behavior at all times.

Parents who maintain a positive environment help create a better experience for every swimmer.

Swimmer Code of Conduct

Woodbine swimmers are expected to:

- Show respect to coaches.
- Respect teammates and opponents.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship.
- Follow pool rules.
- Attend practices consistently.
- Listen during instruction.
- Encourage teammates.
- Represent Woodbine positively.

The team succeeds when swimmers support one another.

Volunteer Expectations

The Woodbine Swim Team depends entirely on family involvement.

Every family is expected to contribute volunteer time throughout the season.

Volunteer opportunities include:

Meet Operations

- Timer
- Runner
- Stager
- Place Judge
- Announcer
- Ribbon Writer
- Scorekeeper

Certified Positions

- Starter
- Referee
- Stroke & Turn Official

Team Support

- Pasta Night donations
- Hospitality
- Team events
- Fundraising
- Booster Club activities

A typical meet requires approximately 24 volunteers to operate successfully.

Without volunteers, meets cannot run.

Volunteering is also one of the best ways to meet other families and become part of the Woodbine community.

Swim Meet Officials

Officials ensure fair competition and safe meet operations.

Key positions include:

Referee

The referee oversees the entire meet and ensures compliance with league rules.

Starter

The starter announces events and initiates each race.

Stroke & Turn Officials

These officials observe swimmers to ensure legal stroke technique and turns.

Timers

Timers record swimmer performances.

Place Judges

Place judges verify finish order.

Understanding Disqualifications (DQ)

Disqualifications are part of competitive swimming.

Common reasons include:

- False starts
- Illegal turns
- Illegal finishes
- Improper stroke technique
- Relay takeoff violations

If your swimmer receives a DQ, speak with a coach for clarification and instruction.

Parents should never approach officials regarding calls during a meet.

Frequently Used Swim Terms

A Meet: Primary competitive league meet.

B Meet: Developmental and participation-focused meet.

DQ: Disqualification.

Heat: A group of swimmers competing in the same race.

Lane: Assigned position in the pool.

Leg: One swimmer's portion of a relay.

Personal Best (PB): Fastest time achieved by a swimmer.

Relay: Four swimmers competing together.

Seed Time: Entry time used to organize races.

Warm-Up: Practice swimming before competition begins.

FIRST MEET SURVIVAL GUIDE

For many families, the first swim meet can feel overwhelming. The good news is that everyone felt that way once. By the second or third meet, most families settle into the routine and begin to enjoy the excitement, teamwork, and energy that make summer swimming so special.

What to Bring

For your swimmer:

- Team suit or competition suit
- Goggles (consider bringing a backup pair)
- Two towels
- Water bottle
- Healthy snacks
- Sunscreen
- Team shirt or team apparel
- Extra dry clothes
- Flip-flops or sandals

For parents:

- Folding chairs
- Sunscreen
- Water and snacks
- Hat or visor
- Portable phone charger
- Small bag or cooler

Arrive Early

Warm-ups take place before the official start of the meet. Arriving early gives your swimmer time to:

- Check in with coaches
- Find teammates
- Learn where the team is sitting
- Review event assignments
- Complete warm-ups and stretching

Being early helps reduce stress for both swimmers and parents.

Expect Downtime

Swim meets consist of many short races spread out over several hours. Swimmers may have significant breaks between events.

Consider bringing:

- Books
- Cards
- Coloring supplies
- Quiet games
- Healthy snacks

These items help younger swimmers stay occupied while waiting for their events.

Listen to Coaches and Volunteers

The coaches and parent volunteers work together to make sure swimmers get to the correct events on time. Encourage your swimmer to pay attention to announcements and listen carefully when coaches are gathering swimmers for upcoming races.

Focus on Fun

While competition is part of the sport, the primary goals for new swimmers are learning, improving, and enjoying the experience.

Celebrate:

- Racing for the first time
- Trying a new stroke
- Swimming a legal race
- Achieving a personal best time
- Supporting teammates

Every swimmer develops at a different pace.

Team Communication via GameChanger

The Woodbine Swim Team uses the mobile app GameChanger as a primary tool for team communication, meet updates, event scheduling, and real-time announcements during the season.

GameChanger helps families stay connected with:

- Practice and meet reminders
- Event sign-ups and attendance tracking

- Last-minute schedule changes
 - Coach announcements
 - Team messaging
 - Live meet updates (when applicable)
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How to Download GameChanger

GameChanger is available for both iPhone and Android devices.

Step 1: Download the App

- iPhone/iPad users: Download from the Apple App Store by searching “GameChanger”
- Android users: Download from the Google Play Store by searching “GameChanger”

You may also visit the official website for more information:

[GameChanger Official Website](#)

How to Create an Account

1. Open the GameChanger app after downloading it.
 2. Tap “**Sign Up**” or “**Create Account.**”
 3. Enter your email address (use one you check regularly).
 4. Create a secure password.
 5. Enter your parent/guardian information as prompted.
 6. Complete your profile setup.
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How to Join the Woodbine Swim Team

After creating your account:

1. Open the app.
2. Use the **search bar** or select “**Join a Team.**”
3. Enter the team name: **Woodbine Swim Team**
4. If prompted, enter the **team invite code or link** provided by the coach or Tri-County Representative.
5. Confirm your request to join.

Once approved, you will begin receiving team updates immediately.

Recommended Settings

To ensure you do not miss important updates:

- Turn ON push notifications
 - Enable email notifications (optional but recommended)
 - Allow calendar syncing for meet schedules
 - Check the “Messages” tab regularly during meet days
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Why We Use GameChanger

GameChanger allows coaches and families to communicate efficiently during a fast-moving summer season. Because swim schedules, weather conditions, and meet logistics can change quickly, having one centralized communication platform helps ensure that families always have the most up-to-date information.

Parent Tip

Set up GameChanger before the first week of practice so you are fully connected before the season begins. This ensures you will not miss early announcements, team reminders, or meet sign-ups.

Final Thoughts

Summer swimming is about much more than race results.

It is an opportunity for children to develop discipline, sportsmanship, confidence, resilience, and lifelong friendships. Every swimmer contributes to the success of the team, whether they are competing in their first kickboard race or qualifying for the Tri-County Championship Meet.

The Woodbine Swim Team believes that success is measured not only by ribbons, medals, and championships, but also by effort, improvement, teamwork, and character. The lessons learned on the pool deck often extend far beyond the summer season and help shape confident, responsible young people.

We encourage every family to become involved, support one another, volunteer when possible, and embrace the unique community that makes Woodbine Swim Club special.

Attend practices regularly. Cheer loudly. Celebrate personal bests. Encourage teammates. Volunteer when you can. Most importantly, enjoy the experience.

The summer season moves quickly, but the friendships, memories, and traditions created through Woodbine Swim Team can last a lifetime.

Thank you for being part of our team. We look forward to an exciting and successful season together.

Go Gators!

Important Dates

- Tuesday, May 26, 2026 - First day of evening practice
- Monday, June 1, 2026 - Parents Meeting
- June 8 - 11, 2026 - Swim Team Open House
- Friday, June 12, 2026 - Time Trials
- Friday, June 19, 2026 - First day of morning practice
- Friday, June 19, 2026 - First Pasta Rally hosted by 15 and Up
- Saturday, June 20, 2026 - A Meet [Haddontowne Swim Club](#)
- Tuesday, June 23, 2026 - The start of alternate/evening practice
- Wednesday, June 24, 2026 - B Meet [Woodbine Swim Club](#) vs Wedgewood
- Saturday, June 27, 2026 - A Meet [Woodbine Swim Club](#) vs Charleston
- Sunday, June 28, 2026 - Gators Car Wash
- Wednesday, July 1, 2026 - Breakfast Pep Rally
- Wednesday, July 1, 2026 - A Meet [Whitman Swim Club](#)
- Sunday, July 5, 2026 - Bob Rueppel Mini Meet
- Tuesday, July 7, 2026 - Picture Day
- Wednesday, July 8, 2026 - B Meet [Woodbine Swim Club](#) vs Gloucester
- Saturday, July 11, 2026 - A Meet [Woodbine Swim Club](#) vs Barclay Farm
- Sunday, July 12, 2026 - Joe Crick Midi Meet
- Wednesday, July 15, 2026 - B Meet [Woodcrest Swim Club](#)
- Saturday, July 18, 2026 - A Meet [Woodbine Swim Club](#) vs Chestnut Run
- Monday July 20, 2026 - Team Beach Day at OCNJ
- July 21 - 24, 2026 - Spirit Week
- July 21 - 24 Swimatons
- Thursday, July 30, 2026 - Swim Team Banquet
- Friday July 31, 2026 - Breakfast Pep Rally for Tri-County
- August 1 - 2, 2026 - Tri-County Championship Meet

For more information, follow us on [GameChanger](#).