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| OtterAquatics_LogoWhite | **Mark Otter**  **Ph: 0438 652 696**  **Email:** [**mark@otteraquatics.com.au**](mailto:mark@otteraquatics.com.au)  **Web:** [**www.otteraquatics.com.au**](http://www.otteraquatics.com.au) |

**Information for the Adult Learn-to-Swim Program**

Do you feel unsafe or uncomfortable in the water? Are you afraid of the water – especially deep water? Perhaps you are one of the many of us who never learnt to swim?

If you are concerned, afraid, anxious, nervous or embarrassed about learning to swim, the hardest part is making contact with me. The rest is easy.

Despite what we Australians like to think about ourselves, there are many of us who can’t swim – or can’t swim properly. There are many reasons for this: perhaps we were brought up in the bush out of reach of a modern pool, perhaps we migrated to Australia from places where swimming is not a normal cultural or sporting pursuit or perhaps we developed a fear of the water from past bad experiences (bad coaches and big brothers have a lot to answer for!).

Given our mild climate, most of us wish to take part in water-based recreational activities, such as at the beach, in a pool, in a boat or fishing from the shore. We must have basic swimming and water safety skills to do all of these – for your own safety and that of others in your care.

Do you know that that fewer than 50 percent of Australian adults can swim properly, meaning that they cannot swim 20-25 metres or so without stopping? And this is all Australians, not just migrants. Our appalling drowning statistics are a sad indictment on the notion of the good swimmers that we imagine ourselves to be.

Mark Otter is at home in the water – true to his surname. He is an experienced, understanding and patient instructor and coach and teaches in a comfortable, non-threatening and non-judgemental way. He can teach you to swim, to improve your swimming skills or to improve your swimming fitness, regardless of your age, level of fitness, existing swimming ability or degree of comfort in the water. While he specialises in adult learn-to-swim instruction and swimming improvement coaching, he is well experienced in teaching swimming to people of all ages, from babies to oldies.

Mark has been a pool and open water swimmer for many years and, after a long professional career, took up swimming instruction out of an interest to pass on his passion for the water. He is a former surf lifesaver and a former trainer of pool lifeguards and surf lifesavers. He has a number of qualifications relevant to his current role:

* AUSTSWIM-qualified Teacher of Swimming and Water Safety
* AUSTSWIM-qualified Teacher of Swimming to Adults
* AUSTSWIM assessor (of trainee swimming teachers)
* Swimming Australia-qualified coach.

**When?**

Our normal classes are held on **Sunday mornings**. They each run for one hour - 9am, 10am and 11am. Our program runs throughout the year except for a short break over Christmas and in most winters when our European swimming trips occur.

**Where?**

In summer we swim at Murrumba Downs Aquatic Centre, at the corner of Dohles Rock Road and Ogg Road, Murrumba Downs. It is a 25 metre, nine lane, outdoor heated pool set in very attractive grounds. It also is a clean, well-maintained public pool with changing rooms, toilets and hot showers. There is ample car parking with access off Ogg Road.

In winter, we may swim at other pools. Contact me for details if you want to come in winter.

**Our learn-to-swim philosophy**

All our instruction and coaching is focussed on the individual. There may be other beginners in the pool at the same time but I always focus on an individual’s needs. In fact, our beginners will probably normally be doing different activities from each other. You set your own goals and I will help you achieve them. While I provide a financial incentive for you to keep learning and training, you can start and finish whenever you like; there is no set course length and no term or block fees.

Our learn-to-swim classes are for complete beginners as well as weak swimmers who could be defined as those unable to swim a length of the pool or those unable to breathe properly. A unique feature of my method is that I specialise in teaching those who have a fear of the water. I use recognised psychological and yoga training techniques to encourage my swimmers to learn to relax and overcome anxiety. They really do work! We will also spend time on learning to stay safe in and around the water. I will have you floating on your back by the end of your first lesson, no matter how little previous swimming experience you have had.

Some swimmers want just a few lessons to correct poor technique while others may take more time to learn from scratch – it all depends on what level of proficiency you wish to attain. Each student learns at a different pace. There are a number of swimmers who began some years ago as complete beginners and now return every week to improve their technique and their fitness in the swimfit group.

More advanced swimmers may wish to take part in swimfit/stroke correction sessions or even Open Water Swimming. More details on these sessions are available on the website or contact me.

**Individual (one-on-one) instruction**

While most instruction is held on Sunday mornings, those who would like individual instruction outside of those times can be accommodated at a mutually convenient pool. Please see below for prices for individual instruction.

**What to wear and bring?**

It’s not a fashion event and no one else will take an interest in what you wear. Wear swim wear if you have it – or anything else in which you feel comfortable (shorts and t-shirts or longer, full length clothing are all fine). You may also want to wear a swimming cap or swimming goggles, but these are not essential and I have spares if you don’t own them. Bring a towel and warm clothes to wear afterwards, as being immersed, even in a heated pool, lowers the core body temperature and you may feel cool for a short time afterwards. The water temperature will always be around 26 to 28 degrees.

**Learn-to-Swim Prices**

$30 for a one hour session (there will be others in the pool at the same time)

$60 for a one hour session for individual (one-on-one) instruction (or $45 each for two people)

Payment may be made by cash on the day or by bank transfer beforehand (ask me for details).

**Discounted rate**

A 10% discount applies if you pay in advance for ten or more sessions. This is a financial incentive to keep up your training on a regular basis. It is this consistency that delivers real dividends in your swimming ability, your confidence and your fitness.

**Newsletter**

Regular swimmers and interested others will receive a monthly emailed newsletter with information about any venue changes, swimming tips, stories of Australia’s swimming greats, items on the history of swimming, equipment specials (such as goggles and caps) and Otter Aquatics’ swimtour information (see the website for details on swimtours).

**Non attendance and cancellations**

I do not charge a non-attendance fee and I can understand if you can’t make a lesson for sickness, work, family or any other reason. I just ask that, as a matter of courtesy, you give me as much notice as possible to enable me to manage class numbers. If you do not advise me of your non-attendance, I may allocate your place to another swimmer for future lessons.

I will not tell you that you no longer need to come to lessons. You decide yourself if/when you have had enough or when you consider you have reached your goals. When/if that time comes, please let me know so I can reallocate your time slot. Some people want only a few lessons while others want to continually improve their swimming as part of a healthy and fit lifestyle. Many swimmers have been coming every week for years now.

For the Murrumba Downs pool (or any other open air pool), I do not cancel lessons if it is raining (actually, it is quite nice to swim in the rain!), but we do evacuate the pool if there is lightning as there is a risk of electrocution. If this is the case, I will send an sms message to all remaining swimmers for that day advising that lessons are cancelled.

Please email me on [mark@otteraquatics.com.au](mailto:mark@otteraquatics.com.au) or give me a call on 0438 652 696 if you want to discuss your swimming plans or to book your place. For new starters, I will send you a registration/medical form for you to complete and bring with you at your first session. This is a standard swimming industry requirement.

I look forward to seeing you in the water.

Mark Otter

