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Information for Adult Stroke Correction, Swimfit and Open Water Swimming Training Sessions

Are you a competent swimmer who wants to improve your swimming technique?

Perhaps you are tired of expensive and ineffectual fitness centres and want to improve your fitness in the safe and effective way that only swimming can do?

Or maybe you are bored with swimming laps, constrained by having to turn every 25 or 50 metres ('the tyranny of the wall') and want to extend your swimming distance in a natural environment. Ever thought of trying Open Water Swimming (OWS) – perhaps for triathlons, open water competition or just for the sheer pleasure of 'being out there'?

In addition to its adult learn-to-swim program, Otter Aquatics runs pool-based stroke and correction, technique advice and swimfit sessions as well as OWS training.

Whatever your swimming ability, I can help you improve.

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 for whom swimming may not have been part of normal cultural or sporting pursuits. Our appalling drowning statistics are a sad indictment on the notion of the good swimmers that we imagine ourselves to be.

Swim better with an otter

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.

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 and surf lifeguards. 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?

Pool training sessions are currently held on **Wednesday** and **Sunday mornings**. All sessions run for an hour with the Sunday sessions starting at 9am, 10am and 11am and the Wednesday session at 8am. Our program runs throughout the year except for a short break over Christmas and in some winters when our European swimming trips occur.

Where?

Our **Sunday summer pool venue** (September to April) is Murrumbidgee Aquatic Centre, at the corner of Dohles Rocks Road and Ogg Road, Murrumbidgee. 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 and hot showers. There is ample car parking which is accessed off Ogg Road.

Our **Sunday winter pool venue** (May to August) is Redcliffe War Memorial Swimming Pool at the corner of Oxley Avenue and Sydney Street, Redcliffe. It is an eight lane 50 metre indoor heated pool. It is a clean, well maintained public pool with changing rooms and hot showers. There is parking to the side the pool with access in Sydney Street or Oxley Avenue.

Our **Wednesday winter pool venue** is Emily Seebohm Aquatic Centre in Telegraph Road Fitzgibbon. It is a modern 25 metre six lane outdoor heated pool.

Our **Wednesday summer pool venue** is Deception Bay Aquatic Centre on the corner of Deception Bay Road and Bailey Road, Deception Bay. It is a 50 metre, eight lane outdoor unheated pool.

Our **Open Water Swimming (OWS)** venues are normally Queens Beach North, Scarborough and Scotts Point Beach, Margate – for more information, see below.

Coaching philosophy

All instruction and coaching is focussed on the individual's needs aimed at helping you reach your goals, whether it be improving your times, your distances, your overall fitness, swimming more efficiently or just enjoying the water more. I prepare a constantly varying and graduated fitness program which caters for all abilities by allocating swimmers to lanes according to their ability.

While I provide a financial incentive for you to keep training, you can start and finish whenever you like; there is no set course length and no term or block fees. Some swimmers want just a few lessons to correct poor technique while others become hooked (some of our swimmers have been coming weekly for years).

What to wear and bring?

Wear normal swimming gear – speedos, jammers, one or two-piece swimmers, etc. I don't mind if you wear shirts, boxers, boardies or voluminous clothing but they will only hold you back. I will provide all training aids (fins, pull-buoys, kickboards, hand paddles

and a few other 'fun' bits and pieces) – but you can bring your own if you wish. You may want to wear a swimming cap or swimming goggles, but these are not essential and I have spares if you don't have them. Bring a towel and warm clothes to wear afterwards, as being immersed, even in warm water, lowers the core body temperature and you may feel cool for a short time afterwards. The water temperature in the pool will always be around 26 to 28 degrees. There are hot showers as well as change and toilet facilities within the pool complexes.

For OWS, the conditions will be as we find them – one of the delights of OWS. There are cold water showers at the beach. If the weather or the water is cold, you may wish to wear a wetsuit. In any case, bring warm clothing to put on afterwards.

Types of sessions

a. Swimfit/Stroke Correction

These are squad-type group session designed to improve swimming technique as well as cardio-respiratory fitness. We concentrate on techniques of the main competitive strokes: freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke (and butterfly if you really want it), but with an emphasis on freestyle as it is the most efficient stroke. I will also include some water safety instruction and teach some survival and rescue strokes. Weekly sessions offer a constantly changing routine of stroke correction through to cardio-respiratory conditioning, strength training and improving endurance. It will cater for those who can swim at least 25 metres non-stop all the way up to long distance, competitive or triathlete levels.

I will allocate swimmers into different lanes depending on ability. Normally there will be no more than about six in the pool at any one time. Any more and I will schedule additional sessions.

I will prepare training programs for each level to cater for swimmers to progress gradually over a number of weeks and with a variety of training techniques and training aids to improve fitness and to retain interest. Training is individualised and non-competitive. The aim will be to extend yourself a little each week to improve your fitness. How hard you push yourself is up to you. You do what you are able or want to do. Oh yes, and we have fun!

b. Open water swimming (OWS) training

I offer instruction in OWS aimed at triathlete aspirants, those interested in competing in the increasing number of ocean swimming events available these days or those who just wish to swim away from chemically-treated water or to avoid the 'tyranny of the wall'

(having to turn every 25 or 50 metres), losing count in the process and having to follow that endless black line. Have you ever considered that long-distance open water swimming is really a form of meditation? You will finish your swim totally relaxed – OWSers often say that they let all their cares and worries pass from their mind into the water. Once you make the transition, you will see that this is real swimming and that pool swims are just training for the real thing (this is my bias of course). Some swimmers want to introduce themselves to OWS in order to prepare themselves for Otter Aquatics' domestic and international swimming tours.

Open water swims are generally held three times weekly throughout the year. **Tuesday** and **Thursday** swims are at Scotts Point Beach Margate and Saturday swims are at **Queens Beach North, Scarborough**. All starts are at **8am or 9am** (check with me first if you plan to come). The times and distances swum in all swims is totally up to those present but normally go for about an hour and range from one to three kilometres with plenty of opportunity to pull out beforehand if you wish. Water temperatures are a pleasant 22-23 degrees in summer but drop to 16 degrees or so in winter – you will probably want to wear a wetsuit at those times.

For those new to OWS, I will allocate about 30 minutes time before the above swimming times to introduce you to our few rules (these are important to ensure our safety). For those familiar with OWS but new to our group, please ask me to send you our 'non-rules'. These sessions will be held only if there is a demand – so please phone or text me no later than the evening before if you plan to come. There will be a mix of on-the-beach training to discuss such things as fear of the open water/relaxation, navigation/sighting techniques and handling rough conditions – as well as actually doing it in the water.

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, stories on the history of swimming, equipment specials (such as goggles and caps) and Otter Aquatics' swimming holiday information (see the website for details of swimming holidays).

Non attendance and cancellations

For the pool sessions, I do not charge a non-attendance fee and I can understand if you can't make a lesson for sickness, work or family reasons. I just ask that, as a matter of courtesy, you give me as much notice as possible to enable me to manage classes. 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. No matter how good a swimmer you may be, everyone can improve with coaching. Some swimmers have been coming every week for years now.

I do not cancel lessons at Murrumba Downs pool if it is raining (actually, it is quite nice to swim in the rain!), but we do evacuate the pool (or the open water) 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.

Prices

Stroke correction and Swimfit:	\$20ea
OWS Instruction:	\$10ea

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 and your fitness. Sessions do not have to be taken consecutively.

Please email me on 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.

I look forward to seeing you in the water.

Mark Otter



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