

Swim Wales Safety Guidance

Jumping into Shallow Water

Jumping into a swimming pool is a pre-cursor skill for several water-based activities and should only be taught by someone with appropriate qualifications and experience.

Recognising that impact with the pool floor can injure the ankles, and lower spine is essential.

The activity must be taught with care and consider the following factors:

- The depth of the water where the entry is being made
- The height of the freeboard (height of the poolside above the water)
- The size and weight of the pupil making the entry
- The age and health/medical condition of the person making the entry
- The type of jump the pupil is being asked to perform

All those performing a jumping entry should be taught to land correctly and how to recover themselves if overbalancing occurs. In addition, the importance of bending the knees on impact with the bottom should be stressed. However, jumping should only be performed into water of an appropriate depth.

Recommended minimum depth for simple jumping entries:

These apply to simple feet-first entries and straddle jumps and not specific types of jumps, which require the person involved to gain additional height from the pool surround, i.e. pike, tuck, straight/vertical entry:

- Those in the early stages of learning to swim should only be taught to jump in a minimum depth of 1.0-metre.
- Those confident in deeper water (between 1.0m and 1.5m) and are normally aged between 8 and 12 years or adults in the early stage of learning to swim should be taught to jump in water of at least chest depth.
- Those over 12 years or confident in water out of their depth; should be taught to jump into water of at least 1.5 metres in depth
- Jumping should not be taught from a freeboard with a height exceeding 0.38-metres, including starting blocks or other raised platforms.

Water depths for Learn to Swim Wales Poolside Diving and Jumping Awards should ideally be at least the pupil's full height plus arms and fingers fully extended.

Regardless of the minimum depths required for jumping, a logical/dynamic risk assessment should determine that the deepest part of the pool available and suitable for both the activity and the pupil should be used.

Swim Wales acknowledges the input from Swim England on the production of this guidance and is grateful to them for sharing to ensure consistency across our Home Nations.

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