

SWIM WALES DRILL PROGRESSIONS FRAMEWORK- FRONTCRAWL

NO	DRILL TITLE	COACHING EXPLANATION	TOOLS
1	BODY POSITION KICK (arms by side & Rotation)	Place the face in the water, eyes looking down and slightly forwards allowing the hips and the heels to rise so that the body is horizontal. Pull the tummy towards the surface engaging the core. Kick gently with the heels bubbling on the surface. When adding in the rotation the kick will need additional effort to maintain position without sinking too low in the water.	Fins (soft & flexible) Snorkel to encourage body position
2	TORPEDO KICK (hip led rotation)	This drill is essential to maintaining a basic streamlined shape for all strokes. A beginner may find it easier to start on their backs due to breathing constraints. Focus on the body position as on drill 1 and raise the arms into streamline. Watch out of common faults such as the upper back rounding and lifting out of the water and the lower back sinking. Try to maintain a flat position.	Fins soft for precision and core development, Hard for power and speed
3	SINGLE ARM KICK	Encourage the swimmer to elongate their body from fingertip to toe. Rotate from the hips and shoulders to a 45deg angle ensuring that the swimmer maintains their head and body position. Pressing down with the fingertips will promote a strong catch position.	Fins, snorkel, Finger paddles (to work on press at catch)
4	SINGLE ARM KICK & SWITCH 12/6	Start the length by kicking 12 kicks on the single arm drill. At this point recover the arm, first sliding the hand up past the hip with the elbow raising to the ceiling. Rotate the shoulder forwards, sweeping the hand through past the head and then entering the water with clean precision in order of fingertips - wrist - elbow – extend. Once this is mastered reduce the kicks between the switch to 6.	Fins, snorkel & finger paddles progressing to hand paddles to ensure extended stroke.
5	RECOVERY SWITCH Low / 90 deg / Ext	It is essential when coaching this drill that you do not sacrifice the horizontal body position and length of stroke. After every arm pull this is reset. This drill develops the catch of the stroke in line with the athlete's strength progressing to a straight arm catch which is more suited to shorter events such as the 50m free depending on the frame of the athlete and their swimming style.	Fins, Snorkel, Paddles (low) Fins, snorkels, Paddles (90deg) Fins Snorkels, Paddles (Ext)
6	SINGLE ARM PULL (arms by side)	This drill is often ignored, it takes time and discipline to perfect. This should be a focus of the coach as this drill is critical for maintaining balance of rotation and propulsive force and preventing injury by removing over use of one side of the body. Head position on this drill important and allows the swimmer to fully understand the effects of too much head movement to the stroke.	Fins, Snorkel (but remove to help athlete understand head position & breathing technique)
7	FINGERTRAIL	This is a popular drill amongst coaches and swimmers but must be used correctly to link the above drills into a smoother swimming style. Ensure the stroke is long and relaxed and that the recovery is utilised to provide much needed energy saving when swimming with full efforts. The hand should be relaxed and only tense on the precision of hand entry and the propulsive phase.	Fins & Snorkel
8	WATER POLO SWIM	Keeping the head still and chin on the surface and try to maintain a high hip position. This is a strength & power drill that will help develop the swimmers high elbow and catch position. When the head is elevated it encourages a shorter stroke allowing the swimmer to work within their own range of strength rather than over reaching. Short Bursts are recommended with max kick.	FINS, (firm for power development) Hand Paddles for senior swimmers only.
9	FRONT CRAWL PULL	On the video this is demonstrated without a pull bouy to show perfect pulling, using core strength, balance and coordination. Please progress to this from Pull bouy, to pull boy and band, to band only, to none. By following the progression within this drill and all of the above coaching points you will develop a very strong athlete. Very gradually introduce loading with finger, hand, large paddles	Pull bouy, Band Snorkel, Finger, hand, large Paddles. Parachute, drag wheel
10	3/4 CATCHUP	Timing is critical on his drill. Normal Catchup is often a popular choice but does not allow for hip rotation or extended catch. A flat catch position is also a difficult starting point for developing swimmers normally leading to a dropped elbow. Ensure that the swimmer STOPS, before hand entry! And then at speed and with precision completes the full stroke This allows the hips to engage with the catch with forward drive on entry and on the opposite arm length of stroke past the hips is ensured.	Snorkel, Fins, A Parachute can emphasize the need to drive hips through.
11	SLOW MOTION	In slow motion common faults are exaggerated and should be more easily identified by the coach, pay particular attention to individual athletes on this drill. All of the previous considerations and principles apply. This drill should not be done with equipment as this aids their performance.	No Equipment
12	POWER ON / POWER OFF	Encourage the swimmer to apply power in the propulsive phase whilst either using power on / off or repeating the words Slow & Fast whilst swimming. A slow strong catch, fast propulsion are necessary. Maintain precision of hand entry.	Any equipment

There are variations and progressions of all of these skill elements. I would encourage everyone to explore, challenge and check within your coaching communities.

This framework aims to guide and outline principles of how to achieve world class technique with club development and performance swimmers ensuring the quality of the technique helps smooth transitions through growth and athletic development. The swimmer should be encouraged to understand the relationship between swimming technique & land conditioning. This is not meant to be a measure of how good someone is, just a framework to assess your readiness to train Frontcrawl