

Survival backstroke



Lifesaving
education programs

Extension for survival swimming

Participants will learn the survival swimming stroke of survival backstroke.

Equipment:

- ☐ Flotation devices (i.e., kickboards, pool noodles)

Video demonstration



- 1 Demonstrate the arm and leg action for survival backstroke on land before entering the water.
- 2 Have participants lie down on grass or soft sand and practise the movements.
- 3 Lead the participants into the water and break into small groups with one helper per group.
- 4 In small groups, practise survival backstroke by incorporating one skill/ movement at a time (arms first, then legs)
- 5 Have participants practise survival backstroke techniques. As they grow in confidence, encourage them to add the glide.
- 6 Some participants may prefer to begin with a small board or flotation device on their chest.
- 7 Students then demonstrate stroke while wearing a lifejacket.

Survival backstroke

- To perform survival backstroke, they should lie horizontally in the water on their back with both ears in the water.
- Hips should be kept close to, but slightly below water level.
- Knees should remain close to, but slightly below, water level
- Explain that survival backstroke has three parts – the recovery, the kick and the glide. Or soldier, chicken, airplane, snap!
- The Recovery: legs bend at the knees downwards, with the knees slightly apart.
- The Kick: The feet then move in an outward circular motion, with the feet meeting together at the glide position.
- The Glide: The swimmer holds the position as they glide through the water. Repeat.