

ATTENTION ALL SUMMER LEAGUE SWIMMERS

JOIN THE GATOR SWIM TEAM AND LET THE FUN CONTINUE

All Year!

Practices Available in Cape Girardeau and Ste. Genevieve for your convenience

Summer league is almost over, and we hope that your swimmer has enjoyed all the benefits swimming has to offer. Above all, we hope he or she had fun practicing, competing and getting in shape.

We would like to extend an invitation to all swimmers from all teams to continue developing the physical, emotional and intellectual skills that are part of this great sport by joining the Gator Swim Team's year-round *USA Swimming* program, the longest-running swim program in Southeast Missouri.

The Gator Swim Team is committed to teaching young people excellence in swimming and in life by providing a comprehensive program that serves all levels of competitive swimming. This year-round competitive program is comprised of athletes in 5 different training groups, covering a wide range of preparation and skills.

Our training philosophy focuses on long term swimmer development to fulfill all the benefits that swimming has to offer. Some Gator swimmers have reached the highest levels of competition in the sport, while others have been just as happy to be part of a structured environment that preserves the moral values of friendship, loyalty and honesty, along with the numerous health benefits associated with the sport.

Upon joining the team, all year-round swimmers become members of *USA Swimming*, the national governing body for the sport. This membership provides very important medical insurance for every swimmer and allows him/her to compete in *USA* sanctioned meets. Gator swimmers usually compete in Carbondale, Paducah and St. Louis against other teams in our region (Ozark).

See Answers to Frequently Asked Questions on the back 



Gator Swim Team

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Gators' USA Swimming F.A.Q.

Thinking about swimming year-round? Join the Gators' USA Swimming team this fall! Not sure yet? Here are the answers to frequently asked questions about our year-round program.

What are the differences between summer league and USA Swimming in terms of practice and competition?

Summer league is an opportunity to compete locally within a conference made up of teams from Southeast Missouri. *USA Swimming* takes the swimmers' interest into the entire year. To do this, swimmers are provided with a structured environment that allows athletes to improve themselves under the professional supervision of licensed coaches and assistants with years of coaching experience. The swimmer is then allowed to train to meet his or her abilities and goals all through the year rather than just during the summer. In *USA Swimming* the meets are much less frequent with most swimmers going to one meet a month, on average. These meets happen with less frequency but usually last 3 days (starting Friday evening and ending Sunday afternoon). Parents can choose which meets to attend from a list published in advance on the team's web site.

What if my swimmer is too slow?

What if he or she is not "good enough"? All of our swimmers train, compete and improve regardless of their initial skill and ability. The team has swimmers of all ages and ability levels, and they have a great time swimming at the best level that they can achieve. The Gator Swim Team allows swimmers to strive for goals and standards from the first-year beginner to the seasoned veteran. Each and every swimmer benefits from being part of an environment that stresses important life skills like honesty, dedication, respect, responsibility, sportsmanship, trust and pride. Each and every swimmer is accommodated at his or her ability and the team strives to live by the philosophy that there is no "bench" in swimming.

How much does it cost? It depends on the age and ability level of your child. The swimmers with the least ability pay the least, while those that require a higher level of coaching and pool usage bear the greatest expense. Besides the *USA Swimming* membership fee of \$48 per swimmer per year, each swimmer's family will be responsible for a monthly fee that varies according to the age and ability level of the swimmer (see table). Other costs, mostly associated with going to meets, include: meet entries, lodging, travel, food and similar incidental fees. The team has fixed costs and

expenses, and we strive to ensure that the monthly fee is kept as low as possible while providing our swimmers with a professional coaching staff and access to facilities as needed.

What is the practice schedule? Practices during the school year are usually in the evening after school. When school is not in session there will be other practices and scheduling information will be available. Practices are held every day excluding Sunday, and each swimmer will be provided with a practice schedule. See the table below for a tentative fall schedule.

Does my child have to compete? Yes, when the coach determines he or she is ready. The team highly encourages competition. Swimming competitions (swim meets) are meant to test the swimmers and allow them to compete against others. Competition is a great way to see if they have improved technique and fitness. Plus, swimmers get a sense of "accomplishment" when they see the results of their hard work in practice. The meet schedule will be determined in advance. The coach will discuss with you which meets would be best for your swimmer.



What is the time commitment and other expectations from parents? Since the Gator Swim Team is parent-owned and operated, we rely on parents to help with the various aspects of running the team. For most families, this means helping with our meets. We host two *USA Swimming* meets in the spring and one during the summer, plus we co-host a meet in the summer with the *Saluki Swim Team* in Carbondale. Also during the summer the team hosts the SMSC (summer league) championship meet. These meets are also fund raisers that help keep our cost low for all of our swimmers. There is a lot for our parents to do to help in hosting meets and the team has worked to ensure that parents with all sorts of abilities and schedules can help the team and, thus, help their swimmer.

Is it going to conflict with other activities such as dance, soccer, and other sports? Many Gator swimmers take part in other activities and benefit from our flexible schedule. That said, new families learn quickly that in swimming, like other sports, practice does make perfect, so kids themselves learn to be reasonable about everything they do, making this an invaluable lesson in time management that will last a lifetime.

The Gator Swim Team is just that: a swim team. As such we realize that the more time in the pool that the swimmer has the better he or she will be.

	Practice Times			Attendance Goal	Monthly Fee
	Monday-Thursday	Friday	Saturday		
Age Group 3	4:00 - 5:00 pm OR 5:30 - 6:30 pm	No Practice	8:00 - 9:00 am	2-3 days/week	\$50
Age Group 2	6:00 - 7:30 pm	5:30 - 7:00 pm	7:00 - 9:00 am	3-6 days/week	\$65
Age Group 1	6:00 - 8:00 pm	4:00 - 6:30 pm	7:00 - 9:00 am	6 days/week	\$80

This is the practice schedule and fees for the Cape Central pool. Please call for practice times and fees in Ste. Genevieve/Farmington area.

If you need more details, please contact the Gator coaching staff or a board member. For contact info, or to obtain sign up forms, please call (573) 382-2580 or visit our web site.