Effortless Swimming Workouts

Welcome to the Effortless Swimming TriSwimWorkouts manual! In this first month of the program you've got 12 rock-solid, no fluff programs which will help you improve your swimming well beyond where you are currently at. I've personally used these workouts to take a Master's swim squad to two back-to-back national titles and swimmers to dozens of open water medals.

If you're only new or you feel you don't have much experience with a training program, don't fret! We've made the workouts useable for nearly all levels of triathletes starting at level one and moving up to level three. If you are learning to swim, please see a qualified instructor to teach you the basics and be sure to swim in a supervised pool with lifeguards. Always consult your doctor before beginning any exercise program. The last thing we want is for anyone to hurt themselves!

Where to start:

The best place to get started is picking one workout and going through it. Most of the programs are aerobic focused for triathlon training, but we also have a number of speed and back end pace workouts in here too. You will benefit from both, even if your swims are 'distance' swims. Pick any workout in the manual and be adventurous, why not start at #3 or #7 rather than #1?

If you would like to improve your freestyle technique before you begin the program the Mastering Freestyle Program makes you a swim smoother, longer and faster freestyle.

What to do if you can't do one of the strokes?

If you're unable to do one of the strokes and the set includes it (like 8x25 Fly), feel free to do freestyle or another stroke instead. It's good cross training changing strokes. If you would like to improve your form strokes (butterfly, backstroke and breaststroke) go to www.EffortlessForm.com and join the program.

Drills:

In some of the workouts we have included time to do drills. We don't specify which drill to do because it is a very individual thing. If you're stuck for ideas on some drills we've listed some below for you to choose from. If you were lucky enough to get the bonus drills video, please watch that video for ideas.

Freestyle

Catch up drill – This drill is simple and easy to do. Begin by swimming normal freestyle but don't start your pull until your recovery arm has entered the water. This drill helps swimmers 'lengthen' their stroke and remain streamlined throughout the whole stroke.

'Reach for the wall' freestyle – This drill is done for the same reason as catch up drill. It improves the streamline of the swimmer during the freestyle stroke. As your hand enters the water and glides forward after the recovery, drive your hand forward as if you were reaching for the wall and hold it streamlined for 1-2 seconds. Continue with normal freestyle but each time your hand enters, drive it forward and hold for a moment before beginning each pull.

Fingertip drill - This drill is good for freestyle because it emphasizes body roll and a high elbow recovery. During the recovery, keep the fingertips in contact with the surface of the water. You should feel your fingertips "dragging" in the water as they recover.

Breaststroke

One pull, two kicks – This is one of the easiest breaststroke drills but one of the most effective. It improves your glide after each stroke which means you're using less effort by taking less strokes. Simply do a normal breaststroke pull and kick and then rather than coming back up for your next pull, do an extra kick while still gliding forward underwater. This drill can be change to one pull three kicks, one pull four kicks and so on.

Breaststroke pull with butterfly kick – To develop a strong pull, breaststroke can be swam by doing buttery/dolphin kicks instead of breaststroke kicks. It's best to do two buttery kicks to every breaststroke pull.

Pull progression – A common problem among beginner breaststrokers is they don't pull far enough back with their arms. They often only do a 'half' pull which is doesn't provide the maximum power. Pull progression is done by swimming one lap with a quarter pull, one lap with half a pull, one with three quarters pull and one lap with a complete pull. All of these are done with normal kicking and timing, the only difference is you are changing how far back you pull. This drill helps swimmers get a feel for the correct catch and pull.

Backstroke

Single arm drill – Just as in butterfly , single arm drill is fantastic for improving the pull and entry of the stroke. Done correctly, single arm drill can help with body rotation too. Keep one arm by your side and swim backstroke with the opposite arm, concentrating hard on rotating so the shoulder on your stationary arm is rotating to 45-90 degrees while completing your pull. To improve your pull, imagine you are throwing a tennis ball towards your feet. This is a great way to visualize where you should be pulling.

Six kicks, three strokes – As we've mentioned, it's important to keep our body 'long' in the water like a yacht and not wide like a barge. This drill helps us do that. Kick on back with your body rotated to one side and your head looking directly up. Keep one arm by your side and have the other arm pointing to where you're going. You're going to do six kicks on your side and then take three arm strokes with normal kicking. You will then have rotated to your opposite side where I want you to repeat from the start. Take six kicks on your side and then three arms strokes with normal kicking working on having a 'long' body position.

Balancing cup drill – This drill is performed by the 200 backstroke world record holder Ryosuke Irie. If you watch him swim, his head remains completely still and centered. You won't see him throwing his head from side to side which is common among beginners. Balancing cup drill requires a plastic cup that can sit and balance on your forehead. Fill the cup up to 1/3 or 1⁄2 full with water, and then place the cup on your forehead and proceed to swim backstroke. The aim is to not let the cup fall off your head. By keeping your head stationary, it keeps the body centered and stops the swimmer from 'snaking'. If you are only starting out with backstroke, this drill is best done with fins.

Butterfly

One arm drill– Being one of the most popular butterfly drills, single arm drill can help you develop a clean hand entry, improve the catch and pull and help you get a feel for the correct timing of the kick. One arm drill is done by keeping one arm out in front of the head and doing the arm stroke with the opposite arm. In the recovery of the arm stroke, instead of keeping the arm straight, bend it as you would in freestyle and work on getting a 'clean' entry as the hand enters the water. It's best to do three left arm strokes, three right arm strokes and then 3 normal butterfly strokes.

Six kicks, two strokes – A strong kick is important in buttery, , and this drill encourages you to work on the kicking aspect. To do this drill, you take two normal butterfly strokes with normal kicking, and then after the two strokes you go underwater in a streamlined/torpedo position and do six dolphin/butterfly kicks. After the six kicks are completed you come back to the surface and perform another two strokes and repeat the process. If you are only starting out, six kicks may be too difficult to do, so begin with 2,3 or 4 kicks instead.

Keyhole drill – This is my personal favorite and for good reason. It helps you work on the pull and the timing of the kick and is a great drill even a beginner can do. To begin, your hands should scull out in front of you where the catch would normally begin. Kick with a light freestyle kick. After 3-4 seconds, pull through the water with both arms as if you were doing a buttery pull through. Your arms should follow the shape of an old-school key hole. At the beginning of the pull,butterfly kick to help you drive through the water and take breath. Bring your hands out in front again by bringing them up the centre of your body. Repeat this until you get to the end of the pool.

Effortless Swimming Workouts

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

There are some terms in the workouts which you might not be familiar with. Here we've listed all the terms and their meaning and provided an example of each one.

Term	Meaning	Example
Build	Build up your speed. Start of easy and get faster towards to the end.	4x100 Build In each 100 you would start off easy and get faster towards the end of the 100.
Build 1-4	Build each one as you go. So the first one is the slowest and the 4th one is the fastest.	4x100 Build 1-4 Your first 100 would be the slowest and your last 100 would be the fastest.
Max / Max Effort / Sprint	As fast as you can go!	2x25 Max Two 25's as fast as you can go
Moderate	Swimming at a comfortable pace	300 moderate Swimming at a comfortable pace for 300 meters
Breathing 3/5 in 50's	This means you breath every 3rd stroke for the first 50 and every 5th stroke for the second 50	300 free breathing 3/5 in 50's Swim 300 meters breathing every 3rd stroke for the odd 50's and every 5th stroke for the even 50's
Drill	Your choice of any drill	8x50 Drill 50's of drill, you can change the drills as you go, they don't need to be the same

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Term	Meaning	Example
(30 sec rest)	Rest for 30 seconds in between	4x100 Free (30 sec rest) Swimming 100's of freestyle and resting for 30 seconds in between each 100 Pick a timeframe for each set and use that rather than counting 30 seconds rest. Example above: If you would come in on 1 minute 20 secs for you 100's, make your time frame 1 minute 50 secs.
@ 95%	Swimming at 95% effort	50 @ 95% Swimming 50 meters at 95% effort
Form	Form means any stroke but freestyle	200 form
Choice	Your choice of any stroke	300 choice Swim 300 meters of any stroke
Min/max free	Normal freestyle but kick as hard as you can and slow down your arms	25min/max free
--Repeat--	Repeat the set listed above	200 free 100 back --Repeat---

Effortless Swimming Workouts

Workout #1 - Aerobic speed

Goal - Control heart through aerobic parts and then pick up the speed in the 100's. Great practice for open water speed.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Warm Up 100 swim 3x100 - 50 Kick / 50 swim - 50 scull / 50 swim - 50 drill / 50 swim Main Set 8x50 Aerobic 100 @ PB +14 6x50 Aerobic 100 @ PB +12 4x50 Aerobic 100 @ PB +10 2x50 Aerobic 100 @ PB + 8 Surprise 100 Max effort! Cool Down 100 of free or back with 6 strokes fast anywhere in each lap	Warm Up 300 swim 3x100 - 50 Kick / 50 swim - 50 scull / 50 swim - 50 drill / 50 swim 3x100 IM Switch - 50 Fly / 50 Back - 50 Back / 50 Breast - 50 Breast / 50 Free 200 easy Main Set 8x50 Aerobic 100 @ PB +14 6x50 Aerobic 100 @ PB +12 4x50 Aerobic 100 @ PB +10 2x50 Aerobic 100 @ PB + 8 Surprise 100 Max effort! Cool Down 200 of free or back with 6 strokes fast anywhere in each lap	Warm Up 400 swim 6x100 - 50 Kick / 50 swim - 50 scull / 50 swim - 50 drill / 50 swim 6x100 IM Switch - 50 Fly / 50 Back - 50 Back / 50 Breast - 50 Breast / 50 Free 200 easy Main Set 8x50 Aerobic 100 @ PB +14 6x50 Aerobic 100 @ PB +12 4x50 Aerobic 100 @ PB +10 2x50 Aerobic 100 @ PB + 8 Surprise 100 Max effort! Cool Down 600 of free or back with 6 strokes fast anywhere in each lap
Total distance: 1.8km **TIme: 30 mins**	**Total distance: 2.6km** **Time: 60 minutes**	**Total distance: 3.7km** **Time: 90 minutes**

Effortless Swimming Workouts

Workout #2 - Aerobic and skills

Goal - Solid heart rate set at aerobic pace with skills practice afterwards

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Warm Up 200 choice Main Set 8x100 Aerobic - First 4 with 15 secs rest - Second 4 with 10 secs rest 50 easy 4x25 Kick (Build 1-4) 4x50 Pull (Build 1-4) 4x25 scull (Build 1-4) Cool Down 50 recovery swim down	Warm Up **2 sets of:** 100 free 4x50's IM order Main Set 12x100 Aerobic - First 6 with 15 secs rest - Second 6 with 10 secs rest 100 easy 4x25 Kick (Build 1-4) 50 easy 4x50 Pull (Build 1-4) 50 easy 4x25 scull (Build 1-4) Cool Down 100 recovery swim down	Warm Up **4 sets of:** 100 free 4x50's IM order Main Set 12x100 Aerobic - First 6 with 15 secs rest - Second 6 with 10 secs rest 200 easy 12x25 Kick (Build 1-4) 100 easy 8x50 Pull (Build 1-4) 100 easy 4x25 scull (Build 1-4) 100 easy Cool Down 300 recovery swim down
Total distance: 1.5km **TIme: 30 mins**	**Total distance: 2.6km** **Time: 60 minutes**	**Total distance: 4km** **Time: 80 minutes**

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Workout #3 - Aerobic speed

Goal - Big aerobic main set with speed inbetween. Work hard in those 50's

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Warm Up 5x100 - Swim - 50 scull / 50 swim - 50 Kick / 50 swim - 50 drill / 50 swim - Build Main Set **4 sets of:** 100 Aerobic *10 secs rest* 50 Fast *30 secs rest* Cool Down 4x50 recovery	Warm Up 5x200 - Swim - 50 scull / 50 swim - 50 Kick / 50 swim - 50 drill / 50 swim - Build Main Set **4 sets of:** 150 Aerobic *10 secs rest* 50 Fast *30 secs rest* ---------- 4x50 Recovery Cool Down 6x50 Odd - Freestyle drill Even - Breathing every 5	Warm Up 10x200 - 2x Swim - 2x 50 scull / 50 swim - 2x 50 Kick / 50 swim - 2x 50 drill / 50 swim - 2x Build Main Set **8 sets of:** 150 Aerobic *10 secs rest* 50 Fast *30 secs rest* ---------- 4x50 Recovery Cool Down 12x50 Odd - Freestyle drill Even - Breathing every 5
Total distance: 1.3km **TIme: 30 mins**	**Total distance: 2.3km** **Time: 60 minutes**	**Total distance: 4.4km** **Time: 90 minutes**

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Workout #4 - Middle Distance

Goal - Quality aerobic/lactate set, working on developing pacing awareness and maintaining speed when fatigued.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Warm Up 100 swim 2x50 of kick/swim 2x50 drill 100 Build Main Set 3x100 @ PB +30 (45 secs rest) 100 recovery 3x100 @ PB + 25 (45 secs rest) 100 recovery 3x100 @ PB + 20 (45 secs rest) Cool Down 100 easy swimming with some backstroke	Warm Up 200 swim 2x100 IM 2x50 of kick/swim 2x50 drill 3x100 Build Main Set 3x200 @ PB +30 (45 secs rest) 100 recovery 3x200 @ PB + 25 (45 secs rest) 100 recovery 3x200 @ PB + 20 (45 secs rest) Cool Down 2x100 easy swimming with some backstroke	Warm Up 400 swim 3x100 IM 6x50 of kick/swim 6x50 drill 3x100 Build Main Set 4x200 @ PB +30 (45 secs rest) 200 recovery 4x200 @ PB + 25 (45 secs rest) 200 recovery 4x200 @ PB + 20 (45 secs rest) Cool Down 5x100 easy swimming with some backstroke
Total distance: 1.6km **TIme: 30 minutes**	**Total distance: 3.0km** **Time: 60 minutes**	**Total distance: 4.8km** **Time: 90 minutes**

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Workout #5 - Stroke count and pull

Goal - Easier session but working on stroke count and then pull/shoulder strength.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Warm Up 4x200 150 free / 50 Reverse IM order Main Set 4x 50 / 100 / 150 / 200 Free - Take 15 secs rest inbetween - Hold same stroke count each lap 6x50 Scull 12x50 of Pull with pull buoy 12x50 of pull with paddles and pull buoy Cool Down 200 easy	Warm Up 4x200 150 free / 50 Reverse IM order Main Set 2x 50 / 100 / 150 / 200 Free - Take 15 secs rest inbetween - Hold same stroke count each lap 2x50 Scull 6x50 of Pull with pull buoy 6x50 of pull with paddles and pull buoy Cool Down 200 easy	Warm Up 4x200 150 free / 50 Reverse IM order Main Set 4x 50 / 100 / 150 / 200 Free - Take 15 secs rest inbetween - Hold same stroke count each lap 6x50 Scull 12x50 of Pull with pull buoy 12x50 of pull with paddles and pull buoy Cool Down 200 easy
Total distance: 1.6km **TIme: 30 minutes**	**Total distance: 2.3km** **Time: 60 minutes**	**Total distance: 4.5km** **Time: 90 minutes**

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Workout #6 - Speed/Quality

Goal - Hard main set working on holding the same time for the hard 50's as you progress through the set.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Warm Up 100 swim 4x50 of Scull/Kick/Drill/Swim 4x15m fast 4x50 Build 1-4 last one at 95% effort 100 Recovery Main Set 14x50 of: 1 hard / 1 recovery 2 hard / 1 recovery 3 hard / 1 recovery 4 hard / 1 recovery Cool Down 100 fins and paddles	Warm Up 300 swim 4x50 IM Order 6x50 of 2 Scull/Kick/Drill 4x15m fast 4x50 Build 1-4 last one at 95% effort 100 Recovery Main Set 14x50 of: 1 hard / 1 recovery 2 hard / 1 recovery 3 hard / 1 recovery 4 hard / 1 recovery 100 easy swimming 6x25 Dive Sprint Cool Down 200 fins and paddles	Warm Up 500 swim 8x50 IM Order 12x50 of 4 Scull/Kick/Drill 4x15m fast 4x50 Build 1-4 last one at 95% effort 100 Recovery Main Set 14x50 of: 1 hard / 1 recovery 2 hard / 1 recovery 3 hard / 1 recovery 4 hard / 1 recovery 300 easy swimming 6x25 Dive Sprint Cool Down 400 fins and paddles
Total distance: 1.5km **TIme: 30 minutes**	**Total distance: 2.4km** **Time: 60 minutes**	**Total distance: 3.5km** **Time: 90 minutes**

Effortless Swimming Workouts

Workout #7 - Recovery session

Goal - Comfortable recovery session working on negative split (second half is faster than first half). Similar to last month.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Warm Up 6x50 Odd - Kick Even - Pull (with pull buoy) 4x25 Odd - Scull Even - Fast Main Set 3x100 Negative split (30 secs rest) 50 backstroke 4x50 negative split (20 secs rest) 50 backstroke Cool Down 100 Fins and paddles	Warm Up 6x100 Odd - Kick Even - Pull (with pull buoy) 6x25 Odd - Scull Even - Fast Main Set 3x200 Negative split (30 secs rest) 100 backstroke 4x100 negative split (20 secs rest) 100 backstroke Cool Down 250 Fins and paddles	Warm Up 12x100 Odd - Kick Even - Pull (with pull buoy) 12x25 Odd - Scull Even - Fast Main Set 3x400 Negative split (30 secs rest) 100 backstroke 4x200 negative split (20 secs rest) 100 backstroke Cool Down 600 Fins and paddles
Total distance: 1.1km **TIme: 30 minutes**	**Total distance: 2.2km** **Time: 60 minutes**	**Total distance: 4.2km** **Time: 90 minutes**

Effortless Swimming Workouts

Workout #8 - Aerobic

Goal - Longer aerobic set with 5 speed 100's in it, ideal for swimming endurance

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Warm Up 200 swim Main Set 12x100 Aerobic pace - Every 4th 100 is at 90% effort - Choose your own time cycle so you get 15 secs rest between 100's Cool Down 200 easy	Warm Up 400 swim Main Set 20x100 Aerobic pace - Every 4th 100 is at 90% effort - Choose your own time cycle so you get 15 secs rest between 100's Cool Down 300 recovery of back and free	Warm Up 400 swim 20x100 Aerobic pace - Every 4th 100 is at 90% effort - Choose your own time cycle so you get 15 secs rest between 100's 300 recovery of back and free Main Set 4x6x50 One set of each stroke 1. 20m fast / 30m easy 2. 30m fast / 20m easy 3. 40m fast / 10m easy 4. Easy 5. 50m fast 6. Recovery Cool Down 6x25 scull 6x50 kick
Total distance: 1.6km **TIme: 60 minutes**	**Total distance: 2.7km** **Time: 60 minutes**	**Total distance: 4.1km** **Time: 90 minutes**

Effortless Swimming Workouts

Workout #9 - Technique and speed

Goal - Drills and stroke count to focus on technique, then big lactate setwith speed

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Warm Up 100 swim 5x50 of: - 4x Drill - 1x Stroke count Main Set (freestyle) 25 Dive Fast / 25 easy 100 @ PB + 15 50 Fast 100 easy 100 @ PB + 12 200 Recovery Cool Down 150 backstroke	Warm Up 300 swim 10x50 of: - 4x Drill - 1x Stroke count Main Set (freestyle) **2 sets of:** 25 Dive Fast / 25 easy 100 @ PB + 15 50 Fast 100 easy 100 @ PB + 12 200 Recovery Cool Down 100 backstroke	Warm Up 600 swim 20x50 of: - 4x Drill - 1x Stroke count Main Set (freestyle) **4 sets of:** 25 Dive Fast / 25 easy 100 @ PB + 15 50 Fast 100 easy 100 @ PB + 12 200 Recovery Cool Down 200 backstroke
Total distance: 1.1km **TIme: 30 minutes**	**Total distance: 2.1km** **Time: 60minutes**	**Total distance: 4.2km** **Time: 90 minutes**

Effortless Swimming Workouts

Workout #10 - Speed endurance

Goal - A favourite session of ours, where holding times in the fast ones get challenging towards the end.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Warm Up 200 of 150 swim/50 Kick 4x50 Build 1-4 to 95% effort 100 Recovery Main Set 20x50 on 1.30 Odd - Holding PB + 5 or faster Even- Recovery Cool Down 100 swim down	Warm Up 2x200 of 150 swim/50 Kick 4x50 Build 1-4 to 95% effort 100 Recovery Main Set 30x50 on 1.30 Odd - Holding PB + 5 or faster Even- Recovery Cool Down 200 swim down	Warm Up 5x200 of 150 swim/50 Kick 4x50 Build 1-4 to 95% effort 100 Recovery Main Set 40x50 on 1.30 Odd - Holding PB + 5 or faster Even- Recovery Cool Down 200 swim down
Total distance: 1.6km **TIme: 30 minutes**	**Total distance: 2.4km** **Time: 60 minutes**	**Total distance: 3.5km** **Time: 90 minutes**

Effortless Swimming Workouts

Workout #11 - Aerobic with speed

Goal - Most challenging session of the month. Give it a go!!

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Warm Up 4x50 of 2x Swim 1x Kick 1x Drill Main Set **2 Sets of:** 300 Aerobic (10 secs rest) 100 Fast (20 secs rest) 150 Aerobic (10 secs rest) 50 Fast (20 secs rest) Cool Down 100 easy swim	Warm Up 8x50 of 2x Swim 1x Kick 1x Drill Main Set **4 Sets of:** 300 Aerobic (10 secs rest) 100 Fast (20 secs rest) 150 Aerobic (10 secs rest) 50 Fast (20 secs rest) Cool Down 200 easy swim	Warm Up 20x50 of 2x Swim 1x Kick 1x Drill Main Set **6 Sets of:** 300 Aerobic (10 secs rest) 100 Fast (20 secs rest) 150 Aerobic (10 secs rest) 50 Fast (20 secs rest) Cool Down 200 easy swim
Total distance: 1.5km **TIme: 30 minutes**	**Total distance: 2.8km** **Time: 60 minutes**	**Total distance: 5.0km** **Time: 90 minutes**

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Workout #12 - Recovery

Goal - Comfortable session not working too hard, focus on good technique and keeping relaxed

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Warm Up 3x100 Fins and paddles Moderate pace 4x50 of 12 Kick / 3 stroke changeover drill Main Set 200 Free @ 80% 100 Back 200 Free @ 85% 100 Back 200 Free @ 90% 100 easy swim Cool Down 100 easy	Warm Up 4x100 Fins and paddles Moderate pace 100 easy swim 4x50 of 12 Kick / 3 stroke changeover drill Main Set **2 sets of:** 200 Free @ 80% 100 Back 200 Free @ 85% 100 Back 200 Free @ 90% 100 easy swim Cool Down 100 easy	Warm Up 10x100 Fins and paddles Moderate pace 200 easy swim 8x50 of 12 Kick / 3 stroke changeover drill Main Set **3 sets of:** 200 Free @ 80% 100 Back 200 Free @ 85% 100 Back 200 Free @ 90% 100 easy swim Cool Down 100 easy
Total distance: 1.3km **TIme: 30 minutes**	**Total distance: 2.6km** **Time: 60 minutes**	**Total distance: 4.4km** **Time: 90 minutes**