



San Dieguito Sea Dragons (SDSD) Artistic Swim Club

Club Membership Handbook

Please read through the whole handbook, but in particular, please take note of these rules. There will be no excuses for not having read the handbook!

Tuition is due on the first of the month. Late fees as follows:

- First through fifth day of the month: grace period
- After the fifth day: \$40 late fee
- After the tenth day: Athlete will not be allowed at practice

We require a 30-day written notice for all athlete withdrawals. If notice is given mid-month, you will remain responsible for both the rest of that month's tuition and the full tuition for the following month. All withdrawal notices must be submitted via email to mary@seadragonssd.org.

Absences and routine tardiness will result in athlete moved to alternate position on team.

- Novice: Up to 2 planned absences per month
- Intermediate: Up to 1 planned absence per month
- Age Group: Up to 1 planned absence per month
 - No Saturday absences are permitted from January through June.
 - Any absence within two weeks of a competition will result in the athlete being moved to the alternate position for that event.
- Athletes will arrive on time and prepared for every practice. This includes arriving in the appropriate attire with equipment and sunscreen on.

Coaches have full discretion over routine placement which may include, but is not limited to, removing athletes from competitions due to tardiness on the day of competition.

1. Introduction

San Dieguito Sea Dragons is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization (EIN: 88-4357521) located in San Diego, CA. Our mission is to develop physically active, mentally strong, and dedicated athletes through the sport of artistic swimming.

At the heart of our team's philosophy is the belief that artistic swimming not only shapes exceptional athletes, but also extraordinary individuals. We aim to create a tight-knit community where teamwork, confidence, hard work, and creativity come together seamlessly as we strive for greatness. We believe that every swimmer has the spark of greatness within them, regardless of where or when they start. Our team of dedicated coaches are here to cheer them on every step of the way, providing fun and focused training sessions that bring out the best in each athlete.

2. Club Membership Programs

PRE-NOVICE: *For athletes ages 6+ starting artistic swimming mid-season*

The Pre-Novice Program provides a supportive and encouraging environment for athletes who are new to artistic swimming and joining mid-season. Over the course of 8 weeks, athletes build water confidence, develop stroke technique, and begin learning the foundational skills of artistic swimming. At the end of the session, athletes are assessed and receive personalized recommendations: either moving up to the novice team or continuing in another 8-week session to reinforce their progress.

Focus Areas

- Swim stroke technique and water confidence
- Introduction to basic artistic swimming body positions
- Fundamentals of eggbeater kick and propulsion techniques, such as sculling

Requirements

- Minimum age: 6 years old
- Swim 25 yards unassisted and comfortable in deep water (8 feet or more)

Pre-novice athletes practice Saturdays from 11am-12pm for 8 week sessions.

NOVICE

Novice Beginners Program: *For athletes ages 6+ beginning their artistic swimming journey*

Our Novice Program introduces swimmers to the exciting world of artistic swimming in a fun, team-based environment. Designed for beginners, this program teaches essential skills such as eggbeater, sculling, and basic figures. Athletes also learn how to work together as a team while creating and performing a simple routine.

Focus Areas

- Swim stroke technique and endurance
- Basic body positions (layout, tuck, vertical), sculling, and eggbeater
- Introduction to figures and simple choreography
- Teamwork, musicality, and following counts

Requirements

- Minimum age: 6 years old
- Swim 25 yards unassisted and comfortable in deep water (8 feet or more)

Novice athletes practice 2 days per week and participate in two local invitationals and the Watershow.

Novice Experienced Program: *For athletes (ages 6+) building confidence and consistency after one year of novice training*

The Novice Year 2 Program is ideal for swimmers who have completed their first year of novice training and are ready to strengthen their foundational skills before progressing to the intermediate level. This program reinforces core techniques such as eggbeater, sculling, and basic figures, while introducing athletes to a simple yet polished team routine.

Focus Areas

- Build endurance and overall stamina in the water
- Refine essential skills including body positions, eggbeater, and sculling
- Learn and confidently perform a choreographed team routine featuring hybrids, patterns, and arm movements

Novice athletes practice 2 days per week and participate in two local invitationals and the Watershow.

INTERMEDIATE: *For athletes ready to progress technically and competitively*

The Intermediate Program bridges the gap between foundational learning and competitive readiness. Athletes in this program build on their core skills while developing more advanced techniques, strength, flexibility, and endurance.

Focus Areas

- Introduction of advanced sculling, thrusts, boosts, and hybrid movements
- Longer underwater sequences and more complex routines
- Emphasis on precision, flexibility, stamina, and strength
- Increased execution through skill repetition and drills

Intermediate athletes train 3 days per week and compete in 3-4 local and travel invitationals, plus the annual Watershow. Full-season commitment from September through June is required. At this level, athletes are expected to advocate for themselves and communicate concerns directly with coaches.

AGE GROUP: *For athletes committed to high-level training and competition*

The Competitive Age Group Program is designed for athletes who are ready to pursue excellence in artistic swimming. This high-performance pathway emphasizes advanced technique, complex choreography, and competitive readiness. Athletes work as a team, set ambitious goals, and develop the physical and mental resilience needed for success at the regional and national levels.

At this stage, athletes may be selected to perform in small routines such as solos and duets. These opportunities are awarded based on a combination of skill, performance, routine fit, and overall commitment from both the athlete and their family.

Focus Areas

- Mastery of figures and advanced elements
- Height, stability, and control in verticals, spins, boosts, and thrusts
- Complex and difficult choreography requiring expression, synchronization, and endurance
- Mindset and mental performance training

Athletes train 3–5 days per week (12–20 hours) based on team placement, and compete in 5–7 meets per season, including regional and national-level events. Full commitment to the September–June season and attendance at all competitions is required. Outside of practice, athletes at this level are expected to complete assigned individual training and homework to support strength, flexibility, and technical development

RECREATIONAL: *For athletes seeking a fun, lower-commitment experience*

Athletes who are not pursuing the elite competitive track may move into the Recreational Team. This program is perfect for swimmers who love artistic swimming but have other time commitments or have not yet passed the skill benchmarks for advancement.

Focus Areas

- Continued development of endurance and technique
- Emphasis on consistency and execution
- Simple routines with a focus on quality over difficulty
- A supportive environment for athletes of varying abilities

Recreational athletes practice one day per week and participate in the annual Watershow. Athletes are grouped by skill level rather than age, allowing for personalized development.

3. Registrations, Membership Dues, and Team Fees

Registration Dues

Registration fee (\$60): Annual non-refundable fee paid at registration to SDSD. This fee covers West Zone and San Diego Imperial Association registration.

USAAS Membership: purchased directly from USAAS.

- USAAS Athlete Membership (\$54): pre-novice, novice, and intermediate athletes.
- USAAS Competitive Athlete Membership (\$104.00): age group athletes.

Membership Fees

San Dieguito Sea Dragons offers a 10-Month Membership covering the tuition dues September-June and competition/event entry fees.

Club Membership Dues does NOT include: SDSD Registration Fee, USAAS Membership, volunteer

exemption, travel expenses to competitions, required team gear and routine suits, private sessions.

Membership dues must be received by the 1st day of each month via Zelle or check. Please contact board@seadragonssd.org with questions. We do not offer automatic payment, but encourage families to manually set up monthly payments on their Zelle account.

Late fees:

- First through fifth day of the month: grace period
- After the fifth day: \$40 late fee
- After the tenth day: Athlete will not be allowed at practice

We require a 30-day written notice starting from the 1st of the month for all athlete withdrawals. If notice is given mid-month, you will remain responsible for both the rest of that month's tuition and the full tuition for the following month. All withdrawal notices must be submitted via email to mary@seadragonssd.org.

** Pay the entire annual Membership Dues at the time of registration, and get a 10% discount!!*

Membership Programs	Monthly Dues* / Annual Dues*
Pre-Novice	\$250 per 8 week session
Novice and Recreational - 2 Days per Week	\$300 / \$2,700
Intermediate - 3 Days per Week	\$400 / \$3,600
Age Group, JR, SR - 4 Days per Week	\$500 / \$4,500
Solo and Duet Routines - Add on	Additional \$150 per month per routine

Tuition may be paid by Check or Zelle.

Business name: San Dieguito Synchro

Email: board@sandieguitosynchro.org



zelle®

4. Equipment and Apparel

All athletes should arrive to practice in a swimsuit with workout clothes on top (leggings or shorts - no sweats) and running shoes. Athletes should have their hair up and sunscreen on when they arrive.

Items can be purchased from our [team swimoutlet store](#).

NOVICE: One piece swimsuit or jammers, workout clothes, running shoes, flip flops, cap, goggles, 2+ nose clips, towel, water, sunscreen, yoga mat, parka

INTERMEDIATE: One piece swimsuit or jammers, workout clothes, running shoes, flip flops, cap, goggles, 2+ nose clips, towel, water, sunscreen, yoga mat, parka, [resistance band \(beginner set\)](#)

AGE GROUP: One piece or athletic two piece swimsuit or jammers, workout clothes (shorts or leggings - no sweats), running shoes, flip flops, cap, goggles, 2+ nose clips, towel, water, sunscreen, yoga mat, parka, [resistance band \(beginner set\)](#), [ankle weights](#), [jump rope](#), [paddles](#), journal.

*Age Group athletes are also required to purchase a competition gear pack (approx. \$500) in their first year of competing.

5. Board of Directors

SDSD is governed by an elected Board of Directors composed of parents and coaches. To contact the board, please email bod@seadragonssd.org. A list of current board members can be found at seadragonssd.org/board.

The Board of Directors and Head Coach develop the club mission, rules and consequences, budget, and objectives. The Head Coach makes day-to-day operational decisions for the Club and leading all aspects of training including practice plans, routine placement, choreography decisions, and competition schedule.

6. Absence Policy

Artistic swimming is a team sport, and every athlete's consistent attendance is critical to the success, safety, and progress of the team. Athletes who miss practice not only hinder their own development, but also impact the entire team's ability to train and compete effectively.

Allowed Planned Absences by Athlete Level:

- Novice: Up to 2 planned absences per month
- Intermediate: Up to 1 planned absence per month
- Age Group: Up to 1 planned absence per month
 - No Saturday absences are permitted from January through June (competition season).
 - Any absence within two weeks of a competition will result in the athlete being moved to the alternate position for that event. Exceptions to this rule may be granted on a case-by-case basis if the athlete books private lessons, arranged outside of regular practice hours and at their own expense.
- Additional absences beyond the monthly allowance may result in the athlete being moved to an alternate position on the team.

Athletes are expected to plan vacations, family events, and social activities around the team's practice and competition schedule. Absences for homework are not considered valid. This policy is designed to

help athletes build strong time management and personal responsibility skills. Exceptions will be made only in cases of true emergency.

When sick, athletes at the Intermediate level and above are expected to attend practice and watch from the deck if they are not contagious or severely ill. If the athlete is well enough to attend school, they are expected to attend practice. Athletes should not come to practice if they have a fever, vomiting, or are clearly contagious.

All absences must be communicated in writing (via email or text) to both the Head Coach and the team coach at least 72 hours in advance. Telling a coach informally at practice or poolside is not sufficient.

7. Athlete Code of Conduct

1. Athletes will arrive on time and prepared for every practice. This includes arriving in the appropriate attire with equipment and sunscreen on. Routine tardiness will result in the athlete being moved to the alternate position on their team.
2. Athletes will follow the absence policy outlined in section 6.
3. By registering, athletes are committing to the full season (September through June) and are expected to attend all scheduled meets appropriate to their program level. If an athlete intends to withdraw, written notice must be provided to the Head Coach at least 30 days in advance via email. As a team sport, mid-season roster changes can significantly affect the entire team. We ask that athletes and families carefully consider the impact on teammates before making any decision to withdraw.
4. Athletes are encouraged to advocate for themselves through communicating their needs to coaches.
5. Athletes will demonstrate respect for all coaches. Regardless of whether or not they are your team coach, athletes will listen to and follow directions respectfully as mentored and guided by all coaches.
6. Athletes will display good sportsmanship in representing SDSD. This includes encouraging and respecting all athletes, both on the team and throughout the wider artistic swimming community.
7. Cell phone use at the pool and during competitions is not acceptable. Athletes may only use their phone at the pool or during competitions for urgent needs per Coach discretion. Non-emergency use of cell phones may result in confiscation.

8. Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

1. Club communication will be conducted through the Head Coach. One parent for each athlete is required to join the team Whatsapp group used for regular communication. Weekly practice plans will be sent by email.
2. Concerns should be addressed directly with the Head Coach, and if needed, further discussion

can involve other coaches and parents. Whenever feasible, parents should empower their swimmers to communicate their needs before intervening.

3. Parents are responsible for on time drop off/pick up and ensuring athletes are prepared with all necessary attire and equipment. Pre-Novice, Novice, and Intermediate parents will walk their swimmer to/from the pool for pick-up and drop off.
4. To maintain the focus and productivity of training sessions, parents are kindly asked to remain in the bleacher area while their athletes are practicing. Distractions or disturbances should be avoided unless there is an emergency situation.
5. Parents are expected to honor all decisions made by the Head Coach regarding practice planning, music allocation, choreography, and competition scheduling. The Head Coach will guarantee that each athlete receives personalized and suitable training, though this may vary in terms of music time based on individual routine requirements. Coaches have full discretion over routine placement which may include, but is not limited to, removing athletes from competitions due to absences/tardiness leading up to the event or tardiness on the day of competition.
6. While coaching styles may be different, all coaches must be respected. Please model this behavior by respecting the decisions of coaches.
7. At competitions, parents will respect the decisions of all coaches, officials, and judges. Parents are encouraged to model good sportsmanship by cheering for and encouraging all teams.
8. Some practices are challenging and some are more fun - both are equally as important for the development of your athlete. Parents are asked to encourage their athletes to approach all training sessions and competitions with positive, focused, and respectful athlete ethics.
9. Parents will notify the club of injuries or medical conditions that may affect participation.
10. Parents are expected to fulfill the volunteer commitments throughout the season:
 - a. For any athlete who competes during the season, at least one parent or guardian is required to volunteer at a minimum of one competition. Families who are unable to fulfill this requirement will be charged a \$60 volunteer exemption fee. To receive credit for your volunteer commitment, you must sign up for a volunteer shift with the Head Coach prior to the competition.
 - b. Age Group parents will be expected to chaperone one travel meet per year.
11. Parents are responsible for ensuring their athlete's membership fees and financial obligations are paid on time. Failure to do so will result in late fees.
12. Parents are responsible for ensuring their athlete reads and follows the Code of Conduct including the absence and withdrawal policy.

9. Coaches Code of Conduct

1. Coaches must display the highest standards of professionalism. This includes appropriate language, attire, and behavior at all times.
2. Coaches will treat all athletes with respect, fostering an inclusive and supportive environment that celebrates diversity and promotes a sense of belonging for every member of the team.

3. Coaches will review the lesson plan created by the Head Coach and will come to practice prepared to lead workouts, drills, teach choreography, provide constructive feedback on correct technique, and use practice time effectively.
4. Coaches will make sure practices are both challenging and fun. They will prepare athletes to achieve success at competitions, develop character, and have fun.
5. Coaches will provide a safe environment for athletes by:
 - a. Maintaining up to date lifeguard, CPR, and First Aid.
 - b. Conducting themselves in accordance with the Safesport training.
 - c. Using coaching approaches endorsed by USAAS through up-to-date CCP and training on figures, rules, and technique.
 - d. Ensuring there is always a coach and lifeguard on deck.
 - e. Reviewing athlete medical history and being attentive to any disclosed requirements or restrictions. This information is considered confidential.
6. Coaches are expected to follow all directions from the Head Coach. Any concerns that arise should be promptly brought to the attention of the Head Coach. If necessary, these concerns may be discussed further with other coaches, parents, and swimmers. Team coaches are responsible for directing any parent questions or concerns to the Head Coach for clarification or resolution.
7. Coaches are expected to use their phones only for music and in cases of emergency.
8. One-on-one communication between coaches and athletes over email/text message is not permitted. All messages must have another athlete, coach, or parent copied. If a swimmer reaches out individually, copy the Head Coach on the response. No communication between coaches and athletes should take place over social media.
9. The consumption of or being under the influence of alcohol or use of illegal substances is strictly prohibited in the presence of athletes.

10. Competitions and Travel

At the beginning of each season, the Head Coach will develop a Meet Agreement with which meets the team will be attending, categorized as a travel meet or a local meet.

For travel meets, all Age Group athletes travel and lodge with their teammates and designated team chaperones. The cost of travel, including coaches and chaperones, is split evenly between athletes. Parents who are not chaperoning are welcome to attend the meet as cheerleaders but will be responsible for their own travel and will not be allowed in lodging or on the pool deck.

Novice and Intermediate athletes are required to travel and stay with their families during travel meets.

Travel consent forms are required prior to the first travel competition. All chaperones must be safesport trained, pass a background screening, and have a clean driving record for 12 months prior.



Member Acknowledgement Agreement and Certification

I hereby give my consent for _____ (athlete name), for whom I am the parent or legal guardian, to participate in all San Dieguito Synchro (d.b.a. San Dieguito Sea Dragons) (SDSD) artistic swimming practices, competitions, travel, and activities associated with participation in the sport.

_____ (initial) I understand that participation in this activity could expose him/her to risk of personal injury, death, or property damage. I acknowledge that he/she is voluntarily participating in this activity with the agreement to assume any such risks for any injury, death or damage to or loss of personal property arising out of, or in connection with artistic swimming practices, competitions, travel, and activities associated with participation.

_____ (initial) To the fullest extent allowed by law, I hold harmless and agree to indemnify SDSD, its officers, Board, agents, volunteers, or employees from and against any claim, cause of action, loss or liability for injury to person or property, which participant may suffer or for which participant may be liable to any other person, resulting from any cause, and regardless of fault, related to artistic swimming practices, competitions, travel, and activities associated with participation in the sport.

_____ (initial) In the event of an emergency requiring medical treatment, I grant permission for any and all medical attention deemed necessary to be administered to my athlete until I am contacted. I understand that any resulting expenses or charges are my responsibility. If I cannot be reached in the event of an emergency, I give the listed emergency contact permission to act on my behalf.

_____ (initial) I have reviewed and completed the medical disclosure included in registration required for participation in this program, and have listed all allergies or medical problems suspected and known about for the minor, as well as any medical conditions or past treatments he/she has received.

_____ (initial) I grant permission for my athlete to be photographed, videotaped, and/or interviewed for use by SDSD including but not limited to: website, media releases, email, Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, Tiktok, Youtube, Google Drive, TV, and print media.

_____ (initial) By signing this document and registering my athlete for the season, I acknowledge that I am responsible for tuition payments, which are due on the 1st of each month. I understand and agree that 30 days' notice must be given in writing for any withdrawal from the program, in accordance with the above policy.

_____ (initial) I agree to conduct myself in accordance with the Membership Handbook and Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct. I understand that I am responsible for ensuring my athlete understands and abides by the Athlete Code of Conduct and absence policy. Violations of the Code of Conduct may result in suspension, dismissal, or expulsion from competition and/or the Club.

I have read this document, and I am signing it freely. I understand that this document is written to be as broad and inclusive as legally permitted by the state of California. I agree that if any portion is held invalid or unenforceable, I will continue to be bound by the remaining terms. This agreement is in effect for one year from the date of my signature.

Parent/Guardian Member Name

Parent/Guardian Member Name

Signature

Signature

Date

Date