



## OPEN WATER PRACTICE CHECKLIST FOR COACHES/CLUBS

<b>PLANNING</b>	Visit the body of water for the open water practice in advance to observe the venue, parking/drop-off availability, bathroom/shower situation, swimming area, and any safety considerations (surf, swells, rocks, boats, surfers, marine life, etc.).
	Using Google Earth (or other mapping site), create a “map” of the open water venue and proposed swim practice course with distances and landmarks.
	Check the local water quality website for recent/current status. Water quality should be “safe for recreational swimming”.
	Review state/county/city/local “active use” guidelines and other local public health orders in place.
	Review the guidance from USA Swimming entitled “Safety Management for Open Water Workouts” and “Structuring Your Open Water Workout”.
	Assign coaches and safety paddlers/parents to each open water session. Coach to Athlete Ratio can be varied according to ages/open water ability of athletes.
	Assign athletes – No more than 10 athletes per in-water session at a time. Athletes can be grouped according to comfort and experience in open water.
	Have a conference call/Zoom meeting with all coaches/athletes/parents in advance to review process/procedures for open water practices.
	Write the practice sets for the swim course venue in advance with flexibility in mind. Depending on the buoy and paddler situation, may need to use landmarks on the beach, pier, jetty, parking lot, and surrounding land areas to set the course.
	Arrange to bring warm water, food, extra towels/blankets to practice.
<b>AT PRACTICE</b>	Notify the lifeguards on duty about your open water practice and safety plans.
	Take ROLL, count swimmers at all times throughout the practice session.
	Review swim course, warm-up/practice plan/sets, and safety procedures on land, BEFORE entering water.
	Ensure DIRECT line of sight by coaches to all athletes at all times. Coaches can best supervise out on the water. Assign position of safety persons – paddlers on water, and persons on beach/land.
	Have FUN! Remember to count swimmers.
	Depending on water temperature and conditions, total practice time may be shorter than planned.
	Ensure ALL swimmers have exited safely.
<b>POST PRACTICE</b>	Evaluate how things went, what to do differently next time, lessons learned, plan for next practice.
	Find additional venues for open water practices as state/county/local public health guidelines and conditions change.