

How to Swim the Elementary Backstroke

While floating on your back, raise your arms and legs, and then squeeze them down for a relaxing glide.

Instructions

- **STEP 1:** Float on your back, with your arms and legs at your side.
- **STEP 2:** Draw your knees up toward your chest. At the same time, draw your arms up along your sides, bending them at the elbows so that your hands are almost in your armpits.
- **STEP 3:** Kick your legs out and apart, then quickly squeeze them together. They should end up straight, with your toes pointed.
- **STEP 4:** Extend your arms like an airplane, and then squeeze them down against your sides.
- **STEP 5:** Coordinate your arms and legs so that both go up, out and together all at the same time. The result should be a burst of motion through the water.
- **STEP 6:** Glide and repeat.

Tips & Warnings

- Relaxing helps you float.
- This is a great relaxation stroke, not a race stroke. Take your time with it.
- The kick for this stroke is the same as the breaststroke kick, only on your back.
- Be careful not to hit your head on the side of the pool. Know where you are in the water. Many pools have flags hanging 5 yards from the wall so you know when you're getting near it.