

# Scouting America

## Mile Swim Application



Name of applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit type: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit number: \_\_\_\_\_ Council: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of council-approved counselor: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor qualification: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of counselor signifies  
applicant has completed all requirements: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Requirements

1. Successfully complete the swimmer test: Jump feetfirst into water over the head in depth, level off, and begin swimming. Swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy, resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be completed in one swim without stops and must include at least one sharp turn.
2. Learn through discussion and application how skill, stamina, stroke selection, and pace influence distance swimming.
3. Learn through discussion and application how skill, stamina, stroke selection, and pace influence distance swimming.
3. Pre-qualify for the mile by either swimming continuously for 1/4 mile or otherwise demonstrating ability to the satisfaction of a counselor approved by the local council.
4. Swim one mile under safe conditions over a course approved by the counselor supervising the swim.

### Participant Notes

Swimming a mile without stopping is a significant accomplishment on your way to being proficient in the water. Are you ready? If you have done it before, you probably know the answer. If you haven't, then consider whether you can walk or bike on level ground for an hour or so without stopping. If you can, then you likely have enough stamina to swim a mile. The next question is whether you have the skill.

If you can meet the requirements for Swimming merit badge, then you likely have the skills needed to swim a mile, that is, the ability to swim a restful breaststroke, sidestroke, and elementary backstroke. If you have trouble completing the 100yard swimmer classification test, then you are probably not ready for the mile.

How long will it take to swim a mile using one or more of those restful strokes? If you save energy by gliding after each stroke, expect to take an hour or more. If you were walking at a relaxed pace, you could probably cover around three miles in the same time. However, it generally takes more energy to pull and push yourself through the water than to walk. A secret to successfully swimming a mile is to use your energy wisely. If you typically swim a brisk front crawl with your head out of the water, then you may need to build endurance by swimming increasing distances over a long period. Using a fast, poorly executed swimming stroke to swim the mile is similar to trying to run full-out for a mile. Conditioned athletes can do so, but not the average person. That is why restful strokes at a relaxed pace are recommended over trying to stay ahead of another person swimming a fast crawl. Swim team members will be able to do a mile in less than 30 minutes without exhaustion. (The record is around 15 minutes.) However, they will have trained extensively to build their stamina and to swim as effectively as possible.

There is no time limit for swimming the mile, so take your time, particularly at the beginning so you don't wear yourself out too soon. As you near the end, you can speed up if you like if you aren't particularly tired. If you aren't struggling to keep going, then one of the challenges of swimming long distances is boredom. Feel free to sing silently to yourself, daydream, or otherwise keep your mind occupied. If you are swimming numerous laps in a pool, then it helps to have a buddy out of the water counting laps so you don't lose count.

Still not sure if you should attempt a mile? No problem. Try a quarter mile or so first, as indicated in requirement 3. If that tires you out, seek coaching tips to improve your skill, then practice regularly until you meet your goal. Swimming is excellence exercise and a great way to develop and maintain physical fitness throughout your life.