

## Good Reasons for Teaching Babies to Swim

1. Infants are well adapted to swimming. They make instinctive swimming movements until they are approximately three months old; however, early swimming instruction is vital to reinforce and maintain this natural advantage in newborns.
2. In water, babies are less restricted by gravity. For example, infants do not need to be able to sit or stand in order to exercise. Water provides wonderful support and buoyancy. Babies increase their strength because of the exercise provided by swimming instruction, and often acquire physical dexterity earlier, such as walking.
3. Swimming improves the cardiovascular fitness of the child, a benefit that lasts a lifetime.
4. Infants who receive early swim instruction get a vital head start. Due to the muscles they build while in swimming lessons when they are tiny, they are able to move on to actual stroke work as early as two and a half years of age. This means that tiny babies who begin lessons become toddlers who are better equipped to save their lives in the event of a water accident.
5. Swimming instruction helps improve coordination and balance as babies learn to maintain their equilibrium in the water. Swimming provides the best bilateral exercise of any sport, developing all muscle evenly.
6. Swimming instruction combined with warm water and gentle exercise relaxes and stimulates a baby's appetite. Also, you'll find that your child will usually sleep and eat better on swimming days.
7. Doctors often recommend swimming as an exercise for asthmatics. Exercise can improve bronchial activity. Swimming is preferable to other forms of exercise because the warm moist air can be less irritating to the lungs.
8. Babies flourish due to the focused attention their parents and swimming instructors lavish on them during lessons. "Baby and Me" parents often

confess that lesson time is the only opportunity they have to spend thirty pleasurable, uninterrupted minutes with their child.

**9.** As infants learn how to maneuver in the water on their own, their independence blossoms. Researchers believe that this newly acquired independence increases their interest in learning which lasts throughout their lifetime.

**10.** Swimming provides babies with lots of skin-to-skin contact with their parents. That, psychologists say, deepens the bond between parent and child.

**11.** Achievements acquired through the process of learning to swim help children develop lifelong self-confidence, which promotes success in all future challenges both in and out of the water.

**12.** Learning to swim is not only a fun-filled and health activity, but it can save a life. All children should learn how to swim to greatly reduce their chances of drowning!

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