

Where can you learn to swim?

Swimming is taught in Finland for children, adults and families. Adults and children can learn to swim in swimming school. Children can also learn to swim at school during PE lessons.

However, it is important for parents to take their children swimming in their spare time. Adults must guard their children at the swimming hall, at the beach and elsewhere near the water.

Swimming school

If you don't know how to swim yet, or you want to learn how to swim better, you can join a swimming school. A swimming instructor at the swimming school will teach you how to swim.

Swimming schools are organised by:

- swimming halls
- swimming clubs and other societies
- private businesses.

If you want to join a swimming school, contact, for example, your local swimming hall.

Children can join a swimming school before they start school or at the same time when their school starts swimming lessons.

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Why is it important to learn how to swim?

Finland has thousands of lakes, rivers and long stretches of seashore, which are available for everyone to enjoy.

There are also hundreds of swimming halls in Finland. A lot of time is spent close to water with friends and family.

There are plenty of water-related activities, such as swimming, aqua jogging, boating and fishing. Swimming and other water exercise is good for your health.

When you can swim, you can spend time in and near water safely.

Regretfully, dozens of people drown in Finland every year. If you can swim, the risk of drowning is considerably smaller.

However, you should always take care when you are near water:

- always wear a life jacket when on a boat
- do not steer a boat if you have consumed alcohol
- watch over children when they play in the water or near water.

The ability to swim can save your life.

When you can swim, you can

- travel safely on water
- be saved and survive if you fall into water by accident
- do water exercise and maintain your health and wellbeing
- spend leisure time by the water.



EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW HOW TO SWIM



Can you swim?

This guide tells you why the ability to swim is important, and where you can learn to swim.

This guide also explains the rules of a swimming hall.



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How is the ability to swim defined?

There is a specification for the ability to swim which is used in the Nordic countries.

You are able to swim if you know how to:

- jump into water so deep your feet can't reach the bottom
- They can subsequently swim for 200 metres
- 50 metres of which is swum backstroke.



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Swimming lessons offered by the school

Children can learn to swim at school during PE classes. The aim of the swimming lessons offered by the school is for every child to learn to swim during primary school.

The aims of swimming lessons at school

- 1st and 2nd class of primary school: the pupil gets familiar with water exercise and learns the basics of swimming. Has the courage to go into the water and can swim for ten metres. The pupil has elementary swimming skills.
- 3rd to 6th class: the pupil can swim 50 metres in two different styles. They can also dive 5 metres underwater. Pupils can get out of the water if they fall in by accident. The pupil has basic swimming skills.
- 7rd to 9th class: the pupil can jump into water so deep their feet can't reach the bottom. They can subsequently swim for 200 metres 50 of which are by backstroke. They can also help another person get out of the water. The pupil knows how to swim.



Welcome to the swimming hall!

You can practice swimming and do water exercise at the swimming hall. The swimming hall attendants take care of the swimmers' safety, but you still have to guard your own children.

The swimming hall is for everyone. Anyone can come and swim at the swimming hall. The swimming hall has separate changing rooms, showers and saunas for women and men. Some swimming halls have scheduled times for only girls and women or men and boys.

It is very important to keep the swimming hall clean and tidy. That's why eating is forbidden in the changing room, showers, in the sauna and at the pool.

For a trip to the swimming hall, remember to pack:

- a swimsuit or trunks (the swimsuit or trunks must be of swimsuit fabric)
- shampoo and soap
- a towel
- something to sit on in the sauna, e.g. a small towel.

Swimming goggles may help when learning to swim.

The rules of a swimming hall

- Read the rules of the swimming hall, different swimming halls might have their own rules.
- Shower without a swimsuit or trunks before entering the sauna or the pool. This ensures the water stays clean.
- If you have long hair, shower first and then tie your hair.
- Take off your swimsuit or trunks before entering the sauna.
- You can go into the sauna wrapped in a towel.
- Sit on a small towel in the sauna.
- Shower after sauna and after visiting the toilet.
- Behave calmly and be considerate of others.
- Do not jump into the water from the edge of the pool.
- You can enter the deep pool only if you can swim.