

GSLAC 2026 BSA Swimming & Water Rescue Course Information

This course provides Scouting America leaders with information and skills to prevent, recognize, and respond to swimming emergencies during unit swimming activities. It expands the awareness instruction provided by *Safe Swim Defense* training. Persons completing the training should be better able to assess their preparation to supervise unit swimming events. Scouting America recommends that at least one person with this training is present to assist with supervision whenever a unit swims at a location that does not provide lifeguards. This training is open to any registered adult leader, Scout, Venturer, Sea Scout or Explorer who is age 15 or older. A council approved instructor must directly supervise all training. The course takes approximately eight hours and is valid for three years.

Although the training is professional lifeguards, the course is not a lifeguard training formal *Lifeguard* training for the other hand, this course that may not be covered in programs such as: preventative system and swim classification area in diverse situations; the use equipment; and emergency

Therefore, Scouting America leaders with lifeguard training from other agencies are encouraged to complete this course prior to supervising unit swim activities in remote settings.

Adult and youth first aid training, including CPR, is an important safety consideration for all Scouting activities, not just swimming.

First aid training is not included in the *Swimming & Water Rescue* course with the expectation the leader has addressed this need separately, as noted in the course material and on the training card.



consistent with training provided *Swimming & Water Rescue* course and is not a substitute for summer camp aquatics staff. On addresses important information generic lifeguard training measures, including the buddy tests; how to set up a safe swim of non-standard rescue action plans in remote settings.

Scouting America Swimming and Water Rescue Requirements

Course Prerequisites

- Be age 15 years or older prior to training
- Submit health review (Part B only, which will be collected at the course)
- Have current Scouting America swimmer classification and Safe Swim Defense training (SSD training is available online at <https://myscouting.scouting.org/>)

Swimming Ability

- Complete the Scouting America Swimmer Test
- Recover a 10-pound weight from 8 feet of water.

Water Skills

- Administer both the Scouting America *beginner* and *swimmer* classification tests.

-Demonstrate reaching assists from deck, side and shallow water using items such as arms, legs, towels, rescue tubes, and poles.

-Twice demonstrate throwing assists using items such as lines, ring buoys, throw bags, and free-floating supports. Successfully place at least one such aid within reach of a subject 25 feet from shore.

-Demonstrate stride jump and compact jump entries into deep water.

-Demonstrate an accompanied rescue for a conscious subject in deep water 20 feet from shore. Enter the water with a buoyant aid, present the aid to the subject, release it, and accompany the subject to shore. Speak to the subject throughout the assist to provide clear instruction and encouragement.

-Demonstrate a contact rescue for an unconscious subject at or near the surface in deep water 20 feet from shore:

Approaching the subject from the front, use a wrist tow to move the subject to shore. During the approach, confirm that the subject is passive.

Approaching the subject from the rear, use an armpit tow to move the subject to shore. During the approach, confirm that the subject is passive.

With the assistance of one other person, and without the aid of a backboard, remove an unconscious subject from the water at the edge of the pool or pier and check for breathing and circulation.

Practice in-water rescues of both conscious and unconscious subjects using a variety of flotation aids.

-Demonstrate the following defensive actions:

Front head-hold escape

Rear head-hold escape

-Demonstrate a line-and-tender rescue as both the swimmer and the line tender.

-Demonstrate in-line stabilization for a suspected spinal injury in shallow water:

For a face-up subject

For a face-down subject

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-Demonstrate in-line stabilization for a suspected spinal injury in shallow water:

For a face-up subject

For a face-down subject.

Knowledge Development

Correctly answer 80 percent of the questions on the *Swimming and Water Rescue* written exam covering Safe Swim Defense, emergency action plans, surveillance, victim recognition, and water rescue. Review any incomplete or incorrect answers.

GSLAC Swimming and Water Rescue Course Information

The Swimming and Water Rescue course has 4 major components:

- 1) Course Prerequisites
- 2) Classroom session
- 3) Written test
- 4) In-the-water session

The course prerequisites should be completed before the classroom session is conducted.

Registrants must be 15 years old before the first classroom session. Part B of the Scouting America annual Health and Medical Record should be brought to the first classroom session. The Scouting America swimmer classification must have been achieved within the past 12 months. If not completed previously, the swim test will be administered as part of the course.

Component 2 is held as a three-hour classroom session. The *required* textbook for #2 & #3 is Scouting America Aquatics Supervision publication (No. 34346). It serves as the text for the course and is the standard reference on policies and skills covered during the course. Exam questions for the Swimming and Water Rescue course are taken from the review questions of Sections I and II beginning on pages 5-8/R-1 and 12-18/R-1. Participants should be ready take the written test at the end of the classroom session. They should be familiar with Sections I & II before coming to the class. Experience has shown that it is unlikely that the written test can be successfully completed without reviewing the appropriate sections in the Aquatics Supervision book since all the test material is NOT covered during the classroom session. The text is available for download at https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/Outdoor%20Program/Aquatics/pdf/Aquatics_34346.pdf. The course fee includes a hardcopy of the textbook which will be delivered during the course.

Component 4 takes about 4-6 hours of in-water work. Participants will get wet during the session, so be prepared. The Scouting America swim test should be completed prior to participation in component #4.

Successful completion of all four course components results in a Swimming and Water Rescue course completion card being awarded. Cards expire 3 years after completion.

Register online at stlbsa.org/training/aquatics. Register early to ensure your place in the course. A minimum of three participants is needed one week before the course. If there are not sufficient registrations one week before the course it will be cancelled (we will attempt to contact you).

The \$45 SWR course registration fee includes the required textbook, the classroom session, and the water session. Please note that the same book is used for this course and the Scouting America Paddle Craft Safety course.

Swimming and Water Rescue 2026 Course Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>	<u>Location</u>
Saturday 30 May 2026 9am – 4pm	25 May	Beaumont Scout Reservation Pool Sverdrup Lodge