Open water swimming checklist

TRIATHLONGEAR24

Everything you need to swim safely and comfortably in open water

Tick off what you already have. Essential = you can't swim well or safely without it; handy = makes it more comfortable.

BASIC KIT

- [ ] Wetsuit (breaststroke or front crawl, good fit) — ESSENTIAL
- [ ] Goggles with tinted or mirrored lenses — ESSENTIAL
- [ ] Spare goggles with clear lenses — HANDY
- [ ] Brightly coloured silicone swim cap — ESSENTIAL
- [ ] Swim buoy, inflated and leash checked — ESSENTIAL
- [ ] Swimsuit, swim shorts or trisuit underneath — ESSENTIAL

COLD WATER (BELOW 13 °C)

- [ ] Neoprene swim cap or balaclava — ESSENTIAL
- [ ] Neoprene swim gloves — HANDY
- [ ] Neoprene swim socks — HANDY
- [ ] Sleeveless neoprene vest — HANDY
- [ ] Below 10 °C: thermal versions — TIP

WARM WATER (ABOVE 22 °C)

- [ ] Shorty or kneeskin — CHOICE
- [ ] Swimsuit or swim shorts — CHOICE
- [ ] Waterproof sunscreen — HANDY

COMFORT

- [ ] Anti-chafe balm (no petroleum jelly) — HANDY
- [ ] Neck protector (Mugiro) — HANDY
- [ ] Earplugs — HANDY
- [ ] Anti-fog spray for your goggles — HANDY
- [ ] Waterproof phone case — HANDY

IN YOUR BAG

- [ ] Swim bag — HANDY
- [ ] Poncho towel — HANDY
- [ ] Warm clothes, hat and slippers — HANDY
- [ ] Something warm to drink and eat — HANDY
- [ ] Bag for your wet wetsuit — HANDY

AFTER YOUR SWIM

- [ ] Put on dry, warm clothes straight away — TIP
- [ ] Rinse off with clean water — TIP
- [ ] Rinse your wetsuit in cold fresh water — TIP
- [ ] Dry your wetsuit in the shade — TIP

THE 5 RULES FOR SAFE OPEN WATER SWIMMING

1. Never swim alone, or tell someone on shore where you are swimming and for how long.
2. Choose an official swimming spot and check the current water quality before you go.
3. Always swim with a brightly coloured swim cap and a swim buoy.
4. Enter the water slowly and wait until your breathing has settled (cold water shock).
5. Swim along the shore for your first sessions and look ahead every 6 to 10 strokes.

What to wear at which water temperature?

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Our guideline for the average recreational swimmer

Water temperature	What do you wear?	Good to know
22 °C and warmer	Swimsuit, swim shorts, swimskin or shorty	A full wetsuit is too warm
18 – 22 °C	Shorty, kneeskin or wetsuit	A wetsuit makes swimming faster and easier
13 – 18 °C	Long-sleeve wetsuit	The most common temperature from May to September
10 – 13 °C	Wetsuit + neoprene cap, socks and gloves if needed	Acclimatise gradually and keep your first sessions short
Below 10 °C	Wetsuit + thermal cap or balaclava, gloves, socks and a neoprene vest if needed	Only for experienced swimmers: short and never alone

BEFORE YOU GET IN

- [ ] Water temperature and weather checked
- [ ] Water quality checked
- [ ] Someone knows where you are swimming
- [ ] Route and exit points known
- [ ] Landmark chosen for sighting
- [ ] Anti-chafe balm applied
- [ ] Swim buoy inflated and around your waist

WHILE SWIMMING

- [ ] Start calmly, breathing first
- [ ] Look ahead every 6 to 10 strokes
- [ ] Cramp or tired? Rest on your swim buoy
- [ ] Stay out of shipping lanes and away from locks
- [ ] Cold or shivering? Head for the shore
- [ ] Swallow as little water as possible

NEED HELP CHOOSING YOUR KIT?

Our swimming specialists are happy to help you choose your wetsuit, goggles, swim buoy and neoprene accessories. Call +31 (0)85 773 00 58, email us via www.triathlongear24.com/customer-service/contact/ or try on in our store in Volkel (the Netherlands).