



Swimming Tales

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Set No Limits

Swimming is one of the most popular choices of activity for disabled adults and children. Some of the benefits swimming offers are:

- Improved mobility compared to when on land as water supports the whole body
- Ease from tight or painful joints and tendons thanks to water buoyancy
- Improved balance and agility
- Improved confidence and comfort in and around water

Use Pool Finder to track down your local pool and ask about learn to swim sessions for people with disabilities. It will offer adult classes in a friendly and supportive environment.

<http://www.swimming.org/poolfinder> or Contact your regional ASA office. They will have lots of information and can point you in the right direction. <http://www.swimming.org/asa/regions/>



▶ **As an amputee, the first time you go for a swim can be daunting as you don't know what to expect. The best way to start is to tell yourself that you are no different from anybody else apart from having a 'bit missing'.**

If you have a friend who can go with you, this is a good start. They don't necessarily have to go into the pool with you, being there for moral support is great. Another thing you could do is visit or telephone your local pool to see if they have a hoist or particular facilities to help you in or out of the pool. I went along to my local pool and was lucky to find a Mobility Group which took me under their wing.

Hopefully before you've done all this you will have thought about swimming attire (skinny dipping is frowned upon in public these days!) I would think about getting some goggles which are good for when you're doing the front crawl and a swimming float both of these can be bought cheaply and are

readily available. The float can be used in a couple of different ways, you can hold it in front and kick your legs, or placed between your legs helps with buoyancy when doing front crawl, it also challenges your stomach muscles and helps to build that all important six pack or flat stomach for the ladies.

I get asked quite a lot why I started swimming. From an early age I always liked swimming and up till I lost my foot in 1997, I used to swim as much as I could, mainly on holiday, as other sports like rugby, cricket and football got in the way. After my accident

I wanted to find a sport that didn't put any pressure on my pelvis which I had shattered, so swimming was ideal as it's non weight bearing.

Through swimming I have learnt to be more confident about myself around people not just in the pool but life in general. Swimming has also helped me get fitter, and as a diabetic as well as an amputee, improve my health, confidence, self esteem and wellbeing. My goal now is to become a swimming instructor to show others that if you put your mind to something it can be done.

