



**"Meghan's First Swim Lesson" by Deb Douglas.**

**Check out Deb's book at: KidsWhoSwim.com.**

Currently, this is a coloring book for interaction between parents and children. And, children can color while learning how to swim!

## Welcome! You've found Deb from Kids Who Swim

Welcome to Deb's first edition of newsletters geared towards giving parents and instructors tips, tricks, and easy ways to teach kids and adults how to swim.

My "steps of progression" are tried and true methods I have developed and used in all my lessons for almost 30 years. For instance, a swimmer usually cannot jump into the water without getting water up the nose without learning *nose bubbles* first. And, if a swimmer decided to swim the length of the pool backstroke, an introduction to *back floating with kick* would need to be learned first.

By following my newsletters you will be able to learn "what *comfortable in the water* means"? Here are some to achieve being comfortable in the water:

- Entering the water without crying

- Horizontal to the water
- Leg action—any type of kicking
- Arm flapping—swimmer lets go of instructor
- Face gets near the water getting ready for bubbles
- Does not hold breath during lesson

In my first book, "*Meghan's First Swim Lesson*", I took Meghan from receiving a new swimsuit and goggles to learning to enjoy baths and showers, blowing bubbles and kicking correctly, all right at home!

Feel free to comment on my newsletters at [KidsWhoSwim.com](http://KidsWhoSwim.com), as this is a work in progress! *Deb*



### Step 1: Progress will be slow if the swimmer is not *comfortable in the water!*



Many years of teaching children and adults how to swim has taught me to look at the swimmer's breathing pattern. Once walking around the shallow part of a pool comfortably is accomplished then the bubble blowing begins. I look closely at whether or not the swimmer is *easily* blowing out the *exact* amount of air inhaled. Believe it or not, while swimming, there is no time for holding a breath. When the face is out of the water, a breath is taken. When the face returns to the water, the breath is exhaled. Thus, the pattern of breathing while swimming! By practicing *bobbing* until comfortable and not out of breath after 50 bobs, one can the art of breathing while swimming will be easier to accomplish! The swimmer is instructed to take in an easy breath of air, then to

place the mouth on the water and blow out the same amount of air inhaled. When the mouth clears the surface, another easy breath is taken and easily blown out under water. (The breathing pattern should be as easy as walking to the car, shopping for groceries, or reading a book.) Therefore, if a loud breath is taken, then the swimmer is not inhaling easily and may have trouble exhaling easily. Progression of blowing bubbles:

1. Inhale easily—a normal amount of air
2. When exhaling underwater, blow out easy
3. Lift the head—inhale easily
4. Exhale easy again underwater

This is called *bobbing*. Now, do this a few times. Take notice of how you feel. Are you tired? Out of breath? Relaxed? The swimmer needs to breathe in the water as easily as when walking around a grocery

## Homework for the Parent

If you want your child to learn to swim quicker, take him/her to the pool and swim together! Work on getting the child Comfortable in the Water, kicking, bubbles, face in, laying on the back, and sitting on the side of the pool and coming in to you. Instructors can only do so much with the limited time usually set aside for lessons.

## Concentrating on the swimmer's Kick

### The importance of kick.

When teaching someone to swim, the kick of each stroke should be taught *first*. If you place your hands on your hips, and look down to your feet you'll notice that that's about half your body. When swimming if the legs do not kick (or kick properly), that's how much of your body will want to sink. Wow, that's a lot!

The flutter kick is the kick that comes to mind when asked: "do you know how to kick"? This kick can be done on the stomach and back. Showing a child how to kick properly in the bathtub can easily be taught. Legs should be straight, toes pointed. Fast, small kicks should be practiced. Kicking should take up a good portion of a child's lesson, because, "if you don't have a kick, you don't have a stroke".



### Tip:

Toys in the bathtub are fun, but are not useful during a swim lesson. When an instructor is one-on-one with the swimmer, 100% attention is given to the swimmer, plus the swimmer needs to pay attention to the instructor. If toys are around, the swimmer will become distracted and care more about the toy than what the instructor is trying to teaching.



### Who is this little guy with Sadie?

Meghan's First Swim Lesson is such a success, readers asked if there could be a male version of the same coloring book. This is what "Mason" will look like in her version of the same book which will be titled, "Mason's First Swim Lesson".

### Testing For Water Safety

After swimmers conquer breathing comfortable, the proper kick, swimming on the back and stomach with big arms, instructors can test their students in the following way:

- Swim the wt yards on stomach and back without tiring
- Treading for 5 minutes
- Jump into the pool, tread, then swim to the side safely

I always tell kids that if they fall into a lake from a boat, they need to know how to tread long enough for that boat to circle around to rescue them. If a child is pushed into a pool unexpectedly, swimming to the side safely need to be done.



In this picture Meghan realized that her first swim lesson was fun!

### July 2010

Importance of bobbing.  
Teeter totter!

### August 2010

Thinking ahead after  
summer swim lessons.

### September 2010

The crying child at lessons.  
Parent -tot classes.

### October 2010

Treading and other water  
safety tips.

Log-on to [KidsWhoSwim.com](http://KidsWhoSwim.com) and tell Deb you'd like to receive a copy of the monthly newsletter.