

# BUTTERFLY

## DECEPTIVELY SIMPLE:

1. **As in Breaststroke: forward start; remain toward breast (=“on the breast”); touch wall with two hands simultaneously at any level(s) upon concluding each length.** (101.3)
2. **As in Freestyle and Backstroke: may be submerged up to first 15 meters of each length:** *“It shall be permissible for a swimmer to be completely submerged for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and after each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface. The swimmer must remain on the surface until the next turn or finish.”* (101.3.2)

## SOME COMPLICATIONS:

3. **Both arms must be brought forward over the water and pulled back simultaneously.** (101.3.2) a. **“Arm”** is the *entire* portion of the body which extends from the shoulder to the wrist (Interpretation 10/2009). **“Over the water”** means the arm, as defined above, must break the surface of the water (Interpretation 10/2009).

**Therefore**, a mere knuckle, fingertip, hand, hair, or elbow breaking the surface **does not** satisfy the requirement of this rule. **“Arm” does not** mean “some part of the arm.”

**Judgment call:** additional forward extension after re-entry at the end of an over water recovery. A few more inches to complete a forward reach already in progress is generally considered OK. Re-entry near shoulder level (and/or, initiation of a new backward pull), followed by full forward reach under water, is generally considered an illegal underwater recovery. Elbow flexion might be relevant to the judgment.

- b. **“Simultaneously”** means **at the same time**. **“Simultaneously” does not** mean symmetrically, **does not** mean horizontally, and **does not** mean covering equal distances.

**Therefore**, arms **may** be different shapes (for example one straight, one bent), **may** be at different levels (as long as the shoulders are at or past vertical toward the breast), and/or **may** move different distances between exiting and re-entering the water.

**Judging tip:** observe the relative **times** of exit and re-entry of the *arms* during recovery.

4. **Kick — All up and down movements of the legs and feet must be simultaneous. The position of the legs or the feet need not be on the same level, but they shall not alternate in relation to each other. A scissors or breaststroke kicking movement is not permitted.** (101.3.3) a. Since legs or feet need not be on same level, **“up and down”** movements are judged relative to the plane of the body, not to the surface of the water. (USA Swimming Situation Resolutions 7/2007)

- b. **“Movements”** do not include unintentional drifting motion with the water currents.

**Therefore**, accidental alternation during an *interval between* kicking movements is legal.

- c. **“Simultaneous”** again means **at the same time**.

**Therefore**, the downward movement of each leg should begin and end **at the same times**, and so should the upward movements (otherwise they would be alternating). These movements **may** otherwise be unequal, or on different levels, as long as the levels do not cross (**“alternate in relation”**) during a single movement.

5. **After the start and after each turn .... The swimmer is permitted one or more leg kicks, but only one arm pull under water, which must bring the swimmer to the surface.** (101.3.2) a. More than one arm pull before breaking the surface would necessitate an illegal underwater recovery.

- b. This intent of this portion of the rules is generally interpreted to mean that, once the first arm pull brings the swimmer to the surface, the swimmer **must remain on the surface** until the next turn or finish, **even if** the swimmer’s head has **not yet passed the 15 meter mark**. Re-submersion prior to the 15 meter mark is **not** permitted, unlike in the other strokes.

**VIDEO**