



Team Handbook

www.altoswimclub.com

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Team Information

Our Team

Alto Swim Club is a competitive USA Swimming Team and the premier swim club in the Palo Alto and Stanford area. We offer a comprehensive program for all athletes, from the beginner swimmer to the Olympian. There are over 3,000 USA Swimming Club teams in the United States and Alto competes at the highest level in local, national and international competition.

Our team utilizes a number of facilities in the Palo Alto area, including Avery Aquatic Center on the Stanford University Campus, JLS Middle School, Greene Middle School, Foothill College, Palo Alto High School, Gunn High School, and Fletcher Middle School.

Mission

To be the best developmental and high performance swim team in the United States.

Vision

To provide a safe, positive and healthy environment for athletes, coaches, officials and team families.

Team Philosophy

What is deemed extraordinary elsewhere occurs daily at Alto Swim Club. We succeed because we dare to challenge our members to achieve big goals and chase their dreams. Winning with Alto is a product of enthusiasm, hard work and fun.

To maximize long-term athletic success, athletes must be developed as a whole person. Alto focuses on skill development and age appropriate training. Training groups provide a systematic progression of increased expectations and involvement. As swimmers develop physically and emotionally, workload increases to allow them to reach their full potential.

Coaching Staff

The coaching staff at Alto Swim Club are professionals who are passionate about swimming. The staff and team provide each athlete with the resources needed to achieve their competitive swimming goals.

Alto Swim Club coaches are USA Swimming registered and certified, including background check, Athlete Protection, USA Swimming SafeSport and Coaches Safety Training, CPR and First Aid Certifications.

Joey Sementelli
Head Coach / Owner
National Lead Coach

Laura Mitchell
Head Coach / Owner
Senior Lead Coach

Greg Meehan
Professional / Post Graduate Coach
Head Coach, Stanford Women's Swimming and Diving

Natalie Loredo - Team Manager

Age Group / Pre Senior

Richie Barth
Michael Hung
Mark Tiersma
Kara Guenther
Madeline McKean - Assistant
Sarah Berry - Assistant

Senior / National

Dustin Fukuda
Alec Scott
John Cook - Assistant
Landon Harris - Assistant
Wes Thomas - Assistant

Team Structure and Group Descriptions

Age Group Program 12 & Under

Ages 8 & Under

Age Group Discovery 1

- Swimmers know all strokes. Skill development is the primary focus.
- Swimmers attend all recommended meets and 2+ practices per week.
- Time Goals – National B, BB, A Times.

Age Group 1

- Swimmers know all strokes. Skill development is the primary focus.
- Swimmers attend all recommended meets and 3+ practices per week.
- Time Goals – National B, BB, A, and Zone Championship Qualifying Times.

Age Group Bronze

- Experienced swimmers. Skill development is the primary focus.
- Swimmers attend all recommended meets and 4+ practices per week.
- Time Goals – National BB+, Zone Championships, Age Group Championship Qualifying Times.

Ages 9 - 10

Age Group Discovery 2

- Swimmers know all strokes. Skill development is the primary focus. Training increases.
- Swimmers attend all recommended meets and 3+ practices per week.
- Time Goals – National B, BB, A, and Zone Championship Qualifying Times.

Age Group 2

- Swimmers know all strokes. Skill development is the primary focus. Training increases.
- Swimmers attend all recommended meets and 4+ practices per week.
- Time Goals – National B, BB A+, Zone Championships, Age Group Championship Qualifying Times.

Age Group Silver

- Experienced swimmers. Skill development is the primary focus. Training increases.
- Swimmers attend all recommended meets and 4-5 practices per week.
- Time Goals – National AA, AAA, AAAA, Age Group Championship and Far Western Qualifying Times.

Team Structure and Group Descriptions

Ages 11 - 12

Age Group Discovery 3

- Experienced swimmers. Skill development is the primary focus. Training increases.
- Swimmers attend all recommended meets and 3+ practices each week.
- Time Goals – National B, BB, A, and Zone Championship Qualifying Times.

Age Group 3

- Experienced swimmers. Skill development is the primary focus. Training increases.
- Swimmers attend all recommended meets and 4+ practices each week.
- Time Goals – National B, BB A+, Zone Championships, Age Group Championship Qualifying Times.

Age Group Gold

- Advanced swimmers. Swimmers train at a higher level.
- Swimmers attend all recommended meets and 5+ practices each week.
- Time Goals – National AA, AAA, AAAA, Age Group Championship and Far Western Qualifying Times.

Team Structure and Group Descriptions

Senior & National 12 & Older

Senior Prep

- Experienced swimmers. Training and workload increases.
- Swimmers attend all recommended meets and 3+ practices each week.
- Time Goals – National B, BB, A+, Age Group Championship and Far Western Qualifying Times.

Senior 1

- Swimmers demonstrate an advanced commitment and desire to reach their competitive potential.
- Swimmers train 6-8 sessions per week and attend all recommended meets.
- Time Goals – National AAA, AAAA, Far Western, Sectionals, Junior Nationals.

Senior 2

- Swimmers demonstrate an advanced commitment and desire to reach their competitive potential.
- Swimmers train 7-9 sessions per week. Swimmers attend all recommended meets.
- Time Goals – National AAA, AAAA, Sectionals, Junior Nationals.

Senior 3

- Swimmers train and compete at the highest levels. They have demonstrated a complete commitment to swimming.
- Swimmers train 8-10 sessions per week. Swimmers attend all recommended meets.
- Time Goals – National AAA, AAAA, Sectionals, Junior Nationals, Olympic Trials.

National Group

- Swimmers train and compete at the highest levels. They have demonstrated a desire to reach their potential and a complete commitment to swimming.
- Swimmers train 8-10 sessions per week.
- Time Goals – Junior National, National, Olympic Trials, Olympic Games.

Group Placement and Advancement

Alto Swim Club has a big picture and team-wide philosophy that drives group placement decisions. Swimmers are placed into the training group that is developmentally appropriate. The coaching staff makes all group placement decisions.

Some of the most important factors driving group placement include:

- Training ability and technique.
- Maturity (chronological age, physiological age, and emotional development).
- Commitment (practice attendance, meet participation, priority of the sport).

Racing times are one of several considerations for group placement, though not the primary factor for group placement. Race times may be an indirect factor as meet performance translates to meet qualification and training ability.

The swimmer's group placement determines a floor, not a ceiling. This means that each group has different standards for membership (the floor), but does not have upper limits of achievement (the ceiling). Group placement does not communicate a coach's belief about a swimmer's potential.

Swimmers are placed in a group that best serve their developmental needs. If swimmers or parents have questions concerning group placement, they are encouraged to speak with their swimmer's primary coach.

Practice Information

Practice Attendance

Swimmers in every group should attend all practices offered. Excellent attendance enhances the entire competitive swimming experience. Consistent and uninterrupted training is necessary for both short-term and long-term success. Swimmers may only swim with their assigned group, unless directed to swim with a different group by the coaching staff.

Punctuality

Swimmers should arrive 5-10 minutes before the start of each training session. Swimmers who are going to arrive late must notify their primary coach in advance.

The Pool Deck

The pool area is a classroom setting for coaches and swimmers. Parents should not watch practice and must wait outside the pool area for pick up or drop off. Please do not approach the coaching staff at any time during practice, unless there is an emergency.

Pool & Facility Use

Swimmers and families are guests at our facilities and must follow any and all facility policies. Please ensure that all equipment is labeled and that nothing is left behind after practices or competition. Any non-labeled equipment that is left behind will be thrown away or donated.

Practice Equipment

All suits, caps, and goggles worn must be designed for competitive swimming. Caps must be worn by those with longer hair. Training suits worn should be a brief / speedo or a 1-piece suit. No long shorts or "jammer" style suits should be worn. Alto Caps must be worn by those who wear caps, and competitive swimming goggles should be used.

Competition

Meet Attendance & Events

- Swimmers attend all recommended meets.
- The coaching staff decides which meets swimmers attend and which events they compete in. This is communicated via the group calendars and through group email.
- Swimmers typically attend 1 weekend meet per month during the regular season and may have 1-2 weekend meets per month during team championships.

Entering Meets

- Swimmer meet registration is completed and communicated by the Alto coaching staff.
- If unable to attend a meet, families must notify the coaching staff at altoswimclub@gmail.com at least 60 days prior to the meet.
- Failure to communicate a missed meet in advance will result in charges for swimmer meet registration fees.

Qualifying Time Standards

- There are specific meets that have qualifying time standards. Swimmers must achieve the time standards in order to be eligible to compete in these meets.
- For meets with a minimum qualifying standard, all qualified swimmers attend.

Championship Meets

- These are the most important meets of the season and are typically the final meets in a season. Alto Swim Club counts on every qualified athlete to compete.
- Championship meets have qualifying time standards. Qualifying for team championships is a focus for every Alto swimmer.
- All swimmers who qualify are required to attend and to be available for every meet session, including finals and relays.

Racing Suit Team Policy

- Regular Season Meets: Team suit is worn. No technical suits may be worn in-season.
- Championship / Focus Meets:
 - Ages 12 & Under: No technical suits are worn. 12 & Under swimmers with Junior National level cuts & above may wear a technical suit at Junior National+ meets as outlined by the coaches.
 - Ages 13 & Older: Arena brand technical suits may be worn in team colors (black or gray). The coaching staff determines when a swimmer will compete in a technical suit.

Parent Volunteering

Requirements

- Complete 35 credits within each competitive year (September - August).
- Families can opt out at \$50 per credit if they prefer not to complete all volunteer hours.
- One parent from every family must attend an Officials Training Course within 1 year of joining the team (1.5 hour course). Families will be notified when the training is available.
- Credits can be obtained in many ways. Jobs with credit opportunities must be signed up for in advance. Most credits obtained will be through timing and officiating.
- No-Show Penalty: If you fail to fulfill your volunteer commitment or arrive too late and need to be replaced, a \$20 penalty will be charged to your account. No credit will be given for the missed job.

Timing

- An online timing sign up will be sent out the week of the meet. 1 hour = 1 credit.

Officiating

- Parents are strongly encouraged to become Officials because the team is required to provide multiple Officials at every meet.
- Officials must work a minimum of 8 sessions per year to cover their 35 credits.
- Please contact the Officials Coordinator or the coaching staff if you have any questions or are interested in becoming an Official (altoofficials@gmail.com).
- Time spent on the certification process counts as volunteer hours. A first-year Official will likely complete most of their family's single year volunteer credits through the certification process.

Hosted Meets

- Alto hosts several types of meets: Intrasquad (Alto-only), Invitationals, local CBA Meets and Regional or National Championships.
- There are 4 key roles required to host a meet: Meet Referee, Admin Official, Head Starter and Meet Director. These positions require additional training / experience through shadowing. Parents are strongly encouraged to reach out to the coaching staff to learn more about training for these key roles.

Other

- Other key season-long volunteer positions include: Group Parents, Volunteer Coordinator, Team Photographer, and Apparel Coordinators.
- Please email altovolunteers@gmail.com with any questions that concern volunteering.

Team Communication

Communication is a very important component of the team.

Weekly Update / Group Calendars

A weekly update will be posted on the team website by Sunday evening each week. The weekly update includes the practice / meet schedule for each week and pertinent information about upcoming team events. Families are responsible for checking the update each week. Parents and swimmers are also encouraged to subscribe to their group's google calendar.

Email

The coaching staff will use email to communicate with the team and with specific groups. Families will typically receive at least 1 email per week. Please notify the coaching staff if you are not receiving emails. Please ensure that email addresses are up to date in TeamUnify.

Team Website

Our team website, altoswimclub.com, is a resource for team families and includes the weekly update, practice / meet schedules and resources for families. Our Alto Team-Only Page is a password protected section that includes individual and team performance tracking, team photos, and parent volunteering information.

Parent / Swimmer Meetings

Informational meetings for swimmers and parents are held at the beginning of the year. All families must attend.

Parent Education

Parent education is an important element of team development. Parents' response to setbacks, challenges or successes has a big impact on swimmer mindset and resilience. A parent education page can be found on the team website. The coaching staff sends out recommended readings and videos throughout the year.

Swimmer / Family

Swimmers and families are expected to communicate clearly and as needed with the coaching staff. Whenever possible, swimmers are encouraged to communicate directly with their coach. Brief questions can be answered before and after practice. If you wish to discuss something in detail, please schedule a meeting.

The Pool Deck

The pool area is for coaches and swimmers. Please do not approach the coaching staff at any time during practice, unless there is an emergency. If you wish to discuss something in detail, please schedule a meeting.

Team Apparel and Training Equipment

The training equipment and team apparel outlined below are required items for swimmers. Team gear is outlined in the [Apparel and Gear](#) section.

Team Apparel

Returning Swimmers - Returning swimmers will receive a new cap and 2 t-shirts in the fall. Additional items or replacements can be ordered as needed.

New Swimmers - A \$450 apparel fee for new swimmers (charged online at the time of registration) covers team apparel costs. Additional items or replacements can be ordered as needed.

Apparel Coordinator - Please reach out to our Apparel Coordinator with any questions concerning team apparel.

Team apparel can be ordered online using the Alto Swim Shop website. The link to the online store can be found here: <https://altoswimclub.com/team-apparel-and-gear>

All Competitive Groups	Team Cap, Team Shirts (x4), Team Suit, Winter Hat, Baseball Cap, Team Bag, Equipment Bag, Sweatshirt, Parka, Magnet
Age Group Program	Above
Senior Prep	Above
Senior 1 - 3	Above + Warm up jacket, pants, shorts
National	Above + Warm up jacket, pants, shorts

Training Equipment

Swimmers bring training equipment to all practices. Families can order equipment through arenawaterinstinct.com. Any items that are unavailable through Arena should be ordered through [Alto SwimOutlet](#). A team discount code for Arena is distributed to families via email.

Discovery 1 + 2 & AG 1+2	Equipment Bag, Kickboard, Pull Buoy, Fins
Age Group Bronze	Equipment Bag, Kickboard, Pull Buoy, Fins
Age Silver	Equipment Bag, Kickboard, Pull Buoy, Fins, Paddles, Snorkel
Discovery 3	Equipment Bag, Kickboard, Pull Buoy, Fins, Paddles, Snorkel
Age Group 3 + Gold	Equipment Bag, Kickboard, Pull Buoy, Fins, Paddles, Snorkel
Senior Prep	Equipment Bag, Kickboard, Pull Buoy, Fins, Paddles, Snorkel
Senior 1 - 3, National	Equipment Bag, Kickboard, Buoy, Band, Paddles, Powerfin, TempoTrainer, Snorkel, Nose Clip, Parachute

Team Fee Structure

When a swimmer joins Alto Swim Club they are making a commitment to a year-round competitive swim team. For convenience, the year-round cost of each practice group will be divided into five equal payments. For those who are interested, there is the option to pay the full year-long cost in a single payment.

Families are required to make a financial commitment for the entire year. Should a family decide to terminate participation, the unused portion of the annual dues is nonrefundable. Any outstanding dues (including the remainder of the swimmer's group fees) are considered an obligation to Alto and are due upon termination.

The one exception to the full-year commitment is for swimmers who are new to Alto. Those who join after September will be charged a prorated fee for group enrollment.

Team Payment

The year-long cost of each group is listed on Page 14. Yearly group dues are divided into five (5) equal payments and are invoiced through the team's online billing system (TeamUnify). Once a payment method is on file with the team, no additional action is required in order for your invoice to be processed online. Members can view their invoice online via TeamUnify.

The five payments for group enrollment are due on September 1, October 1, November 1, December 1 and January 1. After January 1, group registration fees have been paid for the entire competitive year (through August).

For those who prefer to pay for the full year upfront, families may opt-in to a single-payment (due September 1). Please communicate via our Team Billing email (altoteamunify@gmail.com) to select this option.

Online Payment Method (TeamUnify)

We suggest that families add electronic bank payment (ACH payment) as their primary online payment method with the team. There is no processing fee charged for ACH payments. Credit card payments will incur a 3.2% processing fee added to the account's monthly invoice.

All payments will be processed online.

Registration Payments by Group

In addition to the group fees below, returning swimmers will be billed on October 1 for the annual USA Swimming Registration fee of \$89. New swimmers must register through the USA Swimming website and will pay the fee directly to USA Swimming for their 1st year only.

Group fees are outlined below. Five Equal Payments (9/1, 10/1, 11/1, 12/1, 1/1)

Discovery 1	\$500 / per payment	\$2500 / annual
Age Group 1	\$520 / per payment	\$2600 / annual
Age Group Bronze	\$540 / per payment	\$2700 / annual
Discovery 2	\$560 / per payment	\$2800 / annual
Age Group 2	\$580 / per payment	\$2900 / annual
Age Group Silver	\$600 / per payment	\$3000 / annual
Discovery 3	\$700 / per payment	\$3500 / annual
Age Group 3	\$720 / per payment	\$3600 / annual
Age Group Gold	\$740 / per payment	\$3700 / annual
Senior Prep	\$740 / per payment	\$3700 / annual
Senior 1	\$820 / per payment	\$4100 / annual
Senior 2	\$880 / per payment	\$4400 / annual
Senior 3	\$900 / per payment	\$4500 / annual
National	\$920 / per payment	\$4600 / annual

Additional

- One-Time \$450 Apparel Fee for new swimmers (charged online at time of registration).
- Other costs - Meet fees, training equipment, replacement apparel, and team travel.
- Expenses are charged through TeamUnify, our online billing platform.
- Late payments - After 10 days, a \$25 fee will be incurred. After 30 days, a \$100 fee.
- Refunds are not available unless specifically approved by the Head Coaches. Athletes will not be released from the team until any outstanding balance is paid.

Scholarship

Alto Swim Club works with Beyond Barriers Athletic Foundation to provide swimming scholarships for eligible families on our team. Eligible families will be reimbursed for their swimmers' group enrollment cost. Families must meet the program eligibility requirements. More information can be found here: [Beyond Barriers Athletic Foundation](https://www.beyondbarriers.org/).