

## **Good Reasons for Teaching Your Baby How To Swim**

1. Babies less than one year old accept the water more readily than older children. Often they will go under water during their first lesson!
2. Fear of water is acquired as children grow older. The longer the child is kept away from the water, the more likely the child will develop a fear of the water.
3. Babies are well adapted to swimming. When submerged they automatically hold their breath and make swimming movements. These reflex behaviors begin to fade as early as three months and need to be relearned.
4. Babies can exercise more muscles in the water. They are less restricted by gravity and their inability to sit or stand. The increased strength that water babies develop often manifests itself in the early acquisition of other motor skills, such as standing and walking.
5. Swimming improves the child's cardiovascular fitness. Water babies often sleep and eat better after exercise.
6. Water helps improve coordination and balance by allowing babies to move bilaterally to maintain their equilibrium.
7. Early mastery of water movement gives the child a head start on learning the basic swimming skills. Stroke instruction can begin as early as 18-24 months for children that have had early preparation.
8. Babies flourish in the focused attention they receive during swimming instruction. Many parents admit that swimming lessons provide the best opportunity for Mom and Dad to spend 30 minutes of uninterrupted time with their baby.
9. Swimming provides babies with lots of skin contact with their parents. According to psychologists, this deepens the bond between parent and child.
10. As babies learn to maneuver on their own in the water, their self confidence and self esteem grows...this is evident by the huge grins on their faces. Researchers believe that this independence and self confidence increases their interest in learning in general.
11. Learning to swim is not only a healthy and fun activity... it could save a life!
12. Please remember that swim lessons cannot guarantee that your child will not drown. Constant parental vigilance around the water is essential.