

ARTISTIC SWIMMING

Dynamic artistry!

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT
ARTISTIC SWIMMING,
ITS ORIGINS, EVENTS, ETC.

WHAT IS FINA?

**FINA IS THE WORLD GOVERNING
BODY FOR AQUATICS.**

FINA COMPRISES NOW
209 NATIONAL MEMBER
FEDERATIONS IN THE
FIVE CONTINENTS.



FOUNDED IN LONDON
JULY 19, 1908 
DURING THE OLYMPIC GAMES IN LONDON (GBR).

8 NATIONAL FEDERATIONS
WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS FORMATION:
Belgium | Denmark | Finland | France
Germany | Great Britain | Hungary | Sweden

WATER IS OUR WORLD

AQUATICS MEANS

SWIMMING, OPEN WATER SWIMMING,
DIVING, HIGH DIVING, WATER POLO,
ARTISTIC SWIMMING AND MASTERS.

THERE IS COUNTLESS VARIETY OF VALUES
AND PRINCIPLES ASSOCIATED WITH
EACH OF OUR DISCIPLINES:



SWIMMING

STRENGTH AND SPEED



OPEN WATER SWIMMING

CHALLENGE AND PERSEVERANCE



DIVING

BALANCE AND AGILITY



HIGH DIVING

COURAGE AND PERFECTION



WATER POLO

TEAM SPIRIT AND MENTAL TOUGHNESS



ARTISTIC SWIMMING

FLEXIBILITY AND GRACE



A BIT OF HISTORY

This activity has taken root during the interwar period (1920/1930s), especially in North America, although there were also occasional exhibitions in Germany.

However, before that, professional swimmers often introduced some “aesthetics performances” in the water. These aquatic shows were done by both men and women.

Despite already existing at the time of the FINA foundation in 1908, “fancy swimming” was not accepted as it had a major difficulty: how should the different performances and movements be chosen and evaluated?

A BIT OF HISTORY

1907

Annette Kellerman (AUS) was considered the first underwater artist, after performing in a glass tank in 1907.

1952

The three countries most contributing to the first set of rules, established in 1952, were the **USA, Canada and Argentina.**



North America (Canada and USA), plus Japan, were the initial powerhouses in the discipline.

1990s

Russia began its supremacy in the end of the 1990s and is presently the nation dominating the world hierarchy.

Spain, Ukraine, France, Italy, and China are also present in the medal charts of the main competitions.



Esther Williams, a former US swimming champion, was the one making the world know about this discipline thanks to her performances in highly successful Hollywood "aqua musicals".

1984



Synchronised Swimming was an Olympic demonstration sport from 1952 to 1968, before making its **official entry in the Games' programme in 1984.**



DESCRIPTION

ARTISTIC SWIMMING IS A SPORT
IN A UNIQUE CLASS OF ITS OWN.

IT IS A SPORT THAT INCORPORATES
ASPECTS OF OTHER SPORTS INCLUDING:
**SWIMMING, GYMNASTICS, BALLET,
WATERPOLO AND DIVING.**

THE ATHLETES DEMONSTRATE
**STRENGTH, PERFORMANCE ARTISTRY,
ACROBATICS AND POWER.**

**ALL THESE ATHLETIC MOVES ARE
SYNCHRONISED TO THE OTHER
SWIMMERS AND TO THE MUSIC;**
WHILE HOLDING YOUR BREATH UPSIDE DOWN
AND MOVING IN THE WATER.



ARTISTIC SWIMMING EVENTS

- 01 SOLO TECHNICAL
 - 02 SOLO FREE
 - 03 DUET TECHNICAL
 - 04 DUET FREE
 - 05 TEAM TECHNICAL
 - 06 TEAM FREE
 - 07 FREE COMBINATION
 - 08 MIXED DUET TECHNICAL
 - 09 MIXED DUET FREE
 - 10 HIGHLIGHT ROUTINE
-

NOTE: There is a figure event for Age Group swimmers.

ROUTINES EXPLAINED

NUMBER OF ATHLETES REQUIRED TO POWER A TEAM:

A TEAM ROUTINE CAN ONLY HAVE
EIGHT SWIMMERS.
TWO RESERVES CAN BE NAMED.

A Free Combination routine has eight to ten swimmers in the water at a time, again with two reserves out of the water ready to go if needed.

(World Championships Free Combination is required to have ten swimmers in the water.)

Finally, the Highlight Routine must have at least eight and no more than 10 swimmers in the water.



ROUTINES EXPLAINED



IF A ROUTINE IS MISSING A SWIMMER, IT WILL INCUR DEDUCTIONS. EACH SWIMMER LESS THAN THE REQUIRED NUMBER IN THE WATER IS A 0.5 POINT LESS ON THE TOTAL SCORE OF THE ROUTINE.

TECHNICAL ROUTINES HAVE REQUIRED ELEMENTS, FREE ROUTINES ARE JUST THAT - FREE.

LENGTH OF EACH ROUTINE

EVERY ROUTINE LASTS BETWEEN TWO AND ALMOST FIVE MINUTES, AND THE TIMES ARE DIFFERENT WITH EACH AGE CATEGORY.

TEAM ROUTINES – WHAT ARE THEY?

THE TEAM COMPETITION INCLUDES
A TECHNICAL ROUTINE AND
A FREE ROUTINE, WITH FINAL RESULTS
BASED ON THE COMBINED SCORES
FROM BOTH.

TEAM TECHNICAL ROUTINES
ARE TWO MINUTES 50 SECONDS

WHILE

TEAM FREE ROUTINES
ARE FOUR MINUTES

An underwater photograph of several swimmers in a pool. The swimmers are wearing colorful, patterned swimsuits in shades of purple, green, and blue. They are in various positions, some appearing to be in a race or a synchronized swim routine. The water is clear and blue, with light rays filtering through. A central white text box is overlaid on the image.

BELOW THE WATER

BELOW THE WATER IS ANOTHER WORLD OF SHEER POWER, STRENGTH AND SKILL THAT BRINGS THE ATHLETES' BODIES INTO SOMETIMES DANGEROUSLY CLOSE PROXIMITY TO EACH OTHER.

IT IS SOMETIMES A CONTACT SPORT - WHEN THE SWIMMERS ARE NOT ACCURATE ENOUGH IN THEIR POSITIONS!

FIGURES OR HIGHLIGHTS

EACH SECTION OF THE ROUTINE,
IS COMPOSED OF **"FIGURES"** OR **"HYBRIDS"**,
"TRANSITIONS" AND **"HIGHLIGHTS"**.

Figures

are the fundamental movements made with the legs above the water while the body is upside down in the water. Sustained height out of the water is important judging criteria for figures.



Hybrids

are complex figures of mixed origin or composition, that include variations of the fundamental figures described in the rules.

Transitions

are connecting movements which enable the athlete(s) to change from one movement to another



Highlights

Are a type of element where a sub group of athletes support, lift or throw one or more other athletes high above the water. Important components of highlight elements are their creativity and their difficulty – the sky is the limit!

Highlights can be done with the athlete supported by one or more body parts and the supported athlete may

THE JUDGING SCALE

**EACH ROUTINE IS EVALUATED
BY THREE PANELS OF FIVE JUDGES.**

IN TECHNICAL ROUTINES

these panels separately score the execution,
the impression and the elements.

IN FREE ROUTINES

the panels separately evaluate the execution,
the artistic impression and the difficulty.



THE JUDGING SCALE

EACH JUDGE AWARDS POINTS FROM
0 TO 10 USING TENTHS OF A POINT.

FOR EXAMPLE

A routine deemed to be **perfect** would score a **10**.

A **good** routine will fall in the **7.0 to 7.9** range.

A **very weak** routine would be scored from **2.0 to 2.9**.





HOW DO YOU CHOOSE MUSIC?



MUSIC IS INTEGRAL TO ARTISTIC SWIMMING

In the solo event, the swimmer has to synchronise with the music. While in other events, the swimmers not only have to be in sync with the music, they will also need to synchronise with their team mates.

Although the choice of music is not judged, it will support the theme of the performance and is often the inspiration for the choreography.

The choreography and performance will be expected to reflect the tempo, mood and feelings evoked by the music.

Choosing the music is often one of the first steps in creating a routine. Sometimes, different pieces of music are edited together to better suit the choreography or theme.

COSTUMES

**ARTISTIC SWIMMERS OFTEN HAVE
ELABORATE COSTUMES.**

These costumes and headwear are used to highlight or emphasise the chosen theme.

Although costumes are not judged and do not affect the scores, they are highly intricate and impactful.

This is because athletes wish to capture the attention of the judges and spectators from the moment they appear on the pool deck.





COSTUMES FOR ARTISTIC SWIMMING ARE MADE BY SPECIFIC COSTUME MAKERS.

This is because the designs will need to be interpreted and incorporated into the suit.

The suits need to be comfortable for the athletes when they perform their routines, an understanding of how the material moves and how much appliqués (pieces of fabric sewn on the main garment to form pictures or patterns) can be applied is important.

If the athletes are restricted in any way by their costumes, then they will not be able to perform to their best.





HAIR & MAKE-UP

**THE SECRET TO THEIR PERFECT COIF IS UN-FLAVOURED GELATIN.
UN-FLAVOURED GELATIN IS MIXED WITH WATER
AND BRUSHED ON THEIR HAIR BEFORE COMPETITION.**

**THE KEY INGREDIENT IN THE PASTE IS
SOFT EQUINE CARTILAGE, WHICH IS SAID TO BE
QUITE HEALTHY FOR HAIR. THE PASTE KEEPS THE HAIR
STIFF AND SHINY THROUGHOUT THE COMPETITION.**

HAIR & MAKE-UP

**ARTISTIC SWIMMERS
ALSO WEAR SPECIAL MAKEUP,
DESIGNED FOR UNDERWATER USE.**

THE MAKEUP IS MEANT TO BE SUITABLE FOR ATHLETIC COMPETITION AND IS SOMETIMES USED **TO HIGHLIGHT THE SWIMMER'S FEATURES SO IT IS EASIER FOR THE JUDGES AND SPECTATORS SEE THEIR FACIAL EXPRESSIONS FROM A DISTANCE - ALL PART OF THE ARTISTIC PRESENTATION OF THE ROUTINE.**



DID YOU KNOW ?

1934

THE TERM

"SYNCHRONISED SWIMMING" WAS INTRODUCED DURING THE PERFORMANCE OF AQUATIC ARTISTS AT THE **1934 WORLD FAIR IN CHICAGO (USA).**

2017

AFTER A VOTE AT THE 2017 FINA CONGRESS IN JULY 2017 IN BUDAPEST (HUN), FINA RENAMED **"SYNCHRONISED SWIMMING"** TO **"ARTISTIC SWIMMING"**.

WHY ?

THE CHANGE WAS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION AND TO ATTRACT A WIDER AUDIENCE TO A SPORT THAT HAS EXPANDED RECENTLY, INCLUDING HAVING MALE COMPETITORS.

THE NAME CHANGE GAVE THE SPORT AN ADDITIONAL ARTISTIC DIMENSION, NOT REPRESENTED IN THE FORMER NAME, WHICH OFTEN CREATED CONFUSION.

THE GENERAL PUBLIC BELIEVED IT MEANT "SYNCHRONISED WITH ONE ANOTHER". IN FACT IT WAS ALWAYS IMPLIED TO MEAN "SYNCHRONISED WITH THE MUSIC".

**DID YOU
KNOW ?**

**THE WALK-ON AND DECK WORK
SHOULD NOT EXCEED 30 SECONDS.**



DID YOU KNOW ?

TOUCHING THE BOTTOM

ARTISTIC SWIMMERS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO **TOUCH THE BOTTOM**. IF A SWIMMER IS CAUGHT TOUCHING THE BOTTOM, IT WILL RESULT IN A **ONE TO TWO POINTS PENALTY** ON THE ROUTINE'S SCORE.

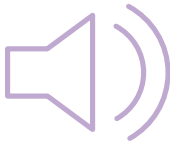


ARTISTIC SWIMMING PERFORMANCES LAST UP TO FOUR MINUTES, THREE OF WHICH THE ATHLETES OFTEN SPEND UNDERWATER.

Most swimmers can hold their breath for around three minutes and swim laps up to 75 metres underwater without taking a breath!

UNDERWATER SPEAKERS

ARTISTIC SWIMMERS USE SPEAKERS IN ORDER TO HEAR THE MUSIC WHILE UNDERWATER.



IN THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION PROCESS, THE MUSIC IS COUNTED USUALLY IN EIGHTS (5,6,7,8,...1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8...), AND EACH MOVE OR POSITION IS SET ON A PARTICULAR COUNT. THIS COUNTING ENSURES SYNCHRONISATION WITH THE MUSIC AND BETWEEN EACH SWIMMER. **THE ROUTINE WILL BE REHEARSED OVER AND OVER UNTIL MUSCLE MEMORY TAKES OVER AND COUNTING BECOMES TRIVIAL.**

THE IMPEDANCE OF WATER OF UNDERWATER SOUND IS 3,600 TIMES THAT OF AIR. THERE'S A 62-DECIBEL OFFSET BETWEEN SOUND IN THE AIR AND THAT IN WATER. **NORMAL TALKING IS APPROXIMATELY 60 DB, MEANING COMMUNICATING AT THAT SAME RELATIVE INTENSITY REQUIRES 122 DB IN THE POOL.**

DID YOU KNOW ?

IT HAS BEEN REPORTED THAT A TEST ON ALL THE OLYMPIC SPORTS BEFORE THE OLYMPIC GAMES LONDON 2012 FOUND THAT *synchronised swimmers ranked second only to long distance runners in aerobic capacity.*



THE CREATION OF THE ROUTINES HAS INVOLVED DOZENS OF EXPERTS, PEOPLE WILLING TO LOOK BEYOND THEIR SPECIALIST AREAS AND WORK TOGETHER AS A TEAM TO EMBRACE A ROUTINE AS PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER THEN THEMSELVES *and what they create is truly one of the most unique athletic sports.*

AN ARTISTIC SWIMMER WILL, IN GENERAL, NEVER SWIM A ROUTINE WITHOUT AT LEAST ONE AND UP TO THREE EXTRA NOSE CLIPS TUCKED IN HIS OR HER SUIT JUST IN CASE THEY GET KICKED OFF OR FALL OFF, WHICH OFTEN HAPPENS, AND BEING UPSIDE DOWN IN A POOL MUCH OF THE TIME MEANS GETTING WATER INTO THE NASAL CAVITY, WHICH CAN BE VERY PAINFUL!

A notable exception to this rule was former French star Virginie Dedieu, always performing without nose clip!



DID YOU KNOW ?

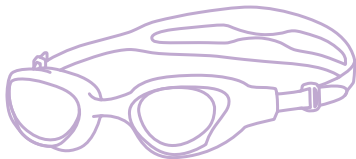
2015

2015 MARKED A MILESTONE IN THE DISCIPLINE:
THE INCLUSION OF MIXED DUET EVENTS
IN THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS.

*A new milestone
will be achieved in 2019,
with the inclusion of a new event,
the Highlight Routine.
A fan Favourite!*

MANY OF THE FIGURES IN ARTISTIC SWIMMING
HAVE ANIMAL DESIGNATIONS:

*dolphin, barracuda,
flamingo, butterfly....*



GOGGLES ARE ESSENTIAL IN SWIMMING,
BUT THEY'RE ACTUALLY BANNED
FROM ROUTINE COMPETITIONS.





FÉDÉRATION
INTERNATIONALE
DE NATATION

FOLLOW US
@FINA1908



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