

Water Sports



To do this interest project, you must pass a swimming test in front of a lifeguard. Jump into the water fully clothed (including shoes), right yourself, and stay afloat for five minutes.

Read *Safety-Wise* before doing any water-related activity. Always have a buddy, make sure there is a lifeguard, and wear a personal flotation device (PFD) for any water activity other than just swimming or splashing around. If you plan to work with others, read *Safety Management* at Girl Scout Sites and Facilities.

Skill Builders

1 Demonstrate basic self-rescue in the water with and without a PFD. Complete a swimming, emergency water safety, lifeguarding, or boating safety course to advance your skills in water safety.

2 Identify how exposure to the sun, wind, and water can be harmful, and which strategies will avoid these harmful effects. Learn how to recognize and administer basic first aid for sunburn, heat-stroke, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, hypothermia, frostbite, and seasickness. Know when to seek a doctor's help.

3 Demonstrate proper technique in at least three basic swimming strokes. Measure your endurance and set a goal to improve it. Or participate in one of the following ways: competitive, synchronized, therapeutic, or lap swimming.

4 Attend a water aerobics class for at least six sessions. Learn proper warm-up and stretching exercises, aerobic exercises, body sculpting exercises, and cool-down exercises.

5 This activity is for very accomplished swimmers only. Learn to use a snorkel, mask, and swim fins in a pool, lake, or ocean, under the guidance of an experienced person. Know what to look for in a mask, snorkel, and fins, and how they should fit you. Practice defogging the mask and clear-

ing the snorkel, as well as how to avoid ear problems with increased water pressure. Practice entering and leaving the water, surface swimming, and dives. Discuss basic safety and what you should know about the water environment before entering. Take care to leave underwater life and habitats undisturbed.

6 If you are an accomplished ocean swimmer, learn to surf. With an experienced instructor or advanced surfer, discuss your knowledge of ocean conditions such as the bottom, tides, currents, and wave action. In surf that matches your ability, demonstrate ways to avoid falling off your board, and ways of falling or diving from the board safely. Discuss and demonstrate ways of controlling the board. Be sure to do warm-up exercises and cool-down stretches for legs, arms, and back.

Technology

1 Visit a university or water sports training center. Learn what kinds of equipment and technology are employed to analyze and improve swim strokes or other water sports techniques. If possible, use some of this sports equipment under the guidance of a qualified expert.

2 Visit a sporting goods store, review water sports magazines, view a video, or speak to someone who uses the equipment to find out about the latest advances in equipment for a water sport of your choice. Consider snorkeling, scuba diving, windsurfing, water skiing, or surfing.

