

# Swim-power paddles

Thank you very much for choosing a Sport-Thieme product! Please read the instructions fully before you assemble the equipment so you can enjoy the product and safety is guaranteed. We are happy to respond to your questions and requests.



## 1. Attaching the rubber tubes

Each paddle requires two rubber tubes, a short one and a long one. The short rubber tube runs through the two narrow holes and holds the swimmer's middle finger. The long rubber tube runs through the two holes that are further apart and holds the swimmer's wrist (see no. 4 and 11).

## 2. Please note:

The holes in the paddles are that narrow on purpose, so the rubber tubes fit well when they are properly adjusted. However, they are still easy to adjust. How to do it: Press the rubber tube's tip together and insert from the inscribed side into the hole. Grip the rubber tube's tip from the other side with the finger tips and pull through a little bit. Now shorten and pull a little bit again. When you shorten, pull the rubber tube's ends carefully through the holes. Do not pull on the long rubber tube!

## 3. Adjusting the rubber tubes

Once all four rubber tube ends have been pulled through a paddle's holes, place your hand into the paddle and pull the rubber tubes until the paddle sits tightly. Only adjust them so that the rubber tube is not uncomfortably tight on the skin. When pulling the rubber tube through, always follow the steps as above and keep shortening.

## 4. Fit of the paddle

The longer rubber band should sit around the wrist. The shorter rubber tube holds the middle finger; if possible, it should sit high up on the finger, at least above the middle joint. This must be tried with the two large paddle sizes; a better individual fit should be ensured by the two sets of holes, see also no. 11!

## 5. Changing the rubber tube

Should a rubber tube be lost or tear through pulling too hard (without shortening), replacement rubber tubes can be ordered. However, it is also possible for you to buy similar rubber tubes yourself (technical rubber supplies). Experience has shown that some swimmers prefer flat rubber. Strips cut from old bicycle tubes are also perfectly suitable for feeding through the Champion paddles' holes.

## 6. Improving swimming style

Swimming with paddles can improve the swimming movements for several reasons:

### 7. Mistakes become more obvious

You cannot see, if you pull correctly and use the water resistance well, you can only feel it using the "muscle sense". This is very difficult, particularly when it is about fine tuning. Paddles makes the palm of the hand much bigger and every incorrect adjustment in hand position therefore has a much bigger effect. With paddles, the swimmer will notice this much earlier and more clearly than without paddles.

### 8. Bad mistakes show up automatically

During the swimming movement, swimmers must always hold their hands at the angle that allows them to feel the full water resistance behind the hand. This means basically, the hand must be perpendicular to the direction of movement. Swimmers often do not do this - without even noticing. With the paddles, a swimmer knows immediately when it is happening: as soon as the hand is no longer at a 90 degree angle to the pulling direction, water gets behind the bent paddle end and pushes the paddle away from the hand. One can feel this very clearly! Just "stroking the water" as many do during the breast stroke arm pull is not possible with the paddles!

### 9. "Clean execution of the pressure phase"

The arm movement's last phase is called "pressure phase" It is often neglected. That's not possible with paddles: if you pull the hand out of the water too early, the resistance at the "kink" is so strong that it becomes really uncomfortable and the swimmer knows immediately what he or she has just done incorrectly.

## 10. You have to learn swimming with paddles!

Swimming with paddles requires skill. First, it has to be learned. Swimmer and coach should not lose patience prematurely. After a short while, you can handle the new device perfectly.

## 11. For advanced users: attachment with one rubber tube!

As soon as you can handle the paddles perfectly, you should try them without the long rubber tube. The paddle is then only attached to the middle finger. Because of this, the swimmer has to pay even more attention to feeling the full water resistance is always on the paddle's underside. The smallest mistake and the water pushes the paddle away.

## 12. Paddles in learning to swim

With paddles, learners experience much clearer and faster how you can and must use the water resistance on the hands, in order to pull yourself forwards in the water using arms and legs. Learners practice alternately with and without paddles. The first exercises with paddles: At first, arm movements whilst standing, then whilst walking in chest or neck-deep water. The most important exercise for beginners: pike with a push from the wall (completely flat position, arms stretched out to the front, head between the arms), then extend gliding through a couple of arm strokes (e.g. across the non-swimmer pool). Breathe in before, in modern teaching breathing in swimming is ignored at first. We focus on the movements; Breathing is only added when the movements are perfect over a short distance (10–15 m). The swimming style does not matter! We follow this process for teaching any swimming style.

When these important exercise are executed a couple of times with paddles, then without paddles and so on, alternately, the learner will quickly have the decisive experience: glide on the water pull yourself forwards a long distance using arm movements! Once this is mastered, the leg movements are added. Paddles (particularly in size IV, orange) substantially shorten the time it takes to achieve important learning goals!

## 13. Change the paddle size!

You can't keep swimming with a large paddle and then suddenly change to "bare skin"! Experience tells us that training resistance perception and transferring the acquired strength to competitions are most efficient when different paddle sizes are used and swimming with and without paddles is alternated. In hard training large paddles are mostly used, in training close to competitions the small ones.

## Paddles in training of the four swimming styles:

Paddles are used in all four swimming styles. Paddles always require a clean dip, a correct stroke and a perfect pressure phase. In paddle swimming, all of this is practised stroke by stroke. In front crawl, backstroke and butterfly swimming, the use of paddles hardly poses a difficulty. Pull and pressure phase are easier to feel than without paddles. With paddles, front crawl and backstroke swimmers find it much easier to feel whether the propulsion from the left and the right arm alternate exactly or if there are breaks in the propulsion. In butterfly swimming, you learn very quickly with paddles how far you can pull to the outside and which angle of the hands provides the best propulsion. The breaststroke swimmer must be particularly skilful, as hands have to be moved to the front underwater. This skill in particular is improved through paddle swimming. Experienced breaststroke swimmers bend their paddles in such way that they have the shape of the typical breaststroke hand position.

## Improving the breast arm stroke

The breast arm stroke requires special mention. Most breaststroke swimmers move far too little with their arm stroke and rely too much on their effective leg stroke. The arm stroke's capabilities are utilised too little. Most of the time, only the outward stroke creates propulsion; the inwards direct pressure phase is mostly neglected. Often, three mistakes can be observed during this phase:

1. the hands are too flat,
2. the elbows are lowered or pressed against the ribs,
3. movement of the arms is slowed down or even stopped completely (particularly when breathing in only starts at this point).

Most of the time these three mistake occur together. It is better, to execute the arm stroke in one movement until pushing the arms forwards, to keep the elbows up as long as possible (requires a lot of strength) and to feel resistance even during the pressure phase in order to increase propulsion. Using paddles, this breast arm stroke efficiency (particularly during the second phase) can be trained and checked particularly well.

## **Paddle swimming improves swimming strength and stamina**

Swimming with “increased palms” requires more strength if you want to achieve the same times as before, without paddles. Where more strength is required, the muscles adapt to the increased demand during training and in the end they can perform better.

It is obvious that paddle swimming trains the exact muscles that are used for swimming. Paddles are therefore, together with exercises on pulling ropes, pulling machines and MiniGym, a valuable aid in swimming specific strength training.

At the same time, paddle swimming is also a kind of overload training and improves stamina (the local muscle stamina) over a certain swimming competition distance. At the start of the training the times with paddles are much slower than the current personal best. During the training process, the muscle performance improves and the times become faster - they get closer to the current personal best. If you now carefully maintain and train the resistance feeling on bare skin, you can expect a new best time over the same distance.

## **About the training:**

Basically, you can swim the same training programmes as before. Based on our experience, the following should be observed in paddle training:

1. More stroke frequency checks than before,
2. keep effort constant, compare stroke frequency with and without paddles,
3. correct style mistakes one by one; correct the next mistake only when the previous one has been sorted out completely! Afterwards, check without paddles,
4. increase hard repetition series with arm stroke only (from 10 times to 40 times 50 or 100 metres),
5. there should always be relaxed swimming without paddles after paddle training, followed by a test with frequency and time check,
6. change the paddle size from time to time. During competition periods use the small paddles more often than the large ones.