

Codes of Exception

The Codes of Exception are assigned to an athlete by the classifiers and are only to guide the technical officials. The technical official shall officiate by the World Para Swimming Rules and Regulations and NOT by the Codes of Exception. The Codes of Exception are referred to within the WPS Rules and Regulations within Part A – General, Definitions.

Code	Exception	WPS Rule/Reg	Interpretation and Guidance
H	Hearing Impaired – Light or Signal Required	11.1.6 11.1.7 11.1.8 1.4.4.3	Swimmer with hearing impairment and requires a light, signal or touch start. A strobe light may be placed by the starter or beside the relevant swimmers blocks. Other signals can be used such as an arm gesture. Support Staff may be used to perform a touch start.
Y	Starting Device	11.1.2.8 11.3.1.3	Swimmer uses a device when starting. A starting device is any assistive device that enables the swimmer to perform an effective start. Typical devices include straps, cords or towels which enable swimmers to grip effectively for backstroke or forward starts. Starting devices must be approved by WPS prior to use.
E	Unable to Grip for Backstroke Start	11.3.1.2	Swimmer is unable to hold the backstroke grips due to missing or weak hands and/or wrist. This code means a swimmer is permitted to start in backstroke without using the backstroke grips, holding the top of the starting/timing pad instead.
A	Assistance Required	11.1.2.2 11.1.2.8 11.1.7 11.1.8 11.3.1.3	Swimmer requires assistance at the start or finish. Swimmers are entitled to a Support Staff who provides assistance at the start, to enter the pool or access the starting blocks prior to commencing the race and/or to assist exiting the pool at the end of the race.
T	Tappers	10.8.3 10.8.3.1 10.8.3.2 10.8.3.3 11.7.12	Swimmer with visual impairment who require a tapper. A tapper will use a tapping device to notify the swimmer when they are approaching the turn, by a single or double tap onto the swimmer. A tapping device is typically homemade consisting of a rod or pole long enough to reach out into the lane with a soft end piece. Tappers are compulsory for S/SB/SM11 swimmers. If a tapper is required at both ends, a separate tapper must be used. Tapping devices must be approved by WPS prior to use.
B	Blackened Goggles	11.8.8	For S/SB/SM11 swimmers it is compulsory to wear blackened goggles unless they have two (2) prosthetic eyes. The goggles should be checked at the end of the race by a technical official. If the swimmer has no eyes they are not required to wear blackened goggles.
0	Nil	N/A	No exceptions apply to the swimmer.
1	One Hand Start	11.3.1.1	The swimmer cannot grip the start with 2 hands. They will place one hand/arm on the start, but the other arm may sit next to the gripping arm, be in the water, or be non-existent.
2	Breaststroke – One Hand Touch	11.4.6.3	The swimmer uses one arm to perform the swim stroke, so must touch at the turn and finish with the one hand or arm used for the swim. The non functioning arm may be dragged or stretched forward.
3	Breaststroke – Simultaneous Intent to Touch	11.4.6.1 11.4.6.4	The swimmer uses both arms to perform the swim stroke. The swimmer must attempt to touch the wall with both hands simultaneously. This exception means only the longer arm may touch the wall, but both arms must be stretched forward simultaneously.
4	Butterfly – One Hand Touch	11.5.4.3	The swimmer uses one arm to perform the swim stroke, so must touch at the turn and finish with the one hand or arm used for the swim. The non functioning arm may be dragged or stretched forward.
5	Butterfly – Simultaneous Intent to Touch	11.5.4.1 11.5.4.4	The swimmer uses both arms to perform the swim stroke. The swimmer must attempt to touch the wall with both arms/hands stretched forward. This exception means only the longer arm may touch the wall, but both arms must be stretched forward simultaneously.
7	Part of Upper Body Must Touch	11.4.6.2 11.5.4.2	Allows for any part of the swimmers upper body to touch the wall at the turn or finish. Athletes will typically touch with their head or shoulders or their shortened arm(s).
8	Right Foot Must Turn Out	11.4.5.1	The swimmer must turn out their right foot when performing the propulsive part of the breaststroke kick.
9	Left Foot Must Turn Out	11.4.5.1	The swimmer must turn out their left foot when performing the propulsive part of the breaststroke kick.
12	Leg Drag OR Show Intent To Kick	11.4.4.1	The swimmer may choose to either drag both legs or show intent to kick. The swimmer must maintain the leg drag or the intent to kick throughout the race and may not change. E.g. a swimmer cannot drag legs for first 50m then begin kicking in the last 50m.
+	Athlete is physically capable of performing a Butterfly Kick	11.4.1 11.4.5	The '+' code is not so much a rule exception but rather informs officials the swimmer is physically capable of performing a butterfly kick. If this action is observed during the normal breaststroke cycle, it is a violation of WPS Rule 11.4.5. Remember: Any swimmer is permitted to take a single butterfly kick at any time prior to the first breaststroke kick after the start or turn as detailed in WPS Rule 11.4.1
Freestyle		No Exceptions (Nil)	
Backstroke		Only Exception '1' may apply	
Butterfly		Exceptions '4, 5, 7' may apply	
Breaststroke		Exceptions Upper Body '2, 3, 7' may apply Lower Body '8, 9 or 12, +' may apply	

This resource is to be used as a guide only and does not substitute for thorough knowledge and application of the WPS Rules and Regulations.