



New to Water Polo FAQ's

Can I do a free trial practice before I join? Of course! Come to any practice and let us know you are trying it out. We'll get you acclimated, and you can see if water polo is right for you.

What Skills do I need to join a water polo team?

- **Junior Athletes (8th grade and under):** Must swim 50 yards without stopping and tread water for 3 minutes.
- **High School (9th Grade to College Freshman):** Must swim 100 yards freestyle and tread water for 5 minutes.

What age can I join Orlando Thunder?

Athletes are encouraged to join as soon as they are athletically ready. Our youngest athlete is 8 years old. In Central Florida there is not much competition for 10U athletes at this time, but we are working on it.

Most Central Florida athletes start in Middle School and many start playing in High School. Those athletes joining before High School often have the skills to make an immediate impact on their varsity HS water polo team, often as starters.

What do I need for my first practice? Just wear a swimsuit! Bring a water bottle, towel and have fun!

But I don't know anything about water polo... That's totally fine! Athletes are grouped by age and ability level, so beginners are always welcome.

Is practice all we do? Practice is a big part! We also participate in scrimmages, playdays, and tournaments to enhance skills, experience, and fun.

- *Scrimmages* - all athletes get to play to gain game experience. Held on all days of the week.
- *Play Days* - help athletes learn and gain formal game experience with USAWP referees, Occur Saturday or Sunday against a local team and all athletes get to play
- *Tournaments* - provide competitive opportunities and involve travel within and out of Florida. Approximately one a month. As water polo is a growing sport, we often need the experience and competition of traveling teams to bring our skills to the next level. It is an honor to be selected as only 10-13 athletes are chosen from each age group to participate.

Why do I have to join USA Water Polo to play with Orlando Thunder? USA Water Polo membership covers insurance for all club activities and is required for tournament participation. Different membership levels are available to suit different levels of involvement. The entry level, Bronze, is great for beginners. See our USAWP page under the Registration tab for more info.

When is your next season? We have four seasons throughout the year:

- **Fall (August - October):** High School up to 3 days a week, Juniors 3 days a week.
- **Winter (November - January):** High School 5 days a week, Juniors 3 days a week.
- **Spring (February - April):** Juniors 2 to 3 days a week.

- **Summer (April - July):** High School 5 days a week, Juniors 2 days a week during school, and 5 days a week once school is out.

Swim Team & Water Polo

We encourage all athletes to participate in both swimming and water polo for enhanced training and skill development. [SLAC](#) and Orlando Thunder work well together to support dual sport athletes.

Why would I want my child to play water polo?

Water Polo is an Olympic sport played globally, known for its comprehensive athletic demands and benefits such as teaching calmness under pressure. Many of our athletes continue to play in college and beyond, fostering a lifelong passion for competition and camaraderie.

Our athletes are physically fit, do well in school, and have a family of friends. Our games last about 50 minutes. When the game is over, your athlete is exhausted, hungry, and clean. What other pastimes can make those claims?