

STEPS TOWARD A CATALINA CHANNEL ATTEMPT

Swimmers considering a crossing must take several steps with the **Catalina Channel Swimming Federation**

before jumping in the water. It is important that you take an honest account of your abilities, the support crew you can recruit, and the time commitment a Channel swim requires. Once you believe you are prepared to make an attempt:

YOUR FIRST STEPS

- **Contact a [boat pilot](#)**
- **Secure your swim date and contract with the pilot**
- The CCSF works closely with the recommended boat pilots, but they are independent of the CCSF and determine their own schedule and charges
- **Confirm** with your boat pilot the **date you are to meet at the docks**. Catalina attempts typically start the evening of one date, and are completed the next day
- Questions concerning the **channel swim** should be directed toward the CCSF info@SwimCatalina.org
- Questions concerning **your escort boat** should be directed toward the captain
- Download the CCSF Swim Application for [SOLO swimmers](#) or [RELAY teams](#)
- Become familiar with what the CCSF requires of swimmers: **Please read the [CCSF Rules](#)** and **note the application deadlines.**

STARTING IN JANUARY

- **Visit your doctor** and complete the medical form in the swim application – We suggest you schedule an appointment as early as you can, but in the year of your attempt. Our health can rapidly change: Last year's physical is unacceptable.
- **Complete** the [CCSF Swim Application](#) for [SOLO swimmers](#) or [RELAY teams](#)

- Sign the waivers – An incomplete application will not be considered nor accepted. There is a checklist included with the application to help swimmers confirm they have a complete package
- **Address questions** concerning your application process to info@SwimCatalina.org
- **Deliver your application**, medical form, and fees to the CCSF at the same time
- **Make a copy of your application** for your personal records
- The CCSF offers a **discount in the sanction fee** for delivery of your complete application before May 1 -- An incomplete application will not be accepted

- Application must arrive – at a minimum – **60 days in advance** of your attempt
- The CCSF will contact you and **confirm the receipt** of your application

DURING THE YEAR OF YOUR ATTEMPT

- Train for a [cold open water](#) **20-mile Channel crossing**, which is influenced by unpredictable currents, strong wind, large Pacific swells, and is made more challenging with a midnight start
- Consider [bilateral breathing](#) . Swimming adjacent to a boat and a kayak at night requires that the swimmer has full awareness on both their left and right.

- **Recruit a support team** that will be supportive. There is an age restriction for children on an escort vessel. Also, members who are susceptible to seasickness must take precautions or consider supporting you on land
- One support member ought to be named **Crew Chief** and take the lead role of coordinating the support team and fully understand the swimmer's feeding protocols – This is often the coach, but must always be an individual who is not susceptible to seasickness or has reliable precautions against it
- An experienced cold water swimmer, kayaker, and support member [blogged about the demands](#) placed on the swimmer's crew and how the swimmer and team members can best prepare in advance

- The CCSF can [assist in connecting](#) you with paddle support
- It is the **swimmer's responsibility** to recruit kayak or paddle support. Paddlers are recommended. Most swimmers feel more comfortable with a kayak adjacent to them while swimming in the darkness
- Make **travel plans** for you and your support team. We recommend a couple of days advance arrival to adjust to a time zone change. In particular, international swimmers may want more time to adjust

WEEKS BEFORE YOUR SWIM

- Review the [CCSF Rules](#)
- The CCSF will **assign two official observers** for your attempt. An introduction will be made in advance
 - The CCSF Observers conduct a **safety meeting** on board the boat. The captains will also require a **pre-swim briefing** of vessel rules and instructions.
- Swimmers are required to arrive at the boat with at least [12 glow sticks](#)
- **Paddlers** provide a [thick safety line](#) and attach it to the **bow of the Kayak**. Your observer and boat captain can answer questions or assist in tying the line
- Swimmers are **required to bring a copy** of their “Plan Your Swim/ Swim Your Plan” form which is a portion of the CCSF application
 - Swimmers are strongly encouraged to have the lead support member carry on board a copy of their **medical form, insurance cards, and ID cards**
- . As well as emergency contacts of family on shore