

*Upon perusing the latest issue of Triathlete Magazine, Rammona thought a lot of our customers could really benefit from several of the articles. We all agreed and have put together this packet of information for you. It includes advice on everything from triathlon training to proper equipment to handling the fear of open water swimming.*

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## The Experts at [WETSUITRENTAL.COM](http://WETSUITRENTAL.COM) on the Open Water Swim

Open bodies of water like oceans and lakes provide challenges; deep water, cold water, strong currents and large waves. Understand your swim capabilities. You can't stand up on the bottom when you get tired. Hypothermia is for real. Understand what water temperatures you can tolerate and for what lengths of time. Know the currents present prior to entering the water and honestly assess your ability to deal with them. We all have limits when it comes to the above challenges. As you accumulate experience in open water, these limits will rise. Be patient, take one step at a time and before you know it you'll be swimming a mile or two in your favorite lake or ocean.

1. **Swim with a buddy or group.** There is safety in numbers. You just don't know what will happen in a lake or the deep blue sea. Keep an eye on your buddy and your buddy will keep an eye on you.

2. **Swim near a lifeguard.** Not only should you swim near a lifeguard, but you should also ask the lifeguard for advice of where best to swim if you're new to the location. They are always full of good info about the local conditions of the water they guard.

3. **Stay safe.** Stay out of the boat lanes. Avoid rocky areas. Don't swim in a surf zone. Wear a bright colored cap. If the surf is too big, don't go out. If the water is too cold, wear a wetsuit!

4. **Practice open water swimming.** Please don't make your first triathlon's open water swim your first time in open water. Start small. First time out, just swim out a few yards and see how you feel. If you feel good, go out a little farther and then return to the beach. Do this a few times and build your confidence up. It's all very different than the pool; less visibility, different taste than pool water, no line on the bottom to follow and you can't stand on the bottom or grab the lane line to relax. The more you practice, the more comfortable and better you'll get.

5. **Use all the gear available.** Wear a bright swim cap for added warmth and to make you more visible to boaters, other swimmers and to the lifeguard. Ear plugs help to prevent feeling dizzy once on land. If you wear ear plugs and you still feel light-headed back on land, you may not be exhaling completely. Any cheap wax or rubber plugs work. Wear goggles and use anti-fog drops. Wear a wetsuit. With a wetsuit on you can't sink and you'll stay much warmer. If the water is really cold, wear two swim caps or one thermal cap. Apply Body Glide to your neck area to prevent chaffing from your wetsuit.

6. **Do the right thing.** Learn how to duck under the waves as you go through the surf. Duck, take a few strokes, duck, take a few strokes. Get those strokes in between waves so you can finally make it past the surf line. You should be able to swim twice the distance in the pool that you intend to swim in open water. Remain calm at all times. Don't freak out if you run into some seaweed. It's just a plant! The main thing is to stop and breathe easy.