

American Red Cross Lifeguard Class Prerequisites

The purpose of the American Red Cross Lifeguarding course is to provide entry-level lifeguard participants with the knowledge and skills to prevent recognize and respond to aquatic emergencies and to provide care for breathing and cardiac emergencies, injuries and sudden illnesses until emergency medical services personnel take over.

To enroll in the Lifeguarding course, you must be at least 15 years old before the last scheduled class session. To participate in the course, you must be able to pass prerequisite skills evaluation by doing the following:

1. Swim 300 yards continuously demonstrating breath control and rhythmic breathing. You may swim using the front crawl, breaststroke or a combination of both but swimming on the back or side is not allowed. Swim goggles may be used.
2. Tread water for 2 minutes using only the legs. You should place your hands under your armpits.
3. Complete a timed event within 1 minute, 40 seconds.
 - Starting in the water, swim 20 yards. Your face may be in or out of the water. Swim goggles are not allowed.
 - Surface dive, feet-first or head-first, to a depth of 7 to 10 feet to retrieve a 10-pound object.
 - Return to the surface and swim 20 yards on your back to return to the starting point with both hands holding the object while keeping your face at or near the surface so you are able to get a breath. You should not swim the distance under water. Exit the water without using a ladder or steps.

Participants will need to schedule an appointment to take the prerequisite skills evaluation. Please bring a swimsuit and towel for the skills evaluation and for every class.

To successfully complete the course, you must attend the entire course, participate in all skill sessions/ drills, activities and scenarios, demonstrate competency in all required skills and scenarios, and pass the final written exams with a minimum grade of 80 percent.

The practice sessions will require some strenuous physical activity. You are encouraged to check with your health care professional before participating in the practice sessions. If you have a medical condition or disability that might prevent you from participating in the activities, or have questions about being able to fully participate in the Lifeguarding course, please contact YWCA Aquatics & Wellness Director to discuss before the course begins.

Upon successful completion of the course, you will receive an American Red Cross certificate for Lifeguarding/First Aid/CPR/AED, valid for 2 years.