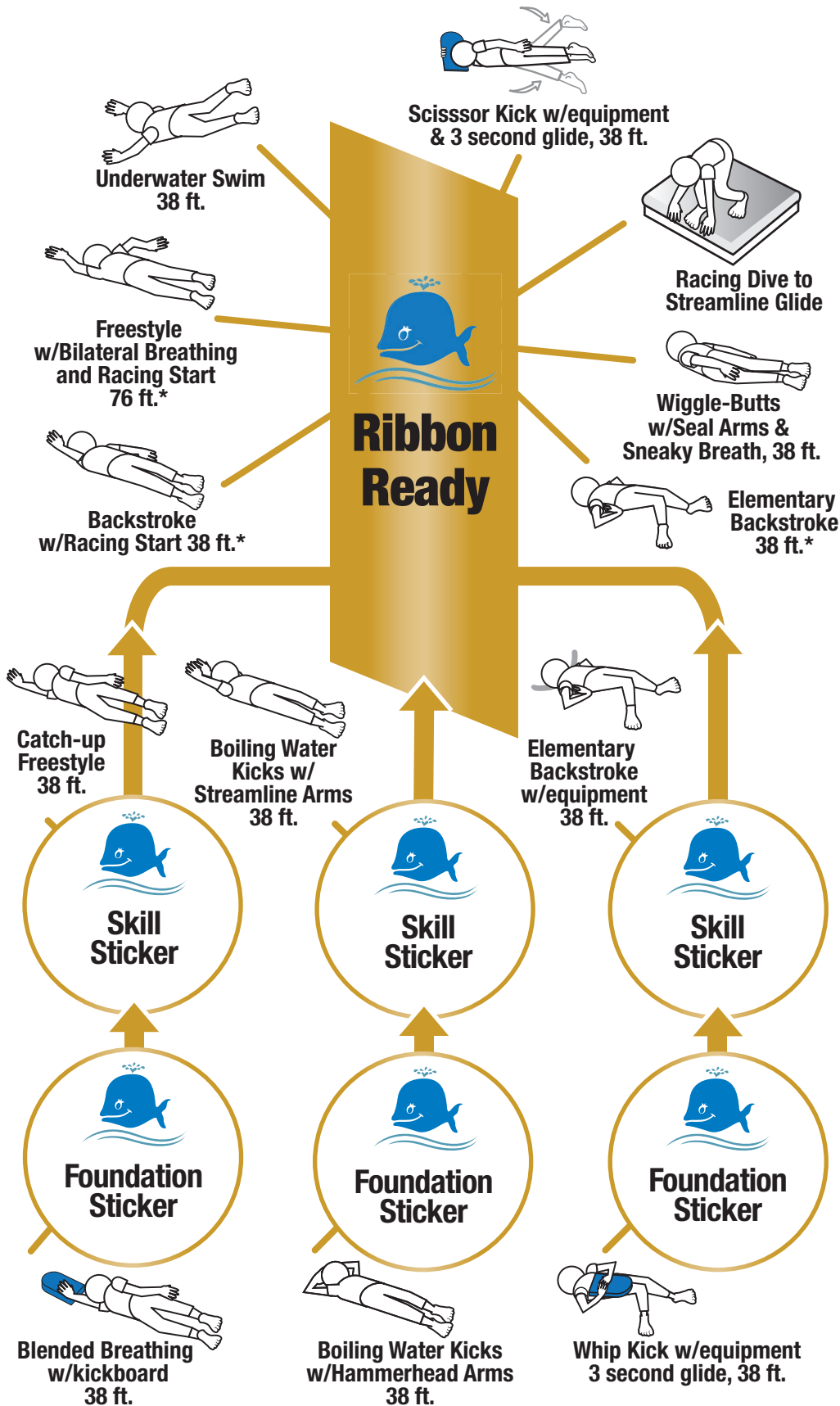


# Little Fin Progress Report: Level 4 (Gold Ribbon)

**Goals:**

In Level 4, students learn the basics of the four competitive strokes and Sidestroke. Some skills like Freestyle and Backstroke will come together completely in Level 4, while Sidestroke, Breaststroke and Butterfly will be limited to building core strength and the foundational kicks necessary to move on to our Gold Plus class.



**What this means for parents:**

After your child graduates Level 4, they have successfully completed the La Petite Baleen learn-to-swim program. Congratulations!! They have earned their gold ribbon and are competent and confident swimmers. They can pass basic recreational swim tests (camp, school, etc.) and have the minimum skills required by many junior swim teams. We encourage all Level 4 students to continue their swimming journey in our Gold Plus class.



## Level 4

### Homework Suggestions

The following homework suggestions provide additional opportunities for students to build proper muscle memory, and the strength needed to do the Level Four skills.

#### Blended Breathing

- (Note: this should only be taught to students who are able to comfortably do up-faces for 38 feet. It is important that students first have the ability to comfortably hold their breath for 5 seconds in the water.)
- Blowing/humming in the shower (breathe in --> exhale into the water)
- Back float in tub, dribble water on face, blow off. (If they get water in their nose during backstroke/ racing starts.)
- While "bouncing" up & down (bobbing), or holding the wall and going up & down, the student can blow bubbles by humming. The student is humming on the way down and on the way up. This is great to practice at family swim!
- Emphasize the pattern : (one breath in --> exhale underwater --> repeat)

#### Kicking

- Lay flat with back on floor, lift legs an inch or two off the ground, and point toes. Do 10 kicks. Rest and repeat. Roll over on tummy, lift legs an inch or two off the floor, and point toes. Do 10 kicks. Rest and repeat. Do 5 sets of each kicking exercise to strengthen back and tummy muscles, and improve kicks.

#### Freestyle

- Look in the mirror while doing basic freestyle, large circle arms ("big arms").
- The arms should rotate in a forward direction and the hands should touch in front ("catch-up arms").

#### Backstroke

- Look in the mirror and rotate arms in a backward motion.
- The arms should be long and straight, and always opposite each other.

#### Breaststroke/Elementary Back:

- The Whip Kick on the stomach will help stretch hip extensors and prevent the student from pulling the knees toward the chest.
- Go slow, making sure toes point out as heels turn in. This creates flexibility in the ankles and knees.
- During the kick, the feet are flexed. The toes only point when the legs are long and straight, in the glide position.
- Standing with one hand on the wall, children can practice the "whip kick" one leg at a time, catching their foot at their bottom and making their toes flex outward.

#### Butterfly/Wiggle-Butts

- From a floor tummy position, with arms at their side, children should arch their back and lift their chin up to practice getting a "sneaky breath" for Wiggle-Butts.
- While doing this, the feet/legs should remain "glued" together like one big dolphin/mermaid tail.
- To practice body movement, have child do mad cat, fat cat.
- To strengthen shoulders and back, lay down on the tummy and reach arms straight forward with backs of hands touching, thumbs down.
- Lift arms about 1-2 inches off the ground. While keeping arms straight, move them down toward the hips and back up quickly (palms facing the feet when in the down position and "silly clapping" when returning to the start position.) Do 5-10 times fast. Rest and repeat.

#### Sidestroke

- On the floor, practice the scissor kick. The legs should open and close like scissors. When opening, the bottom leg should go back toward the buttocks and the top leg moves forward. When closing, the legs stop when coming together for a count of three (glide). Repeat after each three second count.