



HELP for
HEROES

OPERATION SWIM

What lengths would you
go to for our veterans?

**HELP for
HEROES**

 Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**

Help for Heroes is a limited company registered in
England (06363256), and a charity registered in
England and Wales (1120920) and Scotland (SC044984).

WELCOME TO OPERATION SWIM

Thank you for signing up to complete your swimming challenge this June. By taking part, you're supporting our veterans of today, whilst commemorating our heroes of yesterday.

This virtual challenge takes place each June to commemorate D-Day on 6 June 1944, with five swim distances (5km–47km) reflecting the varying lengths of the Normandy beaches where this historic event occurred.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide is here to help you feel confident and prepared before you start. Rest assured, you don't need to be an experienced swimmer to take part; this is your challenge to do your way. However far you swim and however much you raise will help change the lives of veterans and their families.

Inside this guide, you can find out:

- How the challenge works.
- About the swimming distances.
- Simple guidance to set up and use your fundraising page.
- How to stay motivated and supported throughout the month.

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WHY OPERATION SWIM?

This virtual swimming challenge commemorates D-Day on 6 June 1944, when Allied forces landed on the Normandy beaches to help liberate Nazi-occupied Europe.

Each distance reflects the varying lengths of those beaches, giving your swim a shared purpose and a meaningful moment of reflection.

TAILOR YOUR SWIMMING CHALLENGE TO SUIT YOU

Simply choose from one of the distances listed below to complete during June.

Whether you swim regularly or it's been a while since you've gone for a dip, this challenge has been designed to suit a range of abilities and experience levels, so there's a distance to suit you and your lifestyle.

OPERATION SWIM DISTANCES

- **Utah** – 5km (200 lengths of a 25-metre pool)
- **Omaha** – 7km (280 lengths of a 25-metre pool)
- **Gold, Juno or Sword** – 11.5km (460 lengths of a 25-metre pool)
- **Gold, Juno and sword** – 35km (1,400 lengths of a 25-metre pool)
- **All beaches combined** – 47km (1,880 lengths of a 25-metre pool)

You can complete your swims at any time in June and adapt your approach to the challenge if needed. What matters most is taking part.

Please prioritise safety, if swimming outdoors, make sure you're not alone and that it's permitted.

“

I took part to improve my personal fitness, fundraise and to honour the D-Day generation who never gave up. ”

Robert, Operation Swimmer

BEFORE YOU START

Get ready for your challenge with these five simple steps.

1. Sign up to Operation Swim and choose your distance via our **website**.
2. Log in to your Help for Heroes fundraising page; you'll receive a link to this by email after registration. (If you do not receive an email, please contact **facebookfundraisers@helpforheroes.org.uk**).
3. Create your own JustGiving page where people can donate online. (You can find a link to JustGiving on your fundraising hub).
4. Join the **Operation Swim Facebook group**.
5. Spread the word that you're taking part on your socials, and share your JustGiving page with friends, family and colleagues. **Check out our frames and filters here**.

“

Receiving emails from Help for Heroes and reading lovely posts from fellow swimmers on the Operation Swim Facebook page really motivated me to keep going. ”

Lesley, Operation Swimmer



By awarding Sir Peter's Medal, recognizing Allied forces on the Normandy

FUNDRAISING MADE EASY

Fundraising needn't feel overwhelming; just follow these simple steps, and you'll be ready to see those donations start rolling in.

- Set up your own JustGiving page through your fundraising hub.
- Complete your JustGiving page 'about' section to tell everyone why you're taking part in the challenge.
- When people see donations, they're more likely to chip in. So why not donate on your page to show everyone how serious you are about your challenge?
- Join our Operation Swim Facebook page for motivation and fundraising tips.
- Share your JustGiving page with friends, family and colleagues and invite them to donate.
- Add your JustGiving QR code to your Apple, Google or Samsung wallet.

SPREAD THE WORD!

The more people who know about your fundraising, the more money you'll raise so it's worth investing time in getting the word out there.

APPROACH YOUR LOCAL PRESS

Consider getting interest from your local newspaper, radio station or TV news channel. To get them interested, talk about you and why you're taking the plunge for our Armed Forces community. That's what will make your fundraising story stand out. We have a press release template we can share with you, along with step-by-step advice on how to

approach your local media. Contact us at fundraise@helpforheroes.org.uk to get yours.

WORK YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK

Social media is a great way to keep friends and followers up to date with your challenge and build a buzz about your fundraising. Share your photos and videos and let people know why you're taking part. By hearing about your progress, more people will be inspired to donate.

Don't forget to tag us so we can celebrate your amazing activities:

 [@HelpforHeroesOfficial](https://www.facebook.com/HelpforHeroesOfficial)

 [@helpforheroes](https://www.instagram.com/helpforheroes)

“
When it comes to fundraising,
I recommend sharing your
JustGiving link far and wide
and getting as many people as
possible to share it too! ”

Matt, Operation Swimmer

HOW YOUR FUNDRAISING HELPS

Your money will change the lives of veterans and their families by providing:

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Our Hidden Wounds counsellors support veterans and their families with a wide range of mental health challenges, including PTSD, anger, grief, depression, and anxiety.

CLINICAL SUPPORT

Our Nursing team works closely with veterans to provide practical support that helps them reach their physical health goals. That might be something like helping someone regain mobility or even learn to walk again after a life-changing injury.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Our Occupational Therapists visit veterans and their families at home to identify everyday things which have become challenging. From getting in or around the house to being able to navigate outside again. From here, they help find things to help make daily life easier, like home adaptations and mobility aids.

PHYSICAL AND SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

We work with a range of therapists to ensure veterans get the right support for their individual needs. That might mean sourcing a physiotherapist to help with movement and

recovery, or a speech and language therapist to support communication.

SPORTING, SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

Our sporting activities not only support physical and mental wellbeing, but they also help to rebuild confidence.

And our community builders help reconnect veterans within their communities by helping them become involved in activities, interests, and hobbies that help rebuild a sense of belonging.

GRANTS

We can help fund specialist equipment like wheelchairs or reclining beds. And home adaptations like ramps and hoists that help make people's lives easier.

RECOVERY COLLEGE

We offer a wide range of courses and self-help guides designed to give veterans the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need for the next chapter of their lives.

MEET YOUR FELLOW SWIMMERS



“As a veteran myself, joining Operation Swim was a great way to help others like me and a fantastic fitness goal.

“If you’re in need of motivation, the Operation Swim Facebook page is a fantastic place to share progress, support other swimmers and feel part of a bigger team.”

Matt, Operation Swimmer

“I chose to swim as my partner is in the Military Reserves. Thinking about the hardship people face when they join civvy street kept me motivated to complete the challenge.”

Rachel, Operation Swimmer

“I decided to take part in Operation Swim because I love swimming, my dad was in the Navy, and our family has always supported Help for Heroes. A personal highlight was receiving my certificate of achievement. It was rewarding to see in writing how much I’d raised, along with recognition for swimming the greatest and most challenging number of kilometres.”

Maisy, Operation Swimmer



“I kept motivated by thinking about the money I was raising and how it would help our Armed Forces community look towards a better future. My personal highlight was completing the challenge at 72 years old with a replacement shoulder, arthritic knees and hips!

Once in the water, buoyancy takes over, so anyone can do it.

Swimming gives you time to yourself, no phones, nobody wanting your attention. So, it’s a great way to get fit while doing something good for others. “

Louise, Operation Swimmer

“I chose to take part because my father saw active service in World War Two, and my daughter currently serves in the Army.

Coming out of the sea knowing I’d completed the challenge gave me a great sense of self-belief.”

Lynne, Operation Swimmer

STAY CONNECTED AND GET SUPPORT

FACEBOOK

The best way to stay connected is to join our **Operation Swim Facebook page**. Here you'll find a community of swimmers with the same goal - supporting our Armed Forces community. You can also ask questions and find motivation and inspiration to get you through your challenge.

NEED MORE HELP?

We're an email away, please contact our Operation Swim team at: **facebookfundraisers@helpforheroes.org.uk**

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING TO TAKE PART.

ARE YOU READY TO TAKE THE PLUNGE? LET'S GO!

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