

Tech Suits

What are tech suits?

Tech suits are high-performance swimwear designed to enhance a swimmer's speed and performance in competitive swimming. They are distinguished by tight fitting, water-repellent construction aimed at reducing drag.

When should I buy one?

Tech suits are most appropriate for experienced swimmers and those competing at a high level. For young swimmers and those relatively new to the sport of swimming, the benefit of a tech suit will not be worth the cost.

Tech suits are not required or expected for our swimmers. While these suits are sometimes seen at higher-level meets, they are a significant financial investment and do not replace consistent training, technique, and effort. The decision to purchase a tech suit is a personal family choice. If you are ever uncertain about whether it is the right time for your swimmer to purchase a tech suit, we encourage you to speak directly with your swimmer's coach.

How much time will my swimmer drop?

It is hard to quantify the average time drop due to a tech suit. Tech suits are as much about mental benefits as they are physical benefits. But whether it's due to reduced drag or the mental boost, it is generally agreed that tech suits do make swimmers go faster. Time drops are not a guarantee, however.

What tech suit should I buy?

Tech suits come in a variety of brands and options. Since Arena is WTRC Sharks' sponsor, we will focus on current Arena brands. Much of a tech suit choice is personal preference, although tech suits do tend to fall into categories:

All-Arounders

The all-arounder tech suits are thin, light, and have a few extra features such as zoned compression, optimized stitching, and hip/core support. These suits are typically more appropriate for middle-distance, distance, and medley swimmers, but can be used for all races. These suits generally feature just one fabric. An example of a good all-arounder is the **Arena Carbon Air2**. These tend to run in the \$150-\$300 (M) or \$200-\$350 (F) range.



Advanced

Advanced tech suits tend to have many features - zoned compression, bonded/welded seams, interior taping, and often have ultra-thin material with extremely dense weave. The enhanced features in a given suit are designed for a specific benefit, which should be weighed against its drawbacks. A great example of this is strategically placed taping or a combination of different fabrics to give targeted and increased compression in certain areas. Compression increases blood flow in the muscles which increases performance, especially in sprint races. However, it can be uncomfortable over longer races or hinder mobility and movement if racing a range of strokes in races such as individual medley. These tend to run in the \$350+ (M) or \$400+ (F).

The following suits fall into this more advanced category:

- **Arena Primo**
- **Arena Carbon Glide/Core**



How do tech suits fit?

Getting a tech suit that fits is as important as what suit you get. Every manufacturer has slightly different sizing and every body type is different. It is highly recommended that a swimmer tries on the tech suit before

purchase. Tech suits will often feel uncomfortably tight if you are not used to them because of the compression. It's not abnormal for the suit to be so snug that it takes between 15-30 minutes to put them on.

How long do tech suits last?

Tech suits are not designed for everyday use, and should only be worn at competitions. The material wears out quickly and only lasts between 30 - 40 races.

Are there ways to get cheaper tech suits?

Tech suits sales tend to happen at the end of the long course season (July – September) as manufacturers make room for next year's suits. Discounts on tech suits can be seen online at SwimOutlet.com, Arenasport.com, etc. There are also end of the year warehouse sales put on by retailers such as SwimOutlet and SwimVille in which tech suits are offered at markedly discounted rates. One such yearly sale occurs at the Long Course Junior Championship meet.

Pictures courtesy of www.swimoutlet.com