



Tech Suits for Dummies

The 2020/2021 primer for newbies and the somewhat confused

NOTE : The national ban on bonded seam and woven suits for swimmers 12 years and under began September 1, 2020. Please see the full rules at the USA Swimming.

<https://www.usaswimming.org/news/2020/08/24/tech-suit-restriction-for-12-and-under-swimmers>

The new rule:

Swimmers aged 12 years and younger (12U) cannot wear “tech suits”.

A “tech suit” is defined as having woven fabric and/or bonded seams.

Note: *Knitted fabric* is a two-sided fabric with two or four way stretch and is the fabric used for introductory and thus legal 12U suits.

Woven fabric is a very thin “papery” fabric that is used in upper level tech suits and not legal for 12U swimmers.

Sewn seams are used on introductory suits and thus legal for 12U. The one major exception is Speedo’s LZR PRO. More below.

Bonded seams – or glued seams -are used on upper level tech suits and thus not legal for 12U swimmers.

The notable exception is the LZR PRO by Speedo. The LZR PRO is a woven suit with sewn seams and thus unique in that all other woven suits have bonded seams.

The USA Swimming ruling reads that a woven suit (regardless of seam treatment) which extends past the hips is a “tech suit” and thus is illegal for 12U swimmers. The bottom line is that the LZR PRO Kneeskins and Jammers are NOT legal but the classic Recordbreaker style IS legal for 12U.

THE FINA LOGO

All “tech suits” will have the FINA logo. FINA is the *Fédération Internationale de Natation*, English: the International Swimming Federation which is recognized by the Olympic Committee.

No 12U legal suit will have a FINA logo, thus making it easier for everyone to determine legality at a glance. However, since present vendor inventories run deep, there may be Introductory suits that are perfectly legal that still have the FINA logo. In this case a second logo, basically a green check in a circle, may be placed beside it. Or, the original FINA logo might still be present without the green check. Over time, these suits with one old logo or two logos will phase out and all 12U legal suits will have no FINA logo.

What happens in the 2020/2021 fall/winter season? The word was that there would be a grace period concerning the FINA logo until present suit inventories are exhausted.

The most recent buzz from the LSC’s (Local Swim Committees) is that COVID-19 is presenting far bigger problems than logos on suits and officials have put logo concerns on the back burner as the health of the swimmers has become their first priority.

Toad Hollow does have a supply of the green check logo that can be placed on older suits if anyone is still concerned about the legality of their suits.

THE SUITS

An important fact for those new to the tech suit world is to understand that the sizing runs are usually different than those of regular suits. Thus a 28 in a practice suit will not be the same size as a 28 in a tech suit. Your swimmer will most likely take a smaller size. Also, some tech suits begin at size 16, while others have odd number sizes - 23, 25, 27, 29.

All of us at Toad Hollow firmly believe that tech suits should be approached beginning with the introductory suits and graduating to the more advanced (and more expensive) technology as the swimmer grows and matures. Below is a guide to tech suits that we sell at Toad Hollow, and the order in which we suggest they should be approached.



Suits in Level One are made of knitted fabric- as opposed to the woven fabrics of Level Two. Knitted fabrics have generous four-way stretch capabilities and are less expensive. Because the suits stretch easily, the swimmer must size down to ensure both good fit and as many wearings as possible.

All suits in Level One have knitted fabrics and sewn rather than bonded seams and thus are legal for 12U swimmers.

SPEEDO

Aquablade

The original and still a winner- the Aquablade was the first offering by Speedo in the tech suit market. The fabric is a color-on-color stripe with a very silky feel. A nicely priced introductory suit. Available in classic Recordbreaker, Jammer, Brief

Vanquisher

The new knitted fabric suit with sewn seams offers more compression than the Aquablade. Available in Kneeskin and Jammer. (Note: Remember knitted fabric kneeskins ARE legal for 12U swimmers).

PowerPlus Prime

This suit is discontinued by Speedo and replaced by the Vanquisher above. It is legal for 12U. Available in Kneeskin and Jammer.

TYR

Fusion

Equivalent to Speedo's Aquablade, TYR's Fusion differs in that it also is available in a legal Kneeskin. Available in Aeroback, Kneeskin (called Short John), Jammer, and Brief.

Thresher

Equivalent to Speedo's Vanquisher, the more compressive Thresher is available in various colors and prints. Available in Aeroback, Kneeskin (called Short John), Jammer, and Brief.

ARENA

Powerskin ST

The Powerskin ST (Powerskin is used by Arena to describe all their tech suits) is available in a variety of colors and many limited releases of nice prints. Available in Classic Suit, Kneeskin, Jammer, Brief.



Level Two suits are made of woven fabrics with bonded seams. Woven fabrics are incredibly lightweight and do not hold water. Because they do not have the four-way stretch of the knitted fabrics of Level One, they are more difficult to put on. However this lack of stretch does have a distinct advantage in that it limits water absorption and provides compression. Research has shown that compressed muscles perform more efficiently.

Since most of these suits relax with wear, it is best to size down to a very tight fit to allow the swimmer to wear the suit as many times as possible.

Level Two suits, with their woven fabrics and bonded seams, are labeled “Tech suits” by US Swimming and thus are NOT legal for 12 and under swimmers. All will have the FINA logo.

SPEEDO

LZR Racer Pure Intent

The latest release from Speedo is designed to offer maximum compression. Available in Open and Closed Back Kneeskin, High Waist and Regular Jammer. Colors will be offered with limited availability.

LZR Racer Pure Valor

The Valor offers maximum flexibility for swimmers who prefer a lightweight suit that allows more movement. Available in Open and Closed Back Kneeskin, High Waist and Regular Jammer. Colors will be offered with limited availability.

LZR Racer X and LZR Elite 2

Discontinued by Speedo but still great suits. Available in Open and Closed Back Kneeskin, High Waist and Regular Jammer.

LZR Racer PRO - the Exception

A unique suit in that it has a woven fabric but with sewn seams, the PRO was the first woven suit offered by Speedo. The Kneeskin and Jammer are illegal for 12U swimmers, but legal for swimmers aged 13 and up. (12U swimmers may wear the classic Recordbreaker suit)

TYR

Genesis

Like Speedo’s Pure Intent, the Genesis offers maximum compression. The present offerings from TYR are the **Venzo**, **X-Ray** and a **USA** print. Other colors and prints will be offered with limited availability. Available in Open and Closed Back Kneeskin, High Waist and Regular Jammer.

Avictor

The Avictor is a suit with less compression and great flexibility. The present prints are the **Venom**, **Supernova**, and **USA**. Available in Open and Closed Back Kneeskin, High Waist and Regular Jammer.

ARENA

Powerskin Carbon Core

Like Speedo’s Pure Intent and TYR’s Genesis, Arena’s Carbon Core offers maximum compression over flexibility. It differs in that it is a lighter weight fabric than the other compressive suits on the market. Available in Open and Closed Back Kneeskin and Jammer.

Powerskin Carbon Glide

The Carbon Glide stresses flexibility over compression. Available in Open and Closed Back Kneeskin and Jammer.

Arena: continued

Powerskin Carbon AIR and AIR2

The Carbon Air is perhaps the lightest suit in the tech suit market. Available in Open and Closed Back Kneeskin and Jammer.

Powerskin Carbon Flex

The Carbon Flex is the original Arena offering in the high compression tech suit market. Available in Open and Closed Back Kneeskin and Jammer.

Powerskin R-EVO

Similar to Speedo's Valor and TYR's Avictor, the R-EVO offers maximum flexibility. Available in Open and Closed Back Kneeskin and Jammer.

BLUESEVENTY

Nero TX

The Nero TX offers a woven fabric and bonded seams but it also offers more stretch than other higher level tech suits. It is easier for swimmers to get on. The Nero TX fits slender swimmers extremely well. Available in Open Back Kneeskin and Jammer.

Nero Fit

The Fit also offers bonded seams but with an even lighter fabric than the Nero TX. It is also one of the lowest priced woven/bonded suits on the tech suit market, making it a good choice for a swimmer's first kneeskin if they are 13+ swimmers.

Available in Open Back Kneeskin and Jammer. Legal for 13+ swimmers.