

TRIATHLON WETSUIT F.A.Q.

Q: What should I look for in a triathlon wetsuit fit?

A: When people try on new triathlon wetsuits we look for it to be pretty snug and without folds. When you are trying on the wetsuit, make sure it is pulled all the way (see below) and fold your arms across your chest. Then swing your arms a few times. Finally crouch down and touch the ground. You should be able to make all these moves (assuming you could *before* you put the suit on), but beyond that, the suit WILL feel snug.

Q: What is the proper way to put on a wetsuit to avoid wetsuit damage and ensure good fit?

A: Below is an instructional diagram to help you properly put on a triathlon wetsuit. This technique makes it easier to put on, ensures proper fit, and helps avoid tearing the material as you are pulling the wetsuit on. See our step by step instructions and the diagram below:



1. Slide your feet through the wetsuit, placing leg openings **well above the ankle bone***.
2. **Fold the wetsuit inside out** so you can **pull from the inside** and avoid neoprene tears.
3. Inch the wetsuit up as **high to the crotch** as possible. Check that seams are correctly placed.
4. Roll the wetsuit up above the waist. Smooth out wrinkles. Put on sleeves one at a time. Push one hand out the sleeve, using the other hand to push the sleeve up **well past your wrist, snug under the armpit, and above the shoulders**. Repeat for other sleeve.
5. Bend forward to gather the neoprene around your stomach and pull towards your neck.
6. Zip the back and velcro the neck strap.

***IF YOU OWN THE WETSUIT (VS. RENTING OR BORROWING), YOU SHOULD CUT THE WETSUIT SO THAT IT HITS AT THE FULLEST PART OF YOUR CALF.** This way the wetsuit will slip off over your foot MUCH more easily when you are trying to get it off in transition. You just cut a straight line with ordinary sharp scissors. See photo of pro triathlete Cait Snow (below). This is how you want to exit the water!



Q: This wetsuit fits awfully tight, but the next size up has some loose areas. Which is best for me?

A: A wetsuit will be tightest the first time you try it on. Wetsuits arrive from the manufacturer completely dry. Remember when trying on a wetsuit that all wetsuits loosen up once they soak up water. If it's loose when it's dry, it'll be even looser when it's wet! Getting the best size will largely be a judgment call, try on both wetsuits and stick with what is most comfortable keeping in mind that a new wetsuit will get slightly looser after the first

few uses. Remember, you don't want to take on water while swimming, so the clingier the better. Think "t-shirt", not "dress shirt".

Q: I hosed down my wetsuit but it still seems really snug. Is that as loose as it's going to get?

A: The wetsuit should soak for at least 30 minutes before it will get looser. This goes for both new and used suits. Older suits will lose elasticity over time, so provided you've stayed the same, it will feel looser as it gets older.

Q: How do I get the darn thing off?

A: Before putting on the wetsuit, you should lubricate your wrists and ankles with Body Glide, or a lubricant made for wetsuits (NOT baby oil, as it will eat away the neoprene). Many triathletes cut their wetsuit legs off just below the widest part of the calf. This will still provide buoyancy, but will make it MUCH easier for you to get your feet out in a hurry. (see photo above)

Q: Why does my year-old wetsuit just not seem to fit the same as it did last year?

A: New wetsuits that haven't been used in a long while need to be "warmed-up". That is to say you need to give it a good soaking or go for light swim. The wetsuit retains water even when dry so when you leave it out for a long time the water evaporates and this can make the wetsuit feel more restrictive.

Q: How do I store my triathlon wetsuit?

A: It is best to store the wetsuit without folding or creasing. You can accomplish this by putting stuffing like newspaper when wrapping up the suit for storage. Also, be sure that the wetsuit is rinsed out and dried before stashing it away for long periods of time. Try to avoid hangers if possible as it may stretch out the wetsuit over long periods of time and leave creases. If you do use hangers use larger wetsuit specific hangers that distribute the weight more than traditional clothing hangers.

Q: What if I need to return the wetsuit after trying it out?

A: Many tri-shops, and virtually ALL private distributors or online retailers will not accept returned wetsuits with rips, tears, scratches or suits that have been worn in the water. You should be able to try the suit on while keeping it in new condition. Check your local shop for their policy.