

13. Shallow Water Scuba Diver

13.1 Introduction

This entry-level certification course is designed to give students the necessary skills to safely conduct open water dives in conditions similar to their training using the shallow water scuba system without the direct supervision of an instructor. This course is specific to a shallow water scuba system, and is not intended to train participants in the use of conventional scuba diving equipment. Therefore, use of conventional scuba diving equipment, by participants, during this program is strictly prohibited.

13.2 Qualifications of Graduates

Upon successful completion of this course, graduates may:

1. Conduct open water dives in conditions similar to their training using a shallow water scuba system to a maximum depth of 9 metres / 30 feet

13.3 Who May Teach

1. Any active SDI Instructor that is certified to teach the shallow water diver course and has a shallow water scuba system on hand for training purposes

13.4 Student to Instructor Ratio

Academic

1. Unlimited so long as adequate facility, supplies and time are provided to ensure comprehensive and complete training of subject matter

Confined Water (swimming pool-like conditions)

1. A maximum of 10 students per instructor
2. Instructors have the option of adding 2 more students with the assistance of an active assistant instructor or divemaster
3. The total number of students an instructor may have in the water is 14 with the assistance of 2 active assistant instructors or Divemasters

Open Water (ocean, lake, quarry, spring, river or estuary)

1. A maximum of 8 students per instructor are allowed; it is the instructor's discretion to reduce this number as conditions dictate
2. Instructors have the option of adding 2 more students with the assistance of an active assistant instructor or divemaster
3. The total number of students an instructor may have in the water is 12 with the assistance of 2 active assistant instructors or divemasters

13.5 Student Prerequisites

1. Minimum age 18, 10 through 17 years with written parental consent
2. Students between the ages of 10 through 14 may obtain a SDI Junior Shallow Water Scuba Diver Certification if the following conditions are met: students are to train and dive under the direct supervision of a parent, guardian, or active leadership level diver
3. When a junior shallow water scuba diver reaches the age of 15, they can upgrade to an SDI Shallow Water Scuba Diver certification

13.6 Course Structure and Duration

Open Water Execution

1. Students must complete 2 open water dives in warm, clear, and calm waters with a maximum depth of 9 metres / 30 feet
2. Remain underwater for minimum of 20 minutes on each dive, for a total of 40 minutes
3. Training depth must be between 4.5 to 9 metres / 15 to 30 feet
4. A maximum of 3 open water dives per day are allowed for training
5. All dives must be completed during daylight hours or under conditions that simulate daylight conditions
6. Upon successful completion of the dives, the students must complete their logbooks and the instructor must sign off on the completed dives
7. The instructor must record all in-water and topside training events on the student's record folder

Course Structure

1. All topics are presented in the context of using the water scuba system in warm, clear, and calm waters with a maximum depth of 9 metres / 30 feet
2. SDI allows instructors to structure courses according to the number of students participating and their skill level

Duration

1. The suggested number of student contact training hours is 8

13.7 Administrative Requirements

Administrative Tasks:

1. Collect the course fees from all the students
2. Ensure that the students have the required equipment
3. Communicate the schedule to the students
4. Have the students complete the:
 - a. *SDI Liability Release and Express Assumption of Risk* Form
 - b. *SDI Medical Statement* Form

Upon successful completion of the course the instructor must:

1. Issue the appropriate SDI certification by submitting the SDI Diver Registration form to SDI Headquarters or registering the students online through member's area of the SDI website

13.8 Required Equipment

Students

1. Shallow Water Scuba System that includes:
 - a. High pressure air cylinder of 3.8 to 5 litres / 28 to 40 cubic feet
 - b. Buoyancy compensator device (BCD) with auto-inflator mechanism
 - c. Regulator with primary and alternate second stages
 - d. Submersible pressure gauge and depth gauge
2. Mask, fins and snorkel
3. Weights system
4. Exposure suit; if needed

13.9 Required Subject Areas

The following material is available:

1. *SDI Open Water Scuba Diver* Manual
2. SDI Log Book
3. SDI Confined Water / Open Water Teaching slates
4. SDI Skill Check-off slate

Instructors may use any additional text or materials that they feel help present these topics. The following topics must be covered during online course:

1. History of Diving
2. The Aquatic Environment
 - a. Vision
 - b. Light
 - c. Sound
 - d. Heat loss
 - e. Tides
 - f. Currents
 - g. Waves
 - h. Surge
 - i. Marine life injuries
3. Physics and Physiology
 - a. Buoyancy
 - b. Pressure
 - c. Boyle's Law
 - d. Air Spaces
 - i. Lung over-expansion problems
 - ii. Equalization techniques
 - e. Breathing air under pressure
 - i. Decompression sickness
 - ii. Nitrogen narcosis
 - iii. Oxygen (O₂) toxicity
 - iv. Carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning
4. Scuba Equipment
 - a. Mask, fins, and snorkel
 - b. Exposure Protection
 - i. Wetsuits
 - ii. Dive -skins
 - c. Buoyancy compensator device (BCD)
 - d. Regulator
 - i. Primary regulator
 - ii. Alternate air source
 - e. Cylinders
 - i. Use
 - ii. Removal and replacement
 - iii. Care and inspection requirements
 - f. Weight systems
 - g. Underwater instruments
 - i. Submersible pressure gauge (SPG)
 - ii. Dive watch
 - iii. Depth gauges

- h. Accessories
 - i. Dive flag
 - ii. Rescue signal
 - iii. Knife/Cutting tool
 - iv. Logbook
 - v. Slate
- i. Planning Your Dive
- j. Diver fitness and overexertion
- k. Buddy system
- l. First aid

13.10 Required Skill Performance and Graduation Requirements

Students are required to successfully complete the following skills:

1. Swimming evaluation (*Must be completed prior to any scuba skill being taught*)
 - a. Distance swim of 200 metres, non-stop, using any stroke or 300 metres, non-stop, using mask, snorkel and fins
 - b. Survival swim / float of 10 minutes
2. Scuba skills
 - a. Assembly and disassembly of equipment
 - b. Weight system adjustment with proper weighting
 - c. Removal and replacement of weight system on the surface
 - d. Removal and replacement of weight system at depth
3. Pre-dive check of self and buddy
4. Partial mask clear at depth
5. Full mask clear at depth
6. Breathing and swimming underwater without a mask
7. Buoyancy compensator device (BCD) use:
 - a. Inflation and deflation (oral/auto) at the surface
 - b. Inflation and deflation (auto) at depth
 - c. Removal and replacement at surface
8. Buoyancy control
 - a. Hovering
 - b. Controlled ascents
 - c. Controlled descents
 - d. Not exceeding the planned depth of the dive or 9 metres / 30 feet, whichever is greater

9. Regulator use
 - a. Breathing, clearing, and recovery at the surface
 - b. Breathing, clearing, and recovery at depth
 - c. Alternate air source use; air sharing with a buddy while making a controlled ascent
10. Underwater swimming; proper use of fins
11. Entries and exits
 - a. Controlled seated entry
 - b. Back-roll entry
 - c. Giant stride entry
 - d. Shallow water exit
 - e. Deep water exit
12. Snorkel use
 - a. Adjustment
 - b. Clearing; blast method
13. Use of gauges
14. Underwater communications
15. Rescue techniques
 - a. Tired diver tows
 - b. Cramp relief
16. Out-of-air emergencies: simulated swimming ascent ending with establishing positive buoyancy upon reaching the surface

In order to complete this course, students must:

1. Demonstrate mature and sound judgment concerning dive planning and execution
2. Satisfactorily complete the *SDI Open Water Scuba Diver Knowledge Quest* or equivalent SDI electronic / online learning exam. Instructors may use additional exams that can be found on the *SDI Open Water Scuba Diver Digital Instructor Resource*.
3. Complete all open water requirements safely and efficiently