

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*

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 facilities, 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 Training Material

The following material is available:

1. *SDI Open Water Scuba Diver Manual*.
2. SDI Logbook.
3. *SDI Confined Water / Open Water Teaching Slates*.
4. *SDI Skill Check-off Slate*.

13.9 Required Equipment

The following equipment is required for each student:

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.

13.10 Required Subject Areas

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

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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.
3. Marine life injuries.
4. 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.
5. Scuba Equipment:
 - a. Mask, fins, and snorkel.
 - b. Exposure protection:

- i. Wetsuits.
 - ii. Dry suits.
 - 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.
- 6. Accessories
 - a. Dive flag.
 - b. Rescue signal.
 - c. Knife/Cutting Tool.
 - d. Logbook.
 - e. Slate.
- 7. Planning Your Dive:
- 8. Diver fitness and overexertion.
- 9. Buddy system.
- 10. First aid.

13.11 Required Skill Performance and Graduation Requirements

Students are required to successfully complete the following skills in confined water:

1. Swimming evaluation (Must be completed prior to any scuba skill being taught):

- a. 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.