



18. Night/Low Visibility Diver

18.1 Introduction

Many divers find that night diving is their favorite type of diving. As with all specialty diving applications, procedures are different than those associated with open water diving. The purpose of this course is to acquaint the open water diver with the procedures, techniques, and potential hazards associated with diving at night, or in limited visibility. By becoming familiar with the use of dive lights, and night diving techniques such as navigation, buddy system procedures, communications, buoyancy control, and interacting with nocturnal aquatic life, the diver will be able to enjoy night diving with maximum safety.

18.2 Who May Teach

An active SDI Instructor that has been certified to teach this specialty

18.3 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. N/A

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

1. A maximum of 4 students per instructor; it is the instructor's discretion to reduce this number as conditions dictate
2. Instructor has 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 8 with the assistance of 2 active assistant instructors or divemasters

18.4 Student Prerequisites

1. SDI Open Water Scuba Diver, SDI Junior Open Water Diver, or equivalent
2. Minimum age 18, 10 with parental consent

18.5 Course Structure and Duration

Open Water Execution

1. Two dives are required with complete briefs and debriefs by the instructor
2. Dive plan must include surface interval, maximum no-decompression time, etc. to be figured out and logged
3. Night or low visibility dive is defined as any dive requiring a light to enhance visibility



Course Structure

1. SDI allows instructors to structure courses according to the number of students participating and their skill level

18.6 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 this specialty 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

18.7 Training Material

Required Material:

1. *SDI Night and Navigation* Student Manual
2. *SDI Night and Navigation* Scuba I.Q. Review
3. *SDI Night and Navigation* Instructor Guide
4. *SDI Night and Navigation* Instructor Resource CD

18.8 Required Equipment

1. Basic open water scuba equipment as described in section three of this manual
2. Lights; primary and back up
3. Whistle/ Audible signaling device

18.9 Approved Outline

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

1. Why Dive at Night?
 - a. Different aquatic life
 - b. Experience in limited visibility
2. Special Equipment
 - a. Diving lights
 - b. Importance of light and back up
 - c. Comparison of different styles



- d. Personal dive beacon
- 3. Buddy System
 - a. Buddy contact
 - i. Good visibility, close visual contact
 - ii. Limited visibility, use buddy line
 - iii. Night vision
 - iv. Don't shine light in buddy's eyes
 - b. Communications
 - i. When close use standard hand signals
 - ii. Light signals at distance
 - 1. Attention / OK
 - 2. Something's wrong
 - iii. Tactual signals; buddy line
 - 1. Stop – One pull
 - 2. Go/OK – Two pulls
 - 3. Surface – Four pulls
 - 4. Come Quick! – Five or more pulls
 - iv. Whistle on surface
 - 1. Five or more blasts: Distress
- 4. Navigation
 - a. Bottom contour
 - b. Compass
 - c. Boat
 - d. Beach / Lake
 - e. Marker light / strobe
- 5. Disorientation
 - a. With buddy
 - b. Lost buddy
 - c. Light failure
- 6. Buoyancy considerations
- 7. Emergency Procedures
 - a. Disabled diver
 - b. Lost diver
 - c. Diving maladies
- 8. Underwater Environment
 - a. Nocturnal life

18.10 Required Skill Performance and Graduation Requirements

Students are required to successfully complete the following. Preferably the student has done a dive during the day at the site used for the night dive



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1. Open Water Dive 1
 - a. Plan dive
 - b. Safety procedures
 - c. Enter and descent
 - d. Remain submerged at least 20 minutes
 - e. Change direction several times while maintaining proper navigation
 - f. Use properly; underwater light, submersible pressure gauge, compass, depth gauge, and computer
 - g. Maintain buddy contact throughout dive
 - h. Log dive
 2. Open Water Dive 2
 - a. Plan dive
 - b. Safety procedures
 - c. Descend
 - d. Two minute swim without compass
 - e. Surface and reorient
 - f. Descend and navigate
 - g. Log dive