



6. SDI - Open Water Scuba Diver Course

6.1 Introduction

This entry-level certification course is designed to give students the necessary skills to conduct open water dives in conditions similar to their training without the direct supervision of an instructor.

6.2 Qualifications of Graduates

Upon successful completion of this course, graduates may:

1. Conduct open water dives in conditions similar to their training.
2. Enroll in the SDI Advanced Diver Development program.

6.3 Who May Teach

Who may teach this course?

1. An active SDI Instructor.

6.4 Student – Instructor Ratio

Academic:

1. Unlimited, so long as adequate facility, supplies and time are provided to insure comprehensive and complete training.

Confined Water (Swimming pool-like conditions):

1. A maximum of eight (8) students per Instructor.
2. Instructors have the option of adding two (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 twelve (12) with the assistance of two (2) Assistant Instructors or Divemasters.

Open Water (Ocean, lake, quarry, spring, river or estuary):

1. A maximum of eight (8) students per Instructor are allowed. However, it is the instructor's discretion to reduce this number as conditions dictate.
2. Instructors have the option of adding two (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 twelve (12) with the assistance of two (2) Assistant Instructors or Divemasters.



6.5 Student Pre-Requisites

The student must:

1. Be a minimum age of eighteen (18), however participants may be between the ages of 10 to 17 years old so long as written parental consent is provided.
2. Students between the ages of ten (10) to fourteen (14) may obtain a **Junior Open Water 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 Open Water Diver reaches the age of fifteen (15) years they can upgrade to an Open Water Scuba Diver certification

6.6 Course Structure And Duration

Open Water execution:

1. Students must complete four (4) Open Water dives and remain underwater for minimum of fifteen (15) minutes on each dive, for a total of 80 minutes.
2. Training depth must be between six (6) msw and eighteen (18) msw / twenty (20) fsw and sixty (60) fsw.
3. A maximum of three (3) dives per day.
4. The maximum depth should not exceed eighteen (18) msw / sixty (60) fsw on all the dives.
5. All dives must be completed during daylight hours.
6. Assistant instructors may lead dives 3 & 4 under indirect supervision so long as all required skills have been evaluated by the instructor and the student is proficient prior to the start of dives three and four. If an AI is to lead dives 3 & 4 the ratio can not exceed 2 un-certified divers to 1 Assistant Instructor
7. Upon successful completion of the dives, the students must complete their logbooks and the instructor must sign off on the completed dives.

Course Structure:

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

Duration:

1. The suggested number of total course training hours is twenty (20).

6.7 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 Liability Release and Medical history forms.
5. The Instructor must review the Liability Release and Medical Forms before starting on the course.

Upon successful completion of the course the Instructor must:

1. Issue an SDI temporary certification card. Complete and submit the Registration Form to SDI HQ.
2. Award card.



6.8 Required Equipment

Basic SDI Open Water SCUBA equipment as prescribed earlier in this manual.

The following material is required:

1. SDI Scuba Diver manual and associated Knowledge Quest Book.

The following material is available and recommended;

1. SDI Log Book.
2. SDI Scuba Diver video or DVD
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.

6.9 Required Subject Areas

The following topics must be covered during this 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
 1. Repetitive Dives.
 2. Safety Stops.
 3. Emergency Decompression.
 4. Omitted Decompression.
 - ii. Nitrogen Narcosis.
 - iii. Oxygen Toxicity.
 - iv. Carbon Monoxide Poisoning.
 - v. Mixed Gases
 - vi. Hyperventilation, shallow water blackout
4. Scuba Equipment
 - a. Mask, Fins, and Snorkel.



- b. Exposure Protection
 - i. Wetsuits.
 - ii. Dry suits.
- c. Buoyancy Compensator Device.
- d. Regulator
 - i. Primary Regulator.
 - ii. Alternate Air source.
- e. Cylinders.
- f. Weight Systems.
- g. Underwater Instruments
 - i. Submersible Pressure Gauge.
 - ii. Dive Computers.
 - iii. Dive Watch.
 - iv. Depth Gauges.
 - v. Compass.
- h. Accessories
 - i. Dive Flag.
 - ii. Rescue Signal.
 - iii. Knife.
 - iv. Dive Lights.
 - v. Gear Bag.
 - vi. Logbook.
 - vii. Slate.
- 5. Planning your dive
 - a. Diver Fitness and overexertion
 - b. Orientation to new or local diving environments
 - c. Boat diving procedures
 - d. Buddy System
 - e. First Aid

6.10 Required Skill Performance And Graduation Requirements

Students are required to successfully complete the following skills:

- 1. Swimming evaluation
 - a. Distance swim of two hundred (200) meters non-stop using any stroke without the use of mask, snorkel or of other swimming aids **or** three hundred (300) meters non-stop in mask, snorkel, and fins
 - b. Survival swim of ten (10) minutes

Note: If an exposure suit is worn for any of the above skills, the wearer must be neutrally buoyant at the surface.

- 1. Scuba skills
 - a. Scuba system assembly and disassembly.
 - 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.
- 2. Pre-dive check of self and buddy.
- 3. Mask clear – partial, at depth.



4. Mask clear – full, at depth.
5. Breathing and swimming underwater without a mask.
6. Buoyancy Control Device (BCD) use:
 - a. Inflation and deflation (oral/power) at the surface.
 - b. Inflation and deflation (oral/power) at depth.
 - c. Removal and replacement at surface.
 - d. Removal and replacement at depth.
7. Buoyancy Control
 - a. Hovering.
 - b. Controlled ascents.
 - c. Controlled descents.
8. Regulator use
 - a. Breathing, clearing, and recovery at the surface.
 - b. Breathing, clearing, and recovery at depth.
9. Underwater swimming (proper use of fins).
10. Entries and exits
 - a. Controlled seated entry.
 - b. Back-roll entry.
 - c. Giant stride entry.
 - d. Shallow water exit.
 - e. Deep water exit.
11. Snorkel use
 - a. Adjustment.
 - b. Clearing (blast method)
 - c. Regulator snorkel exchange at the surface
 - d. Surface snorkel swim in full gear
12. Computer Use
 - a. Reading and understanding data
 - b. Understanding functions of computer
13. Use of gauges
14. Underwater Communications
15. Rescue techniques
 - a. Tired diver tows.
 - b. Cramp relief.
17. Out-of-air emergencies
 - a. Controlled swimming ascent.
 - b. Alternate Air source use (Air sharing with a buddy while making a controlled ascent)

In order to complete this course, students must:

1. Demonstrate mature and sound judgment concerning dive planning and execution.
2. Satisfactorily complete the SDI Scuba Diver Knowledge Quest.
3. Complete all open water requirements safely and efficiently.