

## Diving : Taking the Plunge

Have you always wanted to learn to dive?

Getting a Diving Certificate will be one of the most exciting experiences of your life as you learn how to explore a new world underwater.

Here's the 10-step path to becoming a certified diver.

**Step 1: Decide that you really want to do it.**

**Step 2: Find a dive store and dive instructor you like.**

**Step 3: Discuss how you will complete your open-water certification: meeting weekly for pool sessions, weekend classes, home study, a class trip for open-water dives, and more.**

**Step 4: With your instructor, decide on a plan that best fits your schedule.**

**Step 5: Put on a mask, snorkel, and a pair of fins. These are the basic items of personal equipment that need to be fitted to you by the diving professional. For reasons of safety and comfort, we recommend that you buy diving equipment only at a dive store.**

**Step 6: Be enthusiastic. An important part of your training involves going back to the classroom and learning about the dive environment, physics and safety practices.**

**Step 7: Your first dives will take place in a swimming pool. Be prepared for your first breath on a regulator (breathing apparatus) underwater!**

**Step 8: Go diving. Your open-water training dives provide the opportunity to practise the skills you learnt in the classroom and pool work!**

**Step 9: Use your 'C-card' now that you're a certified diver! Only card-carrying divers can buy scuba life-support equipment. We also encourage you to begin right away selecting your personal equipment regulator, buoyancy compensator and dive computer. Having your own equipment will make you safer and more comfortable underwater.**

**Step 10: Go for more. Your certification is really just the beginning. You still need to serve a diving internship with your instructor and other experienced divers. Sign up for more training or dives under supervision as soon as you can.**

### Questions 14-19

**Using NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS FROM THE PASSAGE answer the following questions.**

[14] what THREE pieces of personal equipment do you need to buy before starting the course?

[15] Why should you buy your equipment from a dive store?

[16] Name ONE topic studied in the classroom.

[17] Where do you do your first dives?

[18] What must you show before being allowed to buy scuba diving equipment?

[19] Under what conditions can you dive, once you are certified?

### **Question 20 -23**

**The passage 'Tear No More' on the next page has 5 paragraphs (A-E). Choose the most suitable headings for paragraphs B to E from the list (i-ix) below.**

#### **List of Headings**

(i) HI panic

(ii) FU get lost

(iii) ni be trapped

(iv) I won't be able to swim

(v) III get the bends

(vi) I won't be able to see

(vii) HI get eaten

(viii) HI run out of the air

(ix) Diving statistics

**EXAMPLE - [20] Paragraph B.....**

**[21] Paragraph C.....**

[22] Paragraph D.....

[23] Paragraph E.....

## Questions 24 -27

Complete the notes below using **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS FROM THE PASSAGE** for each answer.

Dive with a buddy.

Check your gauges so you don't run out of air.

Dive no deeper than [24]———until you feel comfortable.

Don't dive [25]..... make a 3-minute safety stop at 15 feet.

If you see a shark [26]..... avoid splashing, kicking or poking at fish.

Visualise emergencies and [27] .....— your responses. Experience gives you confidence.

## Fear No More

A. It's natural to be scared at first. but statistics show scuba diving is not particularly dangerous. It is estimated that there are 2.4 million divers and 17 million dives made in the U.S. per year. Divers Alert Network, the leading safety organisation for divers reported only 85 fatalities in the past year. Most of us find that as our ability increases, our fears decrease. The risks in scuba diving, while real, can all be reduced significantly by what you do for your own safety. Here are some of the most common fears of new scuba divers.

B. It's understandable if you mistrust your scuba regulator. But the mechanical failure of your breathing equipment is highly unlikely. A regulator is simple, strong and designed so that if it does fail, it delivers more air than you need, not less. You also have an extra breathing system, and so will your diving buddy. Keep an eye on gauges and time. If you are running on air you will find that you have to suck to breathe. You will still have time to ascend slowly, even if you have to hold your breath. If you stay above feet and stay out of caves and wrecks — good advice for ail divers — there is no reason to be afraid of running out of air underwater.

C. The bends' is the most decompression sickness most people associate with diving, but in fact, it is almost preventable. Divers most often get the bends by going too deep and coming up quickly. It is not a serious risk if you stay above 60 feet. A safety stop of three minutes at 15 feet is a wise precaution. Cases of the bends do occur rarely, but the sickness is normally treatable.



D. Most fish ignore you or swim away. They have very narrow diets and eat only what they are accustomed to; however, sometimes sharks have been known to make attacks on humans. Even here, there is evidence that the shark mistakes a human for his regular meal, a seal or sea-lion, and shark attacks are very rare. In the presence of sharks, remain calm. Don't annoy sharks by poking at them. Almost all fish will leave you alone if you do the same to them.

E. Fear can sometimes overwhelm the intellect and leaves some people paralysed. The best prevention is training. You will be taught the correct response to danger. When you practise the response, it will be there when you need it. When you know just what to do, you're much less likely to lose self-control. And experience — simply diving again and again — reduces the general anxiety level that is natural when diving is still new. When you realise you are not helpless, your fears are likely to disappear.