

BASIC OPEN-WATER SKILLS – REVIEW

SKILLS ON LAND

1. Assemble, adjust, prepare, and don equipment. Conduct pre-dive equipment safety check. Demonstrate understanding of gauges and/or dive computer display.
2. Review hand signals. Understand dive plan, including depth and time limits.

SKILLS IN THE WATER

1. Descend, equalizing properly.
2. Remove, replace and clear regulator, using both exhalation and purge button methods.
3. Remove mask, breathe on regulator for 30 seconds, replace and clear mask.
4. Switch to alternate air source and back, clearing regulator each time.
5. Demonstrate ability to read gauges and/or computer display accurately.
6. Demonstrate ability to adjust buoyancy using BC inflator and air dump valves.
7. Signal OOA (out-of-air) and accept alternate air source from another diver.
8. Donate air source to diver signaling OOA.
9. Neutral buoyancy exercises:
 - a. Fin tip pivot
 - b. Stabilize with one finger on rock, dead coral or substrate
 - c. Hover in horizontal position just above the bottom (do this in a location where you will not impact corals or other marine life.)
10. Underwater swimming skills
 - a. Demonstrate proper horizontal trim while swimming underwater
 - b. Does not use hands or arms when swimming underwater
11. Ascend to safety stop depth observing proper ascent speed (SEE NOTE).
12. Final buoyancy check w/ empty tank to confirm proper weighting
13. Safety stop [hover 3 minutes].
14. Proper final ascent
 - a. Signal
 - b. Look, reach up, and rotate
 - c. Slow final ascent (SEE NOTE)
 - d. Inflate BCD at surface

BASIC OPEN-WATER SKILLS – REVIEW

OPTIONAL / MORE ADVANCED SKILLS

1. Disconnect and reconnect inflator hose (at safety stop).
2. Demonstrate ability to use compass.
3. Swim for three minutes with eyes closed (or mask blacked out) while guided by instructor or buddy.
4. Do a full ascent with eyes closed (or mask blacked out) while guided by instructor or buddy.
5. Demonstrate ability to inflate and use SMB (submersible marker buoy) at the surface.
6. [If trained] Demonstrate the ability to safely deploy an SMB (submersible marker buoy) at a depth of 10 meters using a reel or spool.

NOTE ON MAXIMUM SPEED OF ASCENT

Over the past decade, recommended ascent speeds have become more conservative more and more evidence was assembled confirming that speed of ascent is a critical risk factor for decompression illness.

Traditionally, divers in the US were trained to observe a maximum ascent rate of **18 meters (60 feet) per minute**. This is still the standard in some dive texts and for some certifying agencies. However, over the past decade, most certification and training agencies have adopted a more conservative approach, setting **9 m/min (30 ft/min)** as the maximum speed of ascent at any depth.

More recently, Tanew emerging consensus among decompression and dive medicine expoerts calls for an even more conservative approach. The idea is that the maximum safe speed of ascent changes according to depth.

<u>Depth</u>	<u>Maximum Speed of Ascent (Meters per Minute)</u>
10 m +	7 m/min (note: more conservative than 9 m/min standard)
6 m to 9 m	3 m/min
0 m to 6 m	1 m/min

Ascending at a rate of 1 m/min or slower in the shallow 0-6 m range requires excellent buoyancy control and perfect weighting.