



# Scuba Diving

## Merit Badge Workbook



This workbook can help you but you still need to read the merit badge pamphlet.  
This Workbook can help you organize your thoughts as you prepare to meet with your merit badge counselor

**Merit Badge Counselors may not require the use of this or any similar workbooks.**

You still must satisfy your counselor that you can demonstrate each skill and have learned the information. You should use the work space provided for each requirement to keep track of which requirements have been completed, and to make notes for discussing the item with your counselor, not for providing full and complete answers.

If a requirement says that you must take an action using words such as "discuss", "show", "tell", "explain", "demonstrate", "identify", etc, that is what you must do.

No one may add or subtract from the official requirements found on Scouting.org.

The requirements were last issued or revised in 2020 • This workbook was updated in February 2024.

Scout's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit errors, omissions, comments or suggestions about this **workbook** to: [Workbooks@USScouts.Org](mailto:Workbooks@USScouts.Org)  
Comments or suggestions for changes to the **requirements** for the **merit badge** should be sent to: [Merit.Badge@Scouting.Org](mailto:Merit.Badge@Scouting.Org)

1. Do the following:

- a. Show that you know first aid for injuries or illnesses that could occur while scuba diving, including hypothermia, hyperventilation, squeezes, decompression illness, nitrogen narcosis, motion sickness, fatigue, overexertion, heat reactions, dehydration, injuries by aquatic life, and cuts and scrapes.

Hypothermia:


Hyperventilation:


Squeezes:


Decompression illness:


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No one may add or subtract from the official requirements found in Scouts BSA Requirements (Pub. 33216 – SKU 653801).

The requirements were last issued or revised in 2009 • This workbook was updated in June 2020.

Scout's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

<http://www.USScouts.Org> • <http://www.MeritBadge.Org>

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Hypothermia:


Hyperventilation:


Squeezes:


Decompression illness:


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Nitrogen narcosis:


Motion sickness:


Fatigue:


Overexertion:


Heat reactions:


Dehydration:


Injuries by aquatic life:


Cuts and scrapes.


- b. Identify the conditions that must exist before performing CPR on a person, and explain how to recognize such conditions.

Identify the conditions that must exist before performing CPR on a person


Explain how to recognize such conditions.


- Demonstrate the proper technique for performing CPR using a training device approved by your counselor.
- 2. Before completing requirements 3 through 6, earn the Swimming merit badge.
- 3. Discuss the Scuba Diver's Code with your merit badge counselor, and explain the importance of each guideline to a scuba diver's safety. *(The BSA Scuba Diver's Code can be found at the end of this workbook.)*


- 4. Earn an Open Water Diver Certification from a scuba organization recognized by the Boy Scouts of America scuba policy.
- 5. Explain what an ecosystem is, and describe four aquatic ecosystems a diver might experience.  
Explain what an ecosystem is


Describe four aquatic ecosystems a diver might experience.

1.


2.


3.


4.


6. Find out about three career opportunities in the scuba industry.

1.

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2.

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3.

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Pick one and find out the education, training, and experience required for this profession.

Career:

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Education:


Training:


Experience:


Discuss this with your counselor, and explain why this profession might interest you.


**When working on merit badges, Scouts and Scouters should be aware of some vital information in the current edition of the *Guide to Advancement* (BSA publication 33088). Important excerpts from that publication can be downloaded from <http://usscouts.org/advance/docs/GTA-Excerpts-meritbadges.pdf>. You can download a complete copy of the *Guide to Advancement* from <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/33088.pdf>.**

**Boy Scouts of America Scuba Diver's Code:**

A Scout:

- Maintains good mental and physical fitness for scuba diving.
- Keeps his dive skills sharp through continuing education.
- Seeks professional orientation prior to diving at unfamiliar dive locations.
- Adheres to the buddy system throughout every dive.
- Uses complete, well-maintained, and reliable equipment with which he is familiar.
- Always dives no deeper than the recommended depth for his certification level and experience.
- Always follows the time limits listed by the special dive tables or a dive computer for a particular depth.
- Is a S.A.F.E. diver (Slowly Ascends From Every dive) and makes a safety stop at 15 feet for three minutes at the end of each dive prior to surfacing.
- Breathes properly while diving, never holding his breath or skipping breathing.
- Knows and obeys local diving laws and regulations, including fish and game laws and dive-flag laws.
- Understands and respects aquatic life, considers how his interactions affects it, and dives carefully to protect fragile aquatic ecosystems.

### Note to Counselor

Counselors for the Scuba Diving merit badge must be registered with the Boy Scouts of America and be approved by the district/council advancement committee.

Like other merit badges, the Scuba Diving merit badge has been developed to teach and train youth in a manner consistent with the overall goals and values of the Boy Scouts of America.

The merit badge counselor should be fair and consistent when presenting and evaluating the knowledge and skills specified by the requirements. None of the requirements may be modified or omitted.

Unlike many other merit badges, the Scuba Diving critical prerequisites, knowledge, and skills are not itemized in the requirements nor adequately covered in the pamphlet. The requirement to earn Open Water Diver Certification means the Scout must meet training requirements set by outside agencies and must supplement the material in the merit badge pamphlet with an entry-level scuba diver manual.

All phases of scuba instruction—classroom, pool, and open water training—must comply with the minimum training standards for entry-level scuba certification adopted by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) or the U.S. Recreational Scuba Training Council (RSTC). The RSTC is recognized as the ANSI Accredited Standards Developer for recreational diving instructional standards. The BSA acknowledges those standards by limiting scuba instruction only to instructors trained and sanctioned by recognized scuba agencies.

Councils may use [the brochure at http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/220-005wb.pdf](http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/220-005wb.pdf) to customize and print a promotional brochure for the Scuba Diving merit badge. The brochure has a space on the lower portion of the cover for personalization, and it also includes pertinent information about the merit badge.

Agencies recognized by the BSA for scuba training are **PADI** (Professional Association of Diving Instructors); **NAUI** (National Association of Underwater Instructors); **SSI** (Scuba Schools International); **IDEA** (International Diving Educators Association); **PDIC** (Professional Diving Instructors Corporation); and **SDI** (Scuba Diving International). In addition to the agencies listed by name, any current member of the World Recreational Scuba Training Council (**WRSTC**) is also recognized.

Each approved instructor must follow the training protocols established by his or her authorizing agency, including limitations and special provisions based on medical conditions and age. For Scout divers under age 15, this will include restrictions for maximum depth, buddies, and supervision ratios.

Scuba industry standards for Open Water Diver Certification require the student to be at least 15 years of age. Students under the minimum age who meet open water scuba performance requirements may qualify for a special certification that allows them to dive with an adult buddy who has, as a minimum, an open water scuba certification. Several of the scuba organizations recognized by the BSA offer “junior” open water certifications for those as young as 10; others have a minimum age of 12. Such junior open water diver certifications satisfy Scuba Diving merit badge requirement 4.

When scuba diving is taught in connection with any local council program, such as offering the Scuba Diving merit badge at summer camp, instructors should provide the training on a contract basis. Such instructors should have dive store or other commercial affiliation that provides liability coverage. Direct employment of scuba instructors is not recommended.

Local council programs may not compress or sell air for scuba use, or sell, rent, or loan scuba equipment (scuba cylinders, regulators, gauges, dive computers, weights, BCDs).

All air and scuba equipment for local council use must be obtained from professional sources (dive stores, resorts, dive boats, etc.) affiliated with a scuba agency recognized by the BSA.