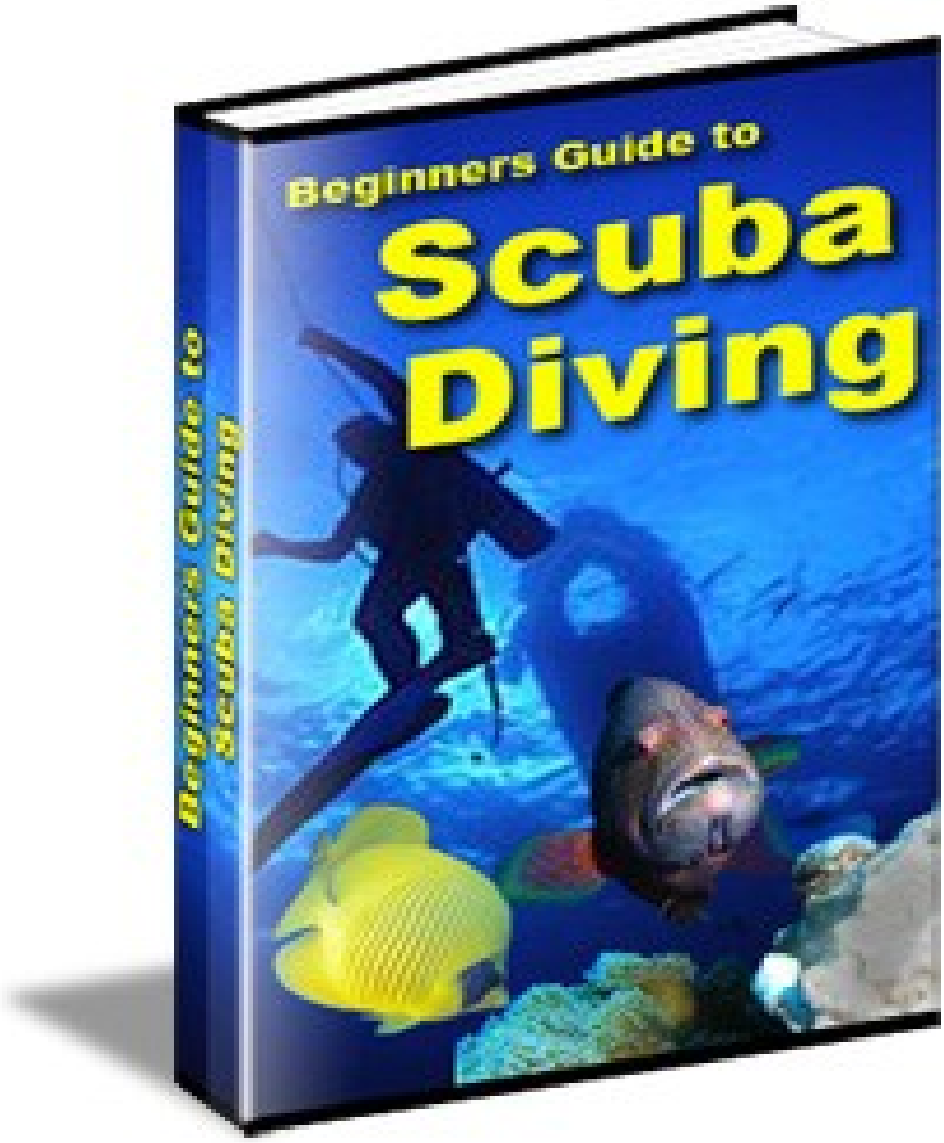

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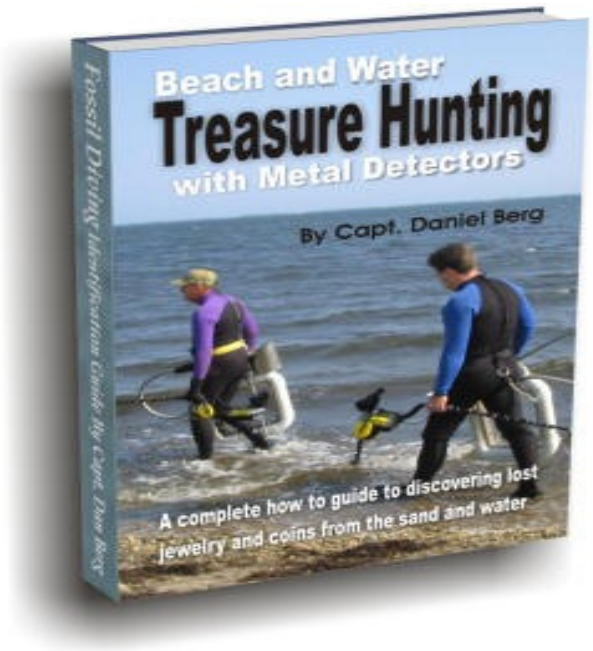
Beginners Guide to Scuba Diving

Table of Contents

Diver Training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Training Courses and Prerequisites for Scuba Divers

Scuba Diving is a sport that has grown in popularity in the past decade, evolving from something that was utilized by scientists and naturalists to further their research, turning into a popular pastime for many people. It's grown to such an extent that even beach resorts have started offering scuba diving lessons, as well as equipment rentals and certified trainers to accompany untrained novice divers who just want to try it out.

Scuba means Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus, and involves operating underwater with a tank or re-breather that supplies oxygen to the diver. Types of Scuba are separated based on the breathing apparatus employed in the dive. In open circuit scuba, the air is supplied by a tank or other source, and once inhaled, is exhaled into the surrounding water. It is the most common type of scuba used for recreation.

In closed circuit scuba, the air is recycled though the use of devices called re-breathers, and oxygen is reintroduced into the air supply of the diver by an apparatus. In semi closed circuit scuba, mixed gases are used as the air supply, taking part of the air exhaled by the diver

as well as adding to it with an air supply similar to that used in open circuit scuba. Semi closed circuit scuba is more difficult to learn than open or closed circuit scuba diving alone, because it involves knowledge from both types of diving because the breathing apparatus used is a fusion of the two.

Scuba diving clubs and other organizations offer lessons in scuba diving in an effort to expand the growing popularity of this sport. On a more professional level, some of these organizations even offer advanced scuba lessons, which allow trained scuba divers to expand their repertoire and go diving in conditions, and environments that are otherwise restricted to other divers who don't possess the training to handle them.

Here are some of the prerequisites for diving, as well as some of the advanced scuba courses that experienced divers can take.

Prerequisites - any and every scuba diver must have skills in swimming, obviously. Aside from this, however, a scuba diver must have had training and experience in snorkeling, which forms the basis for some of the techniques used in scuba diving. If you want to take up scuba diving as a sport but don't know how to snorkel yet, then

take up snorkeling first before taking a course in scuba.

Regular Scuba Certification - this trains a person in the basics of scuba diving, allowing operation in shallow water and near shorelines, and is mainly used for training scuba divers who undertake the sport for purely recreational purposes. For a vast majority of people who take up the hobby, this is enough.

Open Water Scuba - this is for scuba divers who operate out of sight of the shoreline. They will have to take a boat to get to the dive area, so skills in operating a boat are part of the prerequisites for open water scuba diving. Open water scuba usually involves diving to greater depths than a regular diver, and divers who use this method need special equipment like floater buoys to let other boats on the surface know that there's a diver in the spot, as well as underwater line markers, reels, and underwater floaters for underwater navigation.

Rescue Scuba - this is a special training course that focuses on rescue operations for other divers. Those who usually take it are employed in the search-and-rescue business. Training includes first aid, obviously, as well as underwater techniques for getting people out of hazardous situations like underwater caves. There is also training in the use of

specialized equipment used in such rescues.

Deep Dive Scuba - this is scuba diving in extreme deep-water conditions, and includes training in the use of equipment for operating in high-pressure depths. Deep dive scuba is extremely dangerous and not recommended for casual divers who are taking it as a hobby, since in some cases it involves descending to depths that feature water pressures that would physically crush a person wearing regular scuba gear. Naturalists usually take this training up as a way to study sea-bottom dwelling life forms, and geologists and oceanologists likewise take it up for studying underwater formations like volcanoes and rock fissures.

Hazardous Area Scuba - this type of training specializes in teaching scuba divers advanced forms of safety in scuba diving. The diving skills required per se don't differ too much from the levels of skill involved in regular scuba, but additional training is given for allowing a diver to explore hazardous area that are usually restricted to regular divers. Some examples of hazard areas include shipwrecks, coral reefs infested with toxic life forms, shark infested waters, and underwater caves. While not for the regular hobbyist, some of the more serious scuba divers take this up for thrills.

Instructional Courses - this type of scuba course teaches a scuba diver how to teach other people to scuba dive. It also features training in basic first aid to help injured pupils, as well as tutorials in buddy systems that are required for helping novices along underwater. Obviously, a certificate in basic entry level scuba diving is a must for taking this course up, though no proficiency in the more advanced courses is required since this mainly focuses on teaching others the methods of recreational scuba, and not professional scuba.

Diving Safely

Safety in Scuba Diving

Scuba diving is a unique and beautiful experience that everyone should try at least once in his or her lifetime. Barring perhaps hydrophobics, almost anyone will find the experience of being underwater and floating along both exhilarating and relaxing at the same time. However, without proper training and preparation, scuba can also be a dangerous undertaking, with hazards that can affect the unprepared. With proper equipment and precautions, however, it is a safe and wonderful thing to do. Here are a few safety tips for the

beginning scuba diver to consider before taking up diving in earnest.

Training - Get certified. Take a training course that has official certification. If diving only for sport while on vacation like some people do, make sure that you have a certified instructor accompanying you on your dive. If diving in earnest, take a course that will actually give you a certificate for diving (not necessarily as an instructor, but one that will register you as a certified and capable scuba diver).

Physical Conditioning - see a doctor before taking up scuba. Make sure that your doctor gives you a clean bill of health for the physical exertions required in scuba. While mentally relaxing, scuba diving involves enough physical effort that people with weak cardiovascular and especially respiratory systems can't indulge in it. Asthma, a weak heart, tendencies for asphyxiation, all of these can disqualify a person from scuba diving.

Also on the note of physical capability, knowing how to swim is a huge bonus. While not a necessity because scuba gear allows even those who don't know how to swim to navigate underwater, it is nonetheless a very good thing to know. After all, you'll be underwater.

Thank You For Reading

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