



Open Water Diver

Epilogue
Information regarding practical exercises

Congratulations! You have finished the theory part of the ACUC OWD e-learning course. Now the most enjoyable part of the course starts: practices in confined and open water.

It is obvious that we cannot teach you these practices through the e-learning system. The way to do it has not yet been invented (although everything will come). But we can give you an idea of some of the practical exercises you will do, always under the supervision of your ACUC instructor.



You should start doing some practices only with the light equipment (mask, fins and snorkel). You will learn skills such as:

- Ear equalization. In topic 4 we explained that there are differences in pressure in the ears and you must learn to compensate them to avoid pain and injuries.
- Snorkel clearing. Water is introduced into the tube when we navigate or put our head underwater, so you have to learn to empty the snorkel easily and comfortably.
- Various forms of finning.
- Surface dives. Different ways to get underwater.
- Swimming without a mask with the face submerged and breathing through the snorkel. To learn to master the stress that can occur if our nose is in contact with the water.
- Several ways to enter the water.
- And other exercises that the instructor considers convenient.

Some of these exercises will be repeated later with the heavy equipment (SCUBA).

When your instructor considers that you are prepared, he will teach you how to assemble the heavy equipment, to finally do what this course is about and achieve your goal: to swim underwater safely while breathing, that is, to dive with SCUBA.

You will repeat some exercises already done with the light equipment, but now you will also learn another new series of exercises. All of them very important for your safety and underwater enjoyment. Among them:

- You will learn to breathe through the regulator
- To inflate and deflate your vest
- To descend to the bottom
- In short, the basics necessary to maintain your safety.

Once at the bottom, you will learn a skill that is extremely important for your continued enjoyment and safety. This ability is to obtain **neutral buoyancy**. In topic 2 we have explained the importance of neutral buoyancy, that is, not to sink or raise continuously. This skill is extremely important for many reasons.

If you do not have neutral buoyancy you will be doing a “yo-yo” dive; This, in addition to being dangerous, is very uncomfortable and causes fatigue, so you will spend much faster the air in your tank. In addition, poor buoyancy damages the environment, by dragging your body and fins all over the bottom. The discomfort of having to continually struggle to keep yourself at the desired depth can also cause you anxiety, which can even lead to panic. Precisely something we don't want to have underwater is panic.

For that reason, take your time to practice obtaining neutral buoyancy. It should be you who controls your buoyancy and not that buoyancy (negative or positive) controls you. You will do specific exercises to learn how to control your buoyancy, such as the one known as the pivoting method.

You will learn other very important skills, such as:

- Clearing the water from the mask. Even when the mask makes a good seal with our face, it is common that for one reason or another water comes in. It does not matter, since you will learn to empty that water while underwater.
- Purging the regulator. If we put the regulator in our mouth when we are underwater, the second stage will be full of water, so it must be purged in order to breathe. We must also purge it when we are going to disassemble the equipment.
- Recover a displaced regulator. We may need to retrieve a regulator underwater that is out of our reach for not having it properly secured, or because it is accidentally displaced from our mouths. You will learn techniques to recover it.
- Breathing with octopus, that is, with the second stage of the regulator, which we carry for additional safety.
- Share the air with a buddy using a single regulator (Calumet).
- How to ascend properly, etc.

This and much more is what you will learn during the practical part of your course. The fun part of your diving course is about to begin.

When you finish the course, a huge and wonderful new part of the planet will open for you: the underwater world. Cheer up! Millions of fish and spectacular underwater landscapes are waiting to greet you.