



Courtesy of PADI

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.

The Boy Scouts of America Announces the

Scuba Diving Merit Badge

Start with a dash of swimming skills
(the Swimming merit badge).

Add equal measures of aquatics first aid,
safety, and conservation.

Douse liberally with
ADVENTURE!



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The *Scuba Diving* merit badge pamphlet will be available in early December at local council service centers, or go to www.scoutstuff.org. Councils should begin recruiting merit badge counselors now. Get the word out to your staff, volunteers, and Boy Scouts.

The “Note to the Counselor,” *Guide to Safe Scouting*, and the Safe Swim Defense (as applied to scuba diving) are integral to the Scuba Diving merit badge requirements. Review this content in full prior to making any commitments about this merit badge.



Requirements

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.
 - b. Identify the conditions that must exist before performing CPR on a person, and 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.
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.
6. Find out about three career opportunities in the scuba industry. Pick one and find out the education, training, and experience required for this profession. Discuss this with your counselor, and explain why this profession might interest you.

The Boy Scouts of America is not a dive certification agency. Your merit badge counselor can help you find a scuba agency recognized by the Boy Scouts of America scuba policy so that you can fulfill requirement 4.

Scouts who have already earned an Open Water Diver Certification outside of a BSA activity from a scuba agency recognized by the Boy Scouts of America scuba policy may still earn the Scuba Diving merit badge by earning the Swimming merit badge and completing all other listed requirements.



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Note to the Scuba Diving Merit Badge Counselor

All scuba instruction must be conducted by recreational diving instructors in good standing with a scuba agency recognized by the Boy Scouts of America and approved by the BSA local council.

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 this 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 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.

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).