

Open Water Class Information

Congratulations on beginning your adventure to becoming a certified SCUBA diver! At Salem Scuba we love this underwater world that we get to be a part of, and we revel in our role as we introduce you to the “other” 70% of the planet!

Your open water class will be something you’ll remember for years and years to come. The people you meet, and the experiences you have, it really is the journey of a lifetime. So hold on tight, here we go!

Your class consists of three portions- the classroom (or online) learning, the pool practice sessions, and the open water/certification weekend.

For the classroom portion, there are 5 chapters, and at the end of each chapter, a knowledge review. Please read the book and answer, in writing, the questions in the book for each knowledge review. We’ll get together for the classroom portions to talk through what we’re learning, answer questions, and explain differences for local diving that might differ from the book. After we go over the knowledge reviews, there is a quiz for each chapter (only ten questions- multiple choice). If you understand the knowledge reviews, you’ll find these simple and straightforward. After those, we’ll end the class portions with a 50 question final, also directly taken from the knowledge reviews and quizzes.

The pool portion will take us into the water to practice the skills and techniques you’ll be using in open water- 24 skills that we’ll work through till you feel comfortable and confident in how and when to use them. Our system is not about getting you through the class, but making you a safe, comfortable and fun diver- so it’s never rushed, and you’ll have time to ask questions and practice skills additionally as you feel the need.

Once we have done all the classroom and pool sessions we’ll head to the Hood Canal in Hoodspout Washington and do three days of diving. We go up early Friday morning, then do two dives Friday, two Saturday, so that by Saturday around lunch you’re certified! At that point, each dive you do is just for your own growth and enjoyment. The first 4 dives are called checkout dives, and you’ll be doing the exact same skills you’ve just learned and practiced in the pool. But your best dives aren’t when you sit down in front a professional and do skills, but when you start exploring! So after your certification paperwork is signed on Saturday, you’re free to go do a fun dive, as well as a night dive Saturday night. Sunday we often venture to a local marine preserve and do a deep dive and a wreck dive. That way, by the end of your open water weekend, you’ve already got a good head start on being an advanced diver. Truly, it’s the night dive when people stop thinking of this being a class that they’re taking, but instead see themselves as divers and adventurers. Night diving in the northwest with our bioluminescence is something amazing to

behold, and is a highlight of many divers lives. Get out there for that dive, you'll be glad you did.

So that's the three part process you can expect for your class. Here's some other random details:

--The orientation is incredibly important. It's where you'll meet your fellow divers, your shop staff, and get the schedule for your specific class. Please make every effort to be there, as those that do tend to feel more comfortable and confident as the class progresses, as well as not feeling one step behind or out of the loop.

--Please be on time, every time. We're learning to do something that mankind was not built to do, and what we learn helps us to be comfortable and safe, so missing portions is highly advised against, as well as not respectful to your fellow students who were on time. Make it a priority to be at each thing on time, and we'll make sure we use your time well and don't waste your efforts. 😊

--Decide in advance that you want to be here. The single biggest factor in people struggling with this class is if they WANT to be underwater or not. Make the decision that when your fight-or-flight kicks in, you'll fight. You're going to experience new sensations, new sights and sounds- you have to decide to embrace those to enjoy them. It starts before you ever set foot in the class, pool, or ocean. 😊

--SPEAK UP. Your staff at Salem Scuba genuinely grow to care for each of our students. We think about you, plan for you, and are always vigilant in thinking about how we can make this journey the safest and most fun for you. You really are helping us when you speak up to say you don't understand something, don't feel comfortable with something etc. We want to know what's on your mind. If you don't feel right saying it in front of the class, each instructors cell phone number is on their card at the front counter, as well as on the board throughout their class.

--Lastly, HAVE FUN! This is the most amazing sport, and over the years of teaching we have come across some great friendships that feel like family. Welcome to the dive family, now lets go have some fun together!

--Jim Smith
Lead Instructor
Salem Scuba
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