



## Preparing for your NOAA Diver Class

### Temperatures and Weather

#### January/February in Key West:

Temperatures and weather conditions in Key West during the winter are typically very pleasant. The average high temperature in January is 75° F, the average low is 65 F; temperature of water at this time of year is around 69°F. Wind chill can make it seem much colder at times. Typically, though, you will need your shorts and sunscreen. Average rainfall during January is 2.2”.

#### May and September in Seattle:

Weather in Seattle is often rainy or overcast. Wind chill can make it seem colder, especially after repetitive dives. The clothing you bring must function well in a wide-variety of conditions and should include cooler weather clothing that is lightweight, quick drying, and allows you good freedom of movement. Adequate foul weather shell jacket and pants that repel water are recommended. Adequate footwear to ensure warmth and dryness on dive platforms is recommended.

Average temperatures in September: 47 to 68°F above water; about 50°F in water.

Average temperatures in May: 45 to 74°F above water; about 50°F in water.

### What to Expect

#### Schedule

1. Before the beginning of training, you will need to complete the online portion of the DAN Emergency Oxygen for SCUBA Diving Injuries. A link to the DAN course will be provided to you after your registration has been confirmed by NDC.
2. The daily schedule will be shared with all students and generally begins each day at 730 and ends around 1800. Some days you will get off earlier and others later.
3. The first week runs from Monday through Saturday, with electives offered on the first Sunday (Nitrox) and second Saturday (dry suit).
4. There will be a required night dive the second week of training; class will end at approximately 2100 on that day.
5. Class is scheduled to end at 1630 on the last day of module 3. Please plan accordingly.

#### Meals

Short breaks will be provided for lunch during training. Students will need to bring a lunch each day along with healthy snacks and beverages to eat and drink during breaks. Susceptibility to decompression



sickness and a student's ability to function during the strenuous activities of this course are affected by hydration. Students should plan to bring a refillable water bottle to stay hydrated during training.

## **What to Bring**

### REQUIRED:

1. Students are responsible for purchasing their own SCUBA mask (non-purge type). Students should bring this item to class on the first day.
  - a. The mask should provide a leak free fit with a tempered fracture resistant lens. If you wear glasses on land, you may want to order an optical mask or optical inserts. Snorkels will be issued to students by NDC during class.
2. For drysuit training: Synthetic, expedition-weight long underwear and thick wool socks for use under the drysuit. Polypropylene type material that will wick moisture away from the body is recommended. No cotton!
3. Closed-toe shoes are required for all students through-out the training.
4. Swimsuit, towel, and change of clothes for dive training.
5. Bring your own Laptop or tablet.
  - a. NDC will provide electronic course materials for students to access on a class designated Google Drive folder and tests will be taken online. There will be a wireless network in the classroom.
6. Bring government-issued photo identification to access the main security gates of government facilities.
7. Uniform of the Day is ODUs for NOAA Corps; wage mariners and civilian students can wear casual dress
8. If you will be shipping your diving gear back to your unit: please arrange this with your supervisor ahead of time. NDC will require a complete shipping label, paid by your unit, to send the equipment.
9. Non-NOAA personnel must provide all of their own SCUBA equipment. A separate sheet will be provided to these students with specific gear requirements. NDC instructors will review their equipment before training begins.
10. NOAA employees and contractors will be issued Standardized SCUBA Equipment during training. This does not include a SCUBA mask or dry suit undergarments.
11. All dive students will be provided SCUBA tanks and weights through-out training.
12. Be prepared to bring lunch, snacks, and beverages every day to class.

### Recommended items:

- Swimming goggles for swim test
- Refillable water bottle
- Hat



- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Raincoat / Foul weather gear

### Physical Fitness Preparation

The 3-week NOAA Diver training program is physically demanding. The program requires strength to wear approximately 75 lbs. of equipment on land, 3 times a day. It is to your advantage if you are physically prepared. A fit person will learn techniques quickly and effectively. Suggested pre-class fitness activities include bicycling, running, swimming, racquet sports, and weight training. Students must come prepared for long hours during the day, followed by homework and reading assignments in the evenings.

The [initial swim test requirements](#) will be administered to each Diver Candidate during the first pool session. This includes: a 550 yard swim in 15 minutes, a 25 yard underwater swim and a 30 minute float. Anyone who does not pass will be sent home.

If you are beginning the course with Module 2 you should conduct check out dives with your Unit Diving Supervisor. During the next couple of weeks, take the time to get in the water with SCUBA gear and practice all the checkout skills which are demonstrated in this [video](#). You will be asked to perform them during a check out dive with an NDC instructor during your first day of class. Please also review decompression tables as we do not use dive computers during class.

### Checklist:

- Follow a physical fitness conditioning plan and prepare to pass the swim test
- Arrange flights
- Arrange vehicle transportation, carpool, or rental car
- Make lodging arrangements
- Purchase SCUBA mask
- Complete the online portion of the DAN Emergency Oxygen for SCUBA Diving Injuries
- Bring the above required and recommended items