

13. Reef Mermaid

13.1 Introduction

The Reef Mermaid Specialty Course is an advanced mermaid skills specialty course designed to give students the necessary skills to safely swim in a mermaid tail in open water conditions similar to their training without the direct supervision of an instructor. This course paves the way to open discussion with students about expanding to freediving and/or SCUBA as recreational activities.

13.2 Who May Teach

An active PFI Instructor that has been certified to teach this specialty

13.3 Student to Instructor Ratio

Academic

1. Unlimited, so long as adequate facility, supplies and time are provided to insure comprehensive and complete training of subject matter

Confined Water (swimming pool-like conditions)

1. A maximum of 8 students per instructor; it is the instructor's discretion to reduce this number as conditions dictate
2. The instructor has the option of adding 4 more students with the assistance of an active assistant instructor
3. The total number of students an instructor may have in the water is 12 with the assistance of active assistant instructors

Open Water (ocean, lake, quarry, spring, river or estuary)

1. A maximum of 6 students per instructor; it is the instructor's discretion to reduce this number as conditions dictate
2. The instructor has the option of adding 4 more students with the assistance of an active assistant instructor
3. The total number of students an instructor may have in the water is 10 with the assistance of active assistant instructors

13.4 Student Prerequisites

1. Minimum age 18, 10 with parental consent
2. Certified PFI Aquatic Mermaid

13.5 Course Structure and Duration

Open Water Execution

1. This course should be conducted open water, or in addition to confined water, at the instructor's discretion

Course Structure

1. Students must demonstrate skills necessary to swim successfully in a mermaid tail and remain in the water for 20 minutes.
2. All mermaid skills must be demonstrated during daylight hours.
3. PFI allows instructors to structure courses according to the number of students participating and their skill level.
4. The suggested number of training hours is 4 hours.
5. Max Depth 5m/15feet

13.6 Administrative Requirements

Administrative Tasks:

1. Collect the course fees from all the students
2. Ensure that the students have the required equipment
3. Communicate the schedule to the students
4. Have the students complete the:
 - a. *PFI General Liability Release and Express Assumption of Risk Form*
 - b. *PFI Medical History Form*

Upon successful completion of this specialty the instructor must:

1. Issue the appropriate PFI certification by registering the students online through member's area of the PFI website or submitting the *PFI Student Registration Form* to PFI Headquarters

13.6.1. Training Material

Required Material:

13.7 Required Equipment

1. Basic mermaid equipment (fabric tail and monofin)
2. Mask and snorkel
3. Exposure protection

13.8 Approved Outline

Instructors may use any additional text or materials that they feel help present these topics. The following topics must be covered:

1. Safety
 - a. Adult Supervision; Always swim with a buddy
 - b. Know where you are swimming/situational awareness
 - c. Swim with sound judgment, sober, and in good health
 - d. Know your fitness level and awareness of flexibility through stretching
 - e. Be mindful of those around you
 - f. Be mindful of the environment you are in
2. How to put on monofin and mermaid tail skin
 - a. Always put on tail at the water's edge
 - b. Put fin into the tail first
 - c. Place feet into the fin
 - d. Pull fabric over the legs
3. Use a controlled seated entry
4. Emergency tail release procedures
 - a. In case of an emergency, be able to quickly release the monofin by kicking feet out of pockets, to easily swim to safety/the surface.
5. Review swimming in monofin and mermaid tail
6. Full mermaid tail swimming skills in open water
7. Basics of breath-hold diving
 - a. Equalizing and pressure
8. Safety
 - a. Loss of motor control
 - b. Blackout
 - c. Emergency procedures
9. Buoyancy
10. Mermaid tricks for open water
11. Duck dive
12. Gentle, angled descent
13. Underwater movement skills

13.9 Required Skill Performance and Graduation Requirements

Students are required to successfully complete the following.

1. Properly prepare, put on, and adjust all mermaid equipment
2. Perform an emergency tail/monofin release while swimming in a monofin and full mermaid tail
3. Demonstrate good awareness of their environment
4. Safely conduct entries with their tail
5. Demonstrate comfortable floating and surface breathing
6. Proper dolphin kick in a monofin and full fabric tail.
7. Demonstrate proper buddy procedures
8. Identify a mermaid swimming emergency
9. Perform an emergency rescue
10. Swim underwater 25 meters/82 feet on one breath with fins or monofin

Upon successful completion of this course, graduates may:

1. Swim in a mermaid tail in conditions similar to training
2. Enroll in a PFI Freediver Course or an SDI Open Water Diver Course