

3. Safe Buddy

3.1 Introduction

This program is designed to educate uncertified Freedivers and/or water professionals, such as lifeguards, charter boat operators, and scuba professionals, in the safety and rescue techniques necessary for Freediving. The program does not include any instruction on increasing Freediving performances or improving form.

3.2 Course Objectives

The objective of this program is to increase Freediving safety awareness for uncertified Freedivers and to enhance their overall safety when diving within recreational Freediving limits.

3.3 Program Prerequisites

1. Minimum age of 10 for Junior Safe Buddy or 16 years for full Safe Buddy
2. Competent swimming skills
3. PFI Snorkeler / Skin Diver or equivalent skill level

3.4 Required Student Equipment

1. Mask
2. Fins
3. Snorkel
4. Wetsuit
5. Weights and belts optional
6. Timing device
7. Any specialty equipment deemed necessary by the local environment or specifics of the training session such as lanyards.

3.5 Support Materials

Student materials

1. *PFI Liability and Assumption of Risk form*
2. *PFI Medical Statement*

Instructor / support systems

1. Optional manikin for rescue scenarios
2. BLS/First Aid support equipment

3.6 Qualification of Graduates

1. Upon successful completion of this training session the participant receives a Safe Buddy certification, stating that the diver has received safety training.

3.7 Who May Teach

This program may be conducted by any active PFI Freediver Instructor.

3.8 Student to Instructor Ratio

Classroom / Briefing

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

Confined water

1. A maximum of eight students to one PFI Freediver Instructor (8:1). Or a maximum of twelve students to one PFI Freediver Instructor (12:1 max) with the use of active status PFI Assistant Freediver Instructors.

Open Water

1. There is no open water session for this course.

3.9 Depth Restrictions

Confined Water

1. Maximum confined water depth of 10m / 33ft.

3.10 Recommended Course Minimums

Classroom time:

1. 1 Hour

Confined water time:

1. 2.0 Hours

3.11 Knowledge Development Overview

The following topics must be briefed during the training session. Instructors may use additional texts or any materials that they feel help present these topics.

1. Introduction:
 - a. Course Overview
 - b. Paperwork and Prerequisites
 - c. Equipment Requirements Check
 - d. In water Protocols and Conduct
 - e. Safety / Supervision Practices
2. Course Overview:
 - a. Welcome
 - b. Objectives
 - c. Responsibilities
 - i. Conduct yourself in a safe and responsible manner as outlined by your training level
 - ii. Provide back-up safety according to your level if a situation or accident would require
3. Paperwork and Prerequisites:
 - a. Participant Information
 - b. Liability Form
 - c. Medical Form
 - d. Standard Safe Freediving Practice Statement of Understanding
4. Equipment Requirements Check:
 - a. Mask, fins, snorkel
 - b. Exposure protection for local environment
 - c. Weights and weight belt (optional)
 - d. Appropriate timing device
5. Safety & Problem Management:
 - a. Freediving Supervision
 - i. Direct Supervision
 - ii. One buddy up and one down
 - iii. Supervision for 30 seconds at the surface
 - b. Safety for Constant Ballast
 - i. Remain close enough to protect the airway
 - ii. Time your buddy's dive
 - iii. Know which direction they are heading while underwater
 - iv. 90% of LMC & BO happen at surface

- c. Safety signals for Static
 - i. Agree on signal
 - ii. Watch for signal as you tap your buddy
 - iii. Watch for weak or no signals
 - iv. Watch for air release
 - v. The two chances rule
 - vi. Signals: 1 min before; 30 sec before; at announced time; every 15 sec thereafter
- d. Safety for Dynamic (Optional)
 - i. Keep pace at surface with kickboard
 - ii. Watch body style
 - iii. Watch for air release
- e. Recovery breathing
 - i. Static/Dynamic recovery breaths
 - ii. Constant ballast recovery breaths
- f. Buoyancy for Safety
 - i. Buoyant at surface
 - ii. Never completely sink when exhaling to relaxed volume at surface
- g. Buddy Separation
 - i. At the surface
 - ii. Gain height- give OK signal
 - iii. Whistles
 - iv. Call name
 - v. Underwater
 - vi. Call for assistance
 - vii. Triangulate position
 - viii. Search patterns
 - ix. Dives within your limitations
- h. LMC & Surface Blackout
 - i. Depth vs. Static Hypoxia
 - ii. Near Blackout/LMC/Samba
 - 1. Signs and symptoms
 - iii. Assisting a near blackout at the surface
 - 1. Provide support
 - 2. Talk
 - 3. Remove mask if possible

- iv. Blackouts
 - 1. Signs and symptoms
- v. Assisting Blackouts at the surface
 - 1. Link up
 - 2. Remove mask
 - 3. 3 blow/tap/talks
 - 4. Artificial Respiration and Evacuation
- vi. Surface response to underwater blackout

3.12 Confined Water

To be certified as a Safe Buddy a student must demonstrate the following skills to the satisfaction of the PFI Instructor:

- 1. Responding to LMC's & BO's
 - a. Assist ascending diver
 - b. Assist with a simulated surface LMC as a safety.
 - i. Physically support the freediver
 - ii. Keep one hand on the chest above the waterline but below the chin.
 - iii. Speak calmly to encourage the freediver to breathe.
 - c. Respond to a simulated blackout at the surface.
 - i. Place the freediver on their back with the airway protected.
 - ii. Securely support their head and body.
 - iii. Blow, Tap, Talk 3 times.
 - d. Assist with a simulated underwater blackout
 - i. Physically support the freediver.
 - ii. Ensure proper hand placement.
 - iii. Protect the airway.
- 2. Static Apnea
 - a. Demonstrate basic elements of static safety including:
 - i. Timing and safety signals
 - ii. Recovery coaching
 - b. Problem management for Static
 - i. Simulated LMC scenario
 - ii. Simulated BO scenario
 - iii. Complete a full static apnea rescue with BLS egress

3. Dynamic Apnea (optional)
 - a. Demonstrate basic elements of dynamic safety including:
 - i. Buddy positioning
 - ii. Recovery coaching
 - b. Demonstrate problem management for dynamic apnea including:
 - i. Simulated LMC scenario
 - ii. Simulated BO scenario
 - iii. Complete a full dynamic apnea rescue with BLS egress
4. Constant Ballast
 - a. Demonstrate basic elements of constant ballast safety including:
 - i. Recovery coaching
 - ii. Position and proximity
 - b. Problem management for constant ballast
 - i. Simulated LMC scenario at surface
 - ii. Simulated BO scenario at surface
 - iii. Surface response to underwater blackout
 - iv. Rescue tow with unconscious diver
 - v. Airway control and in-water BLS management
 - vi. Egress and victim removal / transport

3.13 Graduation Requirements

In order to successfully complete the Safe Buddy program Freedivers must:

1. Attend all knowledge sessions and confined water sessions
2. Demonstrate proficiency in in-water training sessions
3. Demonstrate proficient rescue techniques on rescue scenario
4. Demonstrate mature and sound judgment concerning planning and execution.