

# SDI Open Water Scuba Diver Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



**Everything you need from our exam experts!**

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# Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

# How to Use This Guide

**This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:**

## 1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

**Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.**

## 2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

**Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.**

## 3. Learn from the Explanations

**After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.**

## 4. Track Your Progress

**Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.**

## 5. Simulate the Real Exam

**Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.**

## 6. Repeat and Review

**Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.**

**There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!**

## **Questions**

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- 1. Which of the following is true regarding diving equipment maintenance?**
  - A. All gear should be cleaned after every dive**
  - B. Expensive gear requires less maintenance**
  - C. Diving gear should be stored wet**
  - D. Only regulator needs regular servicing**
  
- 2. What is the main purpose of a submersible pressure gauge (SPG)?**
  - A. To monitor depth**
  - B. To measure tank pressure**
  - C. To check oxygen levels**
  - D. To determine water temperature**
  
- 3. Which of the following is among the best ways to prevent decompression sickness?**
  - A. Stay within dive computer no-decompression limit**
  - B. Ascend no faster than the rate allowed**
  - C. Make safety stops**
  - D. All the above**
  
- 4. What is the risk of using equipment for the first time during a dive?**
  - A. Increased likelihood of failure or improper use**
  - B. No risk; all equipment is reliable**
  - C. Improved diving experience**
  - D. Enhanced buoyancy control**
  
- 5. As you descend underwater, which colors fade first?**
  - A. Yellows and greens**
  - B. Blues and purples**
  - C. Reds and oranges**
  - D. Blacks and grays**

**6. What two factors are essential to ensure a safe diving experience?**

- A. Proper training and equipment knowledge**
- B. Bright sunlight and clear water**
- C. Advanced certifications and experience**
- D. Interest in marine life and exploration**

**7. What is a key advantage of diving with a buddy?**

- A. Increase in speed.**
- B. Shared equipment weight.**
- C. Enhanced safety and support.**
- D. Greater depth potential.**

**8. Which of the following is NOT a recommended method for clearing a mask underwater?**

- A. Blowing out through your mouth**
- B. Tilting your head back**
- C. Using your hands to push the mask away from your face**
- D. Taking a deep breath and looking up**

**9. Which of the following statements about currents is true?**

- A. Currents only affect surface water**
- B. Currents can be both permanent and temporary**
- C. Currents are caused solely by wind**
- D. Currents do not affect diving**

**10. Underwater, what is the effect of light on visibility?**

- A. It increases clarity**
- B. It enhances color contrast**
- C. It decreases visibility with greater depth**
- D. It remains consistent regardless of depth**

## **Answers**

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1. A
2. B
3. D
4. A
5. C
6. A
7. C
8. A
9. B
10. C

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## **Explanations**

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**1. Which of the following is true regarding diving equipment maintenance?**

- A. All gear should be cleaned after every dive**
- B. Expensive gear requires less maintenance**
- C. Diving gear should be stored wet**
- D. Only regulator needs regular servicing**

Maintaining diving equipment is crucial for safety and performance while underwater. Cleaning all gear after every dive helps to remove salt, sand, and other contaminants that can cause wear and corrosion if left unattended. This practice ensures the longevity of the equipment and its components, helping divers avoid potential issues during future dives. Proper maintenance extends the life of the gear and ensures reliable performance, as even high-quality or expensive equipment can deteriorate if not cared for correctly. Additionally, storing gear properly—usually in a clean, dry place—further protects it from environmental factors that could lead to damage. While some misunderstandings might arise regarding which gear requires service and how frequent maintenance is needed, it's important to remember that all pieces of dive equipment, not just regulators, encounter wear and should be inspected and maintained regularly. Thus, recognizing the importance of post-dive cleaning is vital to responsible diving practice.

**2. What is the main purpose of a submersible pressure gauge (SPG)?**

- A. To monitor depth**
- B. To measure tank pressure**
- C. To check oxygen levels**
- D. To determine water temperature**

The main purpose of a submersible pressure gauge (SPG) is to measure tank pressure. The SPG provides divers with real-time information on the remaining air supply in the scuba tank, which is crucial for dive planning and safety. By understanding how much air is left in the tank, divers can make informed decisions about their ascent and manage their dive time effectively to avoid running out of air while underwater. Monitoring tank pressure is essential for ensuring that divers do not exceed their safe limits, allowing them to maintain control over their dive profile, and ensuring they have enough air for both the ascent and any necessary safety stops. This instrument is vital for overall dive safety and planning.

**3. Which of the following is among the best ways to prevent decompression sickness?**

- A. Stay within dive computer no-decompression limit**
- B. Ascend no faster than the rate allowed**
- C. Make safety stops**
- D. All the above**

One of the most effective strategies for preventing decompression sickness, commonly known as "the bends," involves adhering to several key practices during diving. Staying within the dive computer's no-decompression limit is crucial because these limits are calculated to minimize the risk of nitrogen bubbles forming in the bloodstream during ascent. Ascending no faster than the recommended rate is equally important; rapid ascents can increase the likelihood of inert gas bubbles forming, which increases the risk of decompression sickness. Making safety stops during ascent is an additional precaution that allows extra time for the body to off-gas nitrogen safely, further reducing the risk of decompression sickness. By emphasizing the importance of all these practices, it becomes clear that comprehensive adherence to safe diving protocols is the best approach for preventing decompression sickness. Therefore, acknowledging all these measures collectively ensures divers maintain the highest safety standards while enjoying their underwater experiences.

**4. What is the risk of using equipment for the first time during a dive?**

- A. Increased likelihood of failure or improper use**
- B. No risk; all equipment is reliable**
- C. Improved diving experience**
- D. Enhanced buoyancy control**

Using equipment for the first time during a dive inherently carries the risk of increased likelihood of failure or improper use. When divers are not familiar with the functioning and features of specific gear, they may struggle to operate it effectively. This lack of familiarity can lead to critical mistakes, such as incorrect adjustments or failure to respond properly in an emergency scenario. As a result, divers might not be able to utilize the equipment as intended, which could compromise safety and overall dive experience. In contrast, the idea that all equipment is reliable underestimates the potential for user error and mechanical failure. New divers may feel confident in their gear's reliability but may not be aware of its specific operating procedures, which are essential for safe use. The notion that using unfamiliar equipment enhances the diving experience or improves buoyancy control is also misguided. While proper equipment can indeed enhance a dive, using it without prior experience can lead to anxiety and distractions, taking away from the enjoyment of the dive and potentially leading to dangerous situations. Therefore, it is crucial to practice and become familiar with diving gear before using it in actual dive scenarios.

## 5. As you descend underwater, which colors fade first?

- A. Yellows and greens**
- B. Blues and purples**
- C. Reds and oranges**
- D. Blacks and grays**

As you descend underwater, colors are absorbed by the water at different rates, leading to the phenomenon of color fading. The first colors to fade as you go deeper are reds and oranges. This is due to the fact that these wavelengths of light are longer and are absorbed quickly by water. By the time you reach a depth of about 10 meters (around 33 feet), red light is significantly diminished, and shades of orange will also begin to disappear. In contrast, blue and purple wavelengths are shorter and penetrate deeper into the water before being absorbed. This is why underwater environments primarily exhibit shades of blue as depth increases. The understanding of how colors disappear underwater is crucial for divers when it comes to equipment selection, photography, and understanding marine environments.

## 6. What two factors are essential to ensure a safe diving experience?

- A. Proper training and equipment knowledge**
- B. Bright sunlight and clear water**
- C. Advanced certifications and experience**
- D. Interest in marine life and exploration**

Proper training and equipment knowledge are fundamental to a safe diving experience because they ensure that divers are adequately prepared to handle the challenges and potential risks associated with underwater environments. Training provides divers with the necessary skills and knowledge to understand diving theory, safety procedures, and emergency protocols. This groundwork prepares them to respond effectively to various situations, such as equipment malfunctions or changes in environmental conditions. Additionally, being knowledgeable about equipment ensures divers can properly use and maintain their gear. Understanding how to operate dive computers, regulators, buoyancy control devices, and other essential equipment is vital for managing buoyancy, air supply, and safety during dives. Without both training and equipment knowledge, divers may find themselves unprepared for the challenges they face underwater, increasing the risk of accidents or dangerous situations. In contrast, factors such as bright sunlight and clear water can enhance a dive experience but do not directly contribute to safety in the way that proper training and equipment knowledge do. Similarly, advanced certifications and experience can be beneficial but may not be strictly necessary for all diving situations, especially recreational ones. Interest in marine life and exploration, while valuable for personal motivation, does not inherently ensure safety on a dive.

## 7. What is a key advantage of diving with a buddy?

- A. Increase in speed.**
- B. Shared equipment weight.**
- C. Enhanced safety and support.**
- D. Greater depth potential.**

Diving with a buddy offers enhanced safety and support, which is one of the most significant advantages of this practice. Being in pairs allows divers to monitor each other's air supply, share information about dive conditions, and assist in emergencies. If one diver encounters a problem, the other is there to help, whether it's providing assistance with buoyancy control, sharing equipment, or executing a controlled ascent. This mutual support reduces the risks associated with diving and increases the overall safety of the dive experience. While other options may seem appealing, they do not capture the primary benefit of buddy diving. For example, an increase in speed is not a typical advantage, as diving more quickly could actually compromise safety and proper technique. Similarly, though weight distribution can be a factor, shared equipment weight is generally not a practical advantage in the buddy system since each diver typically carries their own gear. Finally, having a buddy does not inherently provide greater depth potential, as depth limits depend on individual training and experience rather than the presence of a diving partner. Overall, the emphasis on safety and mutual assistance solidifies the importance of diving with a buddy.

## 8. Which of the following is NOT a recommended method for clearing a mask underwater?

- A. Blowing out through your mouth**
- B. Tilting your head back**
- C. Using your hands to push the mask away from your face**
- D. Taking a deep breath and looking up**

The method cited as blowing out through your mouth is indeed a legitimate technique for clearing a mask, as it helps to expel water that has entered the mask. When your mask has water inside, one common approach is to exhale gently through your nose while simultaneously pressing up on the mask's top to force the water out from the bottom. This method creates a pressure difference that efficiently clears the water without introducing additional challenges. In contrast, the other methods may not be as effective. Tilting your head back can cause water to flow into the mask instead of allowing it to clear effectively, while pushing the mask away from your face may not only fail to remove water but could also create a situation where the mask comes off entirely. Taking a deep breath and looking up can help to some degree, but it often involves a combination of techniques for optimal results. Each of these methods achieves the same goal, which is to ensure a clear line of sight while underwater, but blowing out through your mouth is specifically effective and frequently taught as a primary technique.

**9. Which of the following statements about currents is true?**

- A. Currents only affect surface water**
- B. Currents can be both permanent and temporary**
- C. Currents are caused solely by wind**
- D. Currents do not affect diving**

The statement that currents can be both permanent and temporary is accurate because ocean currents are influenced by a variety of factors and can take different forms. Permanent currents, like the Gulf Stream, flow continuously and consistently due to factors such as temperature differences and the Earth's rotation. On the other hand, temporary currents, also known as tidal currents, can occur due to the gravitational pull of the moon and sun, resulting in variations that change with the tides. Understanding the nature of both permanent and temporary currents is crucial for divers as it helps them anticipate water movement, identify potential hazards, and make informed decisions about dive planning and safety. The existence of both types of currents emphasizes the dynamic nature of underwater environments, which can impact visibility and positions of marine life, hence affecting the overall diving experience.

**10. Underwater, what is the effect of light on visibility?**

- A. It increases clarity**
- B. It enhances color contrast**
- C. It decreases visibility with greater depth**
- D. It remains consistent regardless of depth**

The correct answer highlights a fundamental principle of underwater visibility and light behavior. As you descend deeper in the water, light travels less effectively due to absorption and scattering. This phenomenon leads to a decrease in visibility with greater depth, particularly because different wavelengths of light are absorbed at different rates. For example, red light is absorbed quickly, which is why underwater scenes appear more blue or green at depth. While light does indeed play a role in clarity and color contrast, these effects tend to diminish with depth rather than consistently enhance visibility. In shallow waters, light can illuminate and reveal details, improving clarity and contrast, but as you move deeper, these benefits are significantly reduced, resulting in reduced visibility. Thus, understanding how light interacts with water is crucial for divers as they plan their underwater activities and navigation.

# Next Steps

**Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.**

**As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.**

**If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at [hello@examzify.com](mailto:hello@examzify.com).**

**Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:**

**<https://sdi-openwaterscubadiver.examzify.com>**

**We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!**

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