

The Villages Scuba Club

Lost Buddy Procedures

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Some Causes of Dive Buddy Separation

- Strong currents during a drift dive.
- Poor visibility.
- Low visibility combined with a drift dive.
- Wreck diving.
- Night diving.
- Equipment problems or malfunctions.
- Other distractions.
- Miscommunication during the dive.

Standard Lost Buddy Procedures

- Get vertical in water column, look in all directions for your buddy or their bubbles.
- Rise 10 feet in water column and look again.
- After a minute, ascend slowly to the surface. Keep turning as you ascend, continuing to search.
- Once surfaced, note location based on two points on the shore.
- When buddy surfaces, get back together and continue dive, if remaining gas and NDL allow.
- If buddy does not surface within 5 minutes, it is your responsibility to contact and guide the emergency responders.
- *Don't descend!*



Other Ideas to Find a Lost Buddy

- Use tank banger or other audio signaling device.
 - Listen for buddy signaling.
- Swing dive light (on brightest setting) in general direction of your buddy.
 - If you see your buddy's light, respond with swinging dive light.
- Any others?

Tips to Avoid Dive Buddy Separation

- Always discuss separation procedures before you dive, especially -
 - when diving on a drift dive or on a low visibility dive, or
 - diving with a new buddy.
- Stay within 10-15 feet of your buddy on good visibility dives, even closer in low visibility dives.
- Consider a buddy line or tether in extremely low visibility or in stronger drift dives. Or hold hands to avoid separation or, if conditions get really bad, abandon the dive.
- Check on your buddy on a regular basis, every 2-5 minutes.
- Be aware of your blind spot, as your buddy may be behind you.
- If you are planning a wreck penetration dive, discuss plan and signals before you dive to avoid any miscommunication while on the dive.
- If the dive makes it difficult to maintain buddy contact, consider call the dive.

Questions/Comments?