Dive Kit List
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Must haves</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mask</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snorkel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure protection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timing device</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSMB and reel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slate and pencils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADI Manuals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highly recommended</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cutting tool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underwater light</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dive computer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Optional</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regulator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry bag</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extra stuff</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water temperatures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact us</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Brands:** Aqualung, Atomic, Cressi, Hollis, Mares, Oceanic, Scubapro, Tusa

**Recommended:**


**Oceanic Shadow Mask.** Frameless mask, which makes it easy to put flat into your luggage or BCD pocket. [http://www.oceanicuk.com/shadow-mask.html](http://www.oceanicuk.com/shadow-mask.html)

**Aqualung Linea Mask.** Keeps long hair from getting tangled in the buckle while also being frameless. [https://www.aqualung.com/us/gear/masks/item/74-linea](https://www.aqualung.com/us/gear/masks/item/74-linea)

**Tusa neoprene strap cover.** Great accessory for your mask in order to keep your hair from getting tangled in the mask and increasing the ease of donning and doffing your mask. [http://www.tusa.com/eu-en/Tusa/Accessories/MS-20_MASK_STRAP](http://www.tusa.com/eu-en/Tusa/Accessories/MS-20_MASK_STRAP)

**To be considered:**
The most important feature when you buy a mask is fit. The best way to find out if it is the right mask for you is to place the mask against your face as if you were wearing it without the strap, and inhaling through your nose. The mask fits, if you can wobble your head without the mask falling off.

**Spare mask:**
As masks are the second most lost items on our expeditions and highly problematic to replace on site, we strongly recommend to bring along a spare mask as you obviously won’t be able to dive without one.

**Preparation:**
Most new dive masks do have mold release agents in the flexible skirt that during storage will migrate to the surface of the lens and cause fogging. These deposits can be safely removed with an extra application of a powerful surfactant like baby shampoo. Ask your dive store assistant for help and advice on how to prepare your mask, as mask materials may vary and need different treatments.
**Snorkel**

**Brands:** Aqualung, Atomic, Cressi, Hollis, Mares, Oceanic, Scubapro, Tusa

**Recommended:**


**Attachment:**
Snorkels are the number one lost item on expeditions. Make sure that your snorkel comes with a reliable attachment that won’t fall off as you remove and replace your mask during training.

**Mouthpiece fit:**
Ask to try the mouthpiece before you buy and choose one that is comfortable and solid (small/thin teeth grips are vulnerable to being chewed though).

**Mouthpiece valve:**
Most modern snorkels have a valve on the bottom of the snorkel to improve ease of clearing the water from your snorkel after ducking underwater.

**Dry valve:**
Some snorkels have a valve on the end of the snorkel, called ‘dry valves’, designed to keep water out of the snorkel while you duck underwater. However, these are typically expensive, bulky, and often close on the surface, obstructing breathing. Perhaps in a few years the technology will become more streamlined and reliable, but for now these are typically considered gimmicky and don’t come as recommended.
Fins

Brands: Cressi, Mares, Oceanic, SCUBAPRO, TUSA

Recommended:

- Cressi Frog Plus
  [http://www.cressi.co.uk/Catalogue/Details.asp?id=628](http://www.cressi.co.uk/Catalogue/Details.asp?id=628)

- Oceanic Viper

- Scubapro Jet Sport

- Tusa Liberator X

- Mares Avanti Quattro
  [https://www.mares.com/products/fins/open-heel/avanti-quattro/-5652/?region=eu](https://www.mares.com/products/fins/open-heel/avanti-quattro/-5652/?region=eu)

These are more expensive, but they are one of the most popular fins of the last decade. Therefore, we highly recommend those fins if you plan to do a lot of diving.

Foot pocket design:
It is highly recommended for you to buy open heel fins, which are worn with neoprene booties. Full foot fins are for rather for snorkeling. If you already have full-foot fins, it is acceptable to bring these, though you will still be required to bring booties to walk across the sharp rocks and among the sea urchins on the way to the dive boats. Open heel fins are tougher, easier to don and more comfortable than full-foot fins. When choosing which size of foot pocket to select, try it while wearing your booties. It should feel snug and responsive with no wobble.

Blade design:
The basic fin design is a stiff, flat blade or paddle.

Strap design:
While most open heel fins come with rubber straps with clip attachments, steel spring or bungee straps are becoming cheaper and more widely available, and hugely improve donning your fins, especially on the small boats you will use on expedition.
Booties

Brands: Akona, Aqualung, Bodyglove, BARE, Cressi, Fourth Element, Mares, Scubapro, Typhoon, Waterproof

Sole:
Make sure to buy or bring along booties with a thick enough rubber sole to be able to walk comfortably on sharp shells, rocks, coral and sea urchins and to walk around waist high water, in which you might not be able to see what you are stepping on.
If you decided to bring along your full foot fins and are therefore not buying booties, you can bring along old sandals or trainers to save money.

Cut:
Make sure the bootie is high enough to protect your ankles and heel from rubbing against your fin strap. However, if you own a full-length wetsuit, make sure that the booties are not so high-cut that they interfere with the leg of the wetsuit. If they overlap, they should do so snugly, preferably bootie over the top of the wetsuit leg.
Exposure protection

Brands:
Akona, Aqualung, Bodyglove, Bare, Cressi, Fourth Element, Mares, Scubapro, Typhoon, Waterproof

Water Temperature:
The water temperature varies throughout the year. Most people will get cold diving for 45 minutes in 27 degrees water without at least a 3mm thick shorty wetsuit. What you bring is up to you. If you aren’t sure then a 5mm full-length is playing safe, all year round, but if you know you don’t feel the cold so much or are coming when the water is warmer then a 3mm should be adequate.

November to April - typically 27-30°C:
During the Madagascan summer, some people find it warm enough to dive without a wetsuit at all, but always bring one just in case - at least a 3mm thick shorty (or 3-5mm neoprene vest over a rash guard).

May to October - typically 24-26°C:
During the rest of the year, most people prefer to wear a 5mm full-length wetsuit, though some find 3mm to be adequate. During July and August the water temperature is at its lowest, occasionally as low as 20°C, and a 5mm full-length wetsuit is highly recommended. If you are coming during this period and really feel the cold you may consider a thermal vest under your wetsuit and maybe even a hood. Gloves are not recommended as they will interfere with writing on a slate.

Rash guard:
This is a spandex/nylon or polyester shirt. It provides sun protection while snorkeling and during boat transport. In the water it provides a slight protection against jellyfish stings, or under a wetsuit helps prevent chafing. Recommended during all seasons.

Surfing wetsuits:
If you already own a wetsuit from another watersport such as surfing, it will certainly do. However, if investing in a wetsuit for diving, be aware that wetsuits made for sports like surfing are made to be particularly buoyant, whereas those made specifically for diving are prepared in a different way that eliminates annoying excess buoyancy.

To be considered:
For the wetsuit to work effectively, it must be as flush to your skin in all areas as possible. This will minimize water movement between the suit and your skin, keeping you warmer, and avoid trapping air in the suit causing unwanted buoyancy.
Brands:
Cressi, Mares, Oceanic, Suunto

Recommended:

**Casio F-91W.** This watch is a cheap, durable and reliable timing device. You can dive up to 30 metres deep with it. [http://www.casio.co.uk/products/timepieces/casio-collection//Product/F-91W-1XY/](http://www.casio.co.uk/products/timepieces/casio-collection//Product/F-91W-1XY/)

**Suunto Vyper.** This is the benchmark for recreational dive computers. This dive computer will last you for years and you can change batteries yourself. Therefore if you want more than just a timing device, we recommend for you to buy the Vyper. [http://www.suunto.com/vyper/](http://www.suunto.com/vyper/)

Metal links:
If your diving watch has metal links, make sure that it is fitted with enough links to fit around your wetsuit sleeve, if you are bringing a wetsuit with sleeves.

Dive computers:
Dive computers combine a bottom timer with a depth timer, while providing additional functions such as calculating your no-decompression limits or displaying a safety stop countdown.
Recommended DSMB (Delayed Surface Marker Buoy):

IST Dolphin Tech DSMB. This is a small sized DSMB, which makes it easier to be stowed away in your BCD pocket and easier to fully inflate for maximum surface visibility. Therefore, please avoid buying a huge DSMB. About 1m length is fine. [http://istsports.com/web/product.php?id_product=20779](http://istsports.com/web/product.php?id_product=20779)

Recommended Ratchet Reel:

The Lumb Moray Reel is the best combination of low cost, compact and sturdy among ratchet reels. Still, the bulk of it can make it cumbersome to deploy, and makes them harder to stow away while diving. So if you choose a reel, make also sure it is a compact one. [http://www.amazon.co.uk/Lumb-Bros-Moray-Reel-Line/dp/B0056VQ43A](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Lumb-Bros-Moray-Reel-Line/dp/B0056VQ43A)

Recommended Finger Spool:

Dive Gear Express Finger Spool. Finger spools are easier to slip into a BCD pocket and better yet are sold with a double-ended snap clip to ease attaching to a BCD D-ring or your DSMB when you need to deploy. They are also more durable than ratchet reels. Therefore we recommend you to use finger spools instead of ratchet reels. 15-30m is an adequate amount of line. [https://www.divegearexpress.com/dr-plastic-finger-spool-small-50-ft-15-m-white-line-s-s-snap-2986](https://www.divegearexpress.com/dr-plastic-finger-spool-small-50-ft-15-m-white-line-s-s-snap-2986)
Slate and pencils

**Recommended:**

As you will be spending a lot of time writing on slates, we strongly recommend you to buy at least an A4 sized slate with a clip or lanyard, since you will otherwise soon run out of room to make notes.

[http://www.amazon.co.uk/Beaver-Scuba-Diving-Large-Slate/dp/B002ZFJSVA](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Beaver-Scuba-Diving-Large-Slate/dp/B002ZFJSVA)

As pencils get lost easily and rot in water, we recommend you to get multiple backups and buy pencils made of recycled plastics.


**Eraser:**

Although you can use sand to erase your slates, erasers are cheap and effective and don’t take up much luggage space.
PADI Materials:
For each PADI course you are taking on site, you need to make sure to bring up to date course material for each course you take along. Please check below what is required for what course. Second hand or out of date materials are not acceptable. We are not able to purchase any course materials on site, since we are located in a very remote area. It is of paramount importance that you buy your materials (at a local dive shop or padi.com) at home and bring them along. Failure to bring your necessary course material will result in you being charged additional administration fees and will delay the date your certification is being processed.

If you already are a certified Advanced Open Water Diver and are not intending to take any further courses, you only need to bring along your certification and log book.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open Water Diver</td>
<td>- PADI Open Water Diver Manual (ideally 2015 edition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Log Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- RDP Table (metric) with corresponding instructions for use booklet (These are available bundled together as Open Water Crew-Pak with Table and Logbook)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Open Water Diver</td>
<td>- PADI Adventures in Diving Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- PADI Adventures in Diving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency First Response Diver</td>
<td>- Emergency First Response Participant Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Ideally please also bring some spare bandages, gauzes and latex gloves for practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rescue Diver</td>
<td>- PADI Rescue Diver Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- PADI Diving Accident Management Work Slate (often packaged with the manual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Pocket Mask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- These are available bundled together as Rescue Diver Crew-Pak with Pocket Mask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADI Dive Master</td>
<td>- PADI Dive Master Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- PADI Instructor Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- RDP (metric)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- eRDPml with the corresponding Instructions for Use booklet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Encyclopaedia of Recreational Diving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- A set of PADI Dive master Slates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Log Book (you must bring proof of at least 40 dives and the ability to log at least 60 dives before you certify)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Dive master hologram (this sticker is essential and must be sent to PADI with your Dive master application, please ensure it is present in your pack when purchasing and please keep it safe!)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cutting tool

Recommended:


Why a cutting tool?

It is a safety requirement for each buddy team to dive with at least one carrying a cutting tool in case of entanglement in fishing wire or other line. If you are unable to carry one with you, you may be excluded from fun dives without a supervising staff member.

**Knives:**

Knives are the most common form of cutting tool. A small one is sufficient and generally cheaper. Larger ones are a little cumbersome, and generally designed for more heavy duty use, such as in wreck diving or underwater salvaging.

**Line Cutters:**

Sometimes called Z-knives, these have a protected blade, designed to cut line without an exposed point or edge that may accidentally cut you or your equipment. These are often also more compact than knives and more easily tuck away onto your BCD.
Compass

Recommended:

Suunto SK-7: Most popular compass, which features tilt potential, which means that it still functions when tilted up to about 30°, which makes the compass more reliable and easy to use in water. [http://www.suunto.com/en-GB/Products/dive-computers-and-instruments/suunto-sk-7-dive-compass/Suunto-SK-7-Wrist-Dive-Compass-NH/](http://www.suunto.com/en-GB/Products/dive-computers-and-instruments/suunto-sk-7-dive-compass/Suunto-SK-7-Wrist-Dive-Compass-NH/)

DiveGearExpress Deluxe Pro Compass: Also features tilt potential, and comes with a bungee mount for ease of donning [https://www.divegearexpress.com/deluxe-pro-compass](https://www.divegearexpress.com/deluxe-pro-compass)

DSS Bungee Mount is available if you want to modify your Suunto SK-7 to have a bungee mount [https://www.deepseasupply.com/index.php?product=47](https://www.deepseasupply.com/index.php?product=47)

Why a compass?
You will make use of a compass during your dive courses and during reef surveying. Blue Ventures has a limited number of compasses to lend to volunteers when appropriate. If you are taking the Divemaster course, or are already a Divemaster, you will be expected to bring your own compass.
Underwater Light

Brands:
Hollis, Ikelite, intova, IST, Mares, Princeton, Scubapro, Seac, UK (UnderwaterKinetics)

Recommended:
- Seac R1: Button activated power switch, making it safer to turn on and off when wet, and has two different intensity modes. Runs off 3 AAA batteries. [http://www.seacsub.com/scuba/lights/r1.html](http://www.seacsub.com/scuba/lights/r1.html)
- Lerway T6: Does not have the greatest burn time, so make sure you bring a battery charger for the battery. It is incredibly cheap though if you are on a tight budget. [http://www.amazon.co.uk/Lerway%C2%AE-Waterproof-Underwater-Diving-Flashlight/dp/B00BIFO0MU](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Lerway%C2%AE-Waterproof-Underwater-Diving-Flashlight/dp/B00BIFO0MU)

Why underwater light?
If you wish to take part in night diving or snorkeling, you must bring your own underwater torch. If you are completing a Divemaster course and have not previously dived at night, you will have to and must therefore bring your own torch in that case. The chance to go on a night dive is not guaranteed since it is strongly weather dependent.

Batteries:
Underwater lights tend to run off AA, AAA, C, CR-123 or ST-HLT/3.7V Li-ion batteries. It is an advantage to have a torch that runs off easily-accessible batteries, or to have rechargeable batteries and a charger.

Burn intensity:
The brightness of a torch is measured in lumens. About 150-250 lumens is normal for a recreational dive torch. Some torches may advertise higher intensities, but be aware that this often comes at the cost of battery duration. As an example, a torch powered by 3x C batteries may last approximately 30 hours with a 100 lumen LED, 14 hours at 200 lumens and 7 hours at 350 lumens. If you choose a lower intensity, not only will your torch last longer, allowing you to use your torch for other night-time activities; you are also less likely to spook the fragile-eyed nocturnal marine life. Some torches have high-intensity and low-intensity modes.
Regulator

Brands:
Apeks, Beauchat, DiveRite, HOG, Mares, Oceanic, Scubapro, Hollis

Recommended:
- Apeks XTX50 and DS4: Covers all the basics, and does so better and cheaper than its competitors. It has something of a cult following in the dive community. [http://www.apeksdiving.com/uk/regulators/product/xtx50-ds4-regulator.html](http://www.apeksdiving.com/uk/regulators/product/xtx50-ds4-regulator.html)
- Scubapro Mk25 and S600: One of the most consistently ranked as one of the top-performing regulators. Highly recommended if you wish to spend a little more on your breathing equipment. [http://www.scubapro.com/en-US/USA/regulators/products/mk25-evos600.aspx](http://www.scubapro.com/en-US/USA/regulators/products/mk25-evos600.aspx)

Why a regulator?
A regulator is a comparatively costly investment, especially since it requires yearly servicing. Blue Ventures Expeditions have enough regulators to lend to all volunteers. If you decide to have your own one, you can choose which particular first stage to put with a second stage, for example. However, you may find it cheaper and more convenient to buy a set put together by the manufacturer – speak to your dive shop about this.

Valve connection:
The regulator first stage will connect to the tank valve with either a Yoke or DIN connection. The type of connection you bring on expedition does not matter, since Blue Ventures cylinders have adaptable valves that can fit either Yoke or DIN regulators.

Piston or Diaphragm:
Piston type first stages are simpler designs and thus generally considered to be more reliable. Because environmental sealing is easier and more effective for diaphragm type regulators, they are generally considered better suited to cold water diving. Keep in mind that much of the opinion often heard expressed is a result of theoretical considerations or manufacturer marketing, not based on the actual characteristics of modern scuba regulators. Today, both piston and diaphragm first stages are very reliable and both can flow more gas than the diver can breathe.

Environmental sealing:
Environmental sealing keeps the interior of the regulator dry, permitting cold water diving. Since it is never considerably more costly to buy a regulator that is sealed, it is recommended to do so, so that you are not restricted if you one day decide to dive in cold water.
BCD

Brands:
Aqualung, Cressi, Mares, Oceanic, SCUBAPRO, Sherwood, TUSA

Recommended:

- Aqualung Axiom: This BCD is one of the most comfortable ones on the market, offers good pocket room, plenty of D-rings for clipping accessories, and a knife attachment point.

- Apeks Black Ice: This is a high-tech-inspired back inflation BCD otherwise similar to the Axiom with less pocket space but more D-rings.

- Scubapro Knighthawk

- Cressi Travelight: This is the best selling BCD intended for travel. It uses ultra-light materials and eschews a back plate in order that it can be rolled tightly into your Luggage.
  [http://www.cressi.co.uk/Catalogue/Details.asp?id=518&CatMacroID=3](http://www.cressi.co.uk/Catalogue/Details.asp?id=518&CatMacroID=3)

Why your own BCD?
Blue Ventures Expeditions have enough BCDs that you are not required to bring your own. However, owning your own BCD will ensure that you have a snug fit, as there is no guarantee that rental gear will do so.

Fit:
Don’t buy a BCD without first trying it on. Don’t assume that because your jacket is a Medium, your BCD should be too! It should fit snugly without riding up over your shoulders or shifting around as you move.

Inflation:
The most common style for recreational diving is the Jacket BCD. It is essentially an inflatable jacket, with a bladder covering both the back and sides. This provides great buoyancy at the surface, but some BCDs have a back-only inflation which provides much better trim and stability underwater. The back-inflation BCD is quickly gaining in popularity for this reason.

D-rings:
Make sure your BCD has enough D-rings to secure the equipment you need on it, such as DSMB and reel, torches, slates and your octopus-holder. A D-ring on your right shoulder and one on each pocket, or under the pocket should be sufficient.

Alternate regulator/inflator:
Some manufacturers offer an inflator that doubles as an alternate regulator. These are not recommended.
Recommended:

Exped Dry bags, Tri bord, overboard etc

Why my own dry bag?
It is very useful for keeping together your essential items when you travel on the dive boats or go on sailing trips. These come in all shapes and sizes, but consider one that will fit your water bottle, sun cream, towel, t-shirt and hat for a typical boat excursion.
## Water temperatures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Avg. Temp. (°C)</th>
<th>Avg. Temp (°F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Graph showing water temperatures over months](image)
If you have any questions, please do get in contact with us in the London office, on +44 (0)20 7697 8598, or email us at info@blueventures.org.

Happy Diving!

Your Blue Ventures Dive Team