



# Standard Safe Technical Diving Practices Statement of Understanding

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## Please read carefully before signing.

This is a statement in which you are informed of the established safe diving practices for technical diving. These practices have been compiled for your review and acknowledgement to increase your safety in diving. Your signature on this statement is required as proof that you are aware of these accepted technical diving practices. Read and discuss the statement prior to signing it.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that as a technical diver I shall:  
Print Name

1. Maintain good mental and physical fitness for diving. Have the physical strength to function in tec diving equipment, with a reserve capacity, both in the water and out. Avoid being under the influence of alcohol when diving. Not use drugs before diving unless cleared to do so by an appropriate health care professional. As someone making challenging technical dives, recognize that regular dive medical assessments helps reduce my risk. Keep proficient in diving skills, striving to increase them through continuing education. Practice and review specific technical diving skills in controlled conditions after a period of inactivity using those skills, and refer to my course materials, online sources, manufacturer recommendations and interactions with other active tec divers to stay current and refresh myself on important information regarding topics that include, but are not limited to, decompression theory, equipment and procedures.
2. Be familiar with my dive sites. If not familiar with a site, obtain a formal diving orientation from a knowledgeable, local source who is familiar with the requirements of tec diving and how local conditions affect them. Gain experience with the local environment on shallow, no stop dives before making challenging tec dives, and, if diving conditions are worse than those in which I am experienced, postpone diving or select an alternate site with better conditions. Engage only in diving activities consistent with my training and experience.
3. Use complete, well-maintained, reliable equipment with which I am familiar; and inspect it for correct fit and function prior to each dive. If diving a rebreather (SCR or CCR), be specifically trained and qualified for the particular rebreather. Use all the tec community accepted equipment required for the particular tec diving in which I engage. Deny use of tec diving equipment to divers uncertified in its use. Maintain all equipment in accordance with manufacturer recommendations. Only make modifications the manufacturer authorizes me to make. Not dive beyond the manufacturer rated depth and/or time limits for equipment. Always have at least two functioning life support systems on a tec dive, and if one fails, use the other to abort the dive.
4. Listen carefully to dive briefings and directions and respect the advice of those supervising my diving activities. Recognize that special training may be required for participation in many tec diving activities, including self-reliant diving (solo diving), when diving in other geographic areas and after periods of inactivity.
5. Adhere to the team diving philosophy on every tec dive. Plan dives, including but not limited to, communications, procedures for reuniting in case of separation, and emergency procedures, with my team. Agree that the overriding mission of every dive is for the entire team to return safely. Dive within a team, but be self-sufficient. Honor the rule that any diver can abort any dive at any time for any reason. Agree that to dive alone, I should be qualified as a self-reliant (solo) diver. Recognize that diving alone may add risk by depriving me of a team mate who can assist me in the event of, or to prevent, an accident or incident, and understand that any available supervisory staff may have little or no opportunity to affect a timely assist or rescue.
6. Not exceed a  $PO_2$  of 1.4 (bar/ata) for general open-circuit diving and 1.3 for general rebreather diving. Not exceed a  $PO_2$  of 1.6 under any circumstances, and plan dives well within oxygen exposure limits. Plan overhead environment and decompression dives with ample life support reserve to handle unforeseen problems. Be proficient in dive planning with decompression software and/or the planning mode of dive computers. Recognize that the state of practice in tec decompression diving is to have two tec diving computers per diver to provide decompression information. Be qualified for, and use, high oxygen gas mixes to make decompression more efficient. Limit maximum depth and stop time to my level of training and experience.
7. Maintain proper buoyancy for the tec diving activity. Maintain neutral buoyancy while underwater. Be buoyant for surface swimming and resting, and, if diving in a negatively buoyant condition due to gas and equipment requirements, have at least two means of controlling buoyancy using low pressure inflation by a gas source. Carry at least one visual and one audible surface signaling device (signal tube, whistle, mirror) when diving in open water. Always dive with a Delayed Surface Marker Buoy or lift bag and reel to provide an emergency decompression line and to make my position visible from the surface.

8. Breathe properly while diving. Never breath-hold or skip-breathe. Avoid overexertion while in and underwater and dive within my limitations. Recognize that the deeper I dive, the greater the effort required to breathe and the easier it is to overexert. Recognize that when diving a rebreather, the deeper I dive, the less efficient my scrubber will be, which will raise the carbon dioxide level in the breathing loop, all else being equal. Use helium-based mixes to reduce gas density and effort of breathing when making deep technical dives.
  
9. Bail out without delay if I have a problem when diving with a rebreather; when in doubt, bail out, then identify the problem. Acknowledge that any diver can bail out at any time for any reason. Not return to the loop if I cannot determine the problem, or if I suspect a problem with the scrubber, failed mushroom (nonreturn) valves, or a flooded unit.
  
10. Stay within accepted gas narcosis limits. Recognize that oxygen is considered a narcotic gas when determining narcotic limits. Use helium gas blends, with the proper training, and accept the risks of helium diving, to reduce narcosis to within acceptable limits when making dives that would otherwise exceed those limits.
  
11. Know and obey local dive laws and regulations, including fish and game and dive flag laws, and laws regulating access to dive sites.
  
12. Accept that even with proper training, technical diving exposes me to more hazards and potential risk than does recreational diving; such hazards may include, but are not limited to, lack of direct access to the surface (whether from a physical barrier or decompression obligation) too much oxygen or too little oxygen, high carbon dioxide, gas narcosis leading to poor judgment and decisions, decompression sickness, diving negatively buoyant and difficulty managing problems due to overall task loading. Understand that if I cannot accept these risks on a particular dive, I shall not make the dive or will abort it if I already have begun. Acknowledge that if I cannot accept the risks in general, I shall discontinue tec diving until I am able and choose to do so.

I have read the above statements and have had any questions answered to my satisfaction. I understand the importance and purposes of these established practices. I recognize they are for my own safety and well-being, and that failure to adhere to them can place me in jeopardy when tec diving.

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Participant's Signature

Date (Day/Month/Year)