



STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE
**How to become a certified
PADI Open Water diver in
Bonaire**



Ready to start diving?

Learning to dive may have been on your bucket list for quite some time. Perhaps you've snorkeled in various destinations, but have yet to take the plunge into diving. Maybe you've made attempts in the past and are eager to embark on a certification course now! Wherever you currently stand, downloading this guide indicates more than just curiosity; you have a desire to explore scuba diving in Bonaire the best way possible!

In this guide, we'll go over all the **prerequisites** and **medical requirements** first. Secondly, we'll explore the **eLearning** segment of the course. And finally, we'll detail the **in-water training** necessary to attain your certification card.

Allow this comprehensive guide to address all your questions and concerns! You'll find the **FAQs** covered in the last pages for your convenience.

Rest assured, our Scuba Elite team is dedicated to guiding you through the course in the best way possible, ensuring a fulfilling and enjoyable experience.

Let's blow some bubbles soon!





PADI OPEN WATER DIVER COURSE

Prerequisites & medical requirements

Prerequisites

To enroll in the PADI Open Water Diver Course, you need to meet three criteria:

- Be at least 10 years old
- Have basic swimming skills
- Be medically fit to dive

Easy right?

Medical requirements

To ensure you're **medically fit for diving**, you'll need to review a series of medical questions. You can download your dive medical form [here](#).

If you answer **YES** to questions number 3, 5, 10 or some questions on the second page, it's mandatory to visit a dive medical doctor before proceeding with training.

A YES response doesn't necessarily disqualify you from diving; however, consulting a professional specialized in scuba diving is a safer and mandatory approach. In most cases, obtaining clearance after your visit allows you to pursue your scuba diving aspirations without hindrance!



Diver Medical | Participant Questionnaire
 Recreational scuba diving and freediving requires good physical and mental health. There are a few medical conditions which can be hazardous while diving, listed below. Those who have, or are predisposed to, any of these conditions, should be evaluated by a physician. This Diver Medical Participant Questionnaire provides a basis to determine if you should seek out that evaluation. If you have any concerns about your diving fitness not represented on this form, consult with your physician before diving. If you are feeling ill, avoid diving. If you think you may have a contagious disease, protect yourself and others by not participating in dive training and activities. References to "diving" on this form encompass both recreational scuba diving and freediving. This form is a proprietary medical document for new divers, but is also appropriate for divers taking continuing education. For your safety, you may dive with you, answer all questions honestly.



Directions
 This form is a prerequisite to a recreational scuba diving or freediving course. Do not attempt to become pregnant, do not dive.

Question	Yes	No
1. Do you have any conditions affecting your normal physical or mental performance?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have you ever been treated for a heart condition, such as atherosclerosis, heart failure, or a heart valve problem?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Have you ever been treated for high blood pressure?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Have you ever been treated for diabetes?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Have you ever been treated for asthma or other respiratory problems?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Have you ever been treated for epilepsy or other seizure disorders?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
7. Have you ever been treated for a psychiatric condition, such as depression, anxiety, or bipolar disorder?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
8. Have you ever been treated for a neurological condition, such as multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, or a stroke?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
9. Have you ever been treated for a hearing or vision impairment?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
10. Have you ever been treated for a condition that could affect your ability to breathe underwater?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
11. Have you ever been treated for a condition that could affect your ability to equalize your ears or sinuses?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
12. Have you ever been treated for a condition that could affect your ability to swim or tread water?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
13. Have you ever been treated for a condition that could affect your ability to follow instructions or understand directions?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
14. Have you ever been treated for a condition that could affect your ability to communicate with others?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
15. Have you ever been treated for a condition that could affect your ability to make decisions or solve problems?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
16. Have you ever been treated for a condition that could affect your ability to handle stress or pressure?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
17. Have you ever been treated for a condition that could affect your ability to cope with emergencies?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
18. Have you ever been treated for a condition that could affect your ability to work in a team?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
19. Have you ever been treated for a condition that could affect your ability to follow safety procedures?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
20. Have you ever been treated for a condition that could affect your ability to use diving equipment?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Participant Signature
 If you answered NO to all 10 questions above, a medical evaluation is not required. Please read and agree to the participant statement below by signing and dating it.
Participant Statement: I have answered all questions honestly, and understand that I accept responsibility for any consequences resulting from any questions I may have answered inaccurately or for my failure to disclose any existing or past health conditions.

Participant Signature (or, if a minor, participant's parent/guardian signature required) _____ Date (mm/dd/yyyy) _____
 Participant Name (Print) _____ Birthdate (mm/dd/yyyy) _____
 Instructor Name (Print) _____ Facility Name (Print) _____

If you answered YES to questions 3, 5 or 10 above OR to any of the questions on page 2, please read and agree to the statement above by signing and dating a AND take all three pages of this form (Participant Questionnaire and the Physician's Evaluation Form) to your physician for a medical evaluation. Participation in a diving course requires your physician's approval.

Version date: 2022-02-01 1 of 3 © 2020

Tip:

Ensure you check your dive medical status well in advance of your arrival. With only a few dive medical doctors available on the island, their schedules may not always align with your needs.

To avoid any delays, it's recommended to visit a dive medical professional in your home country prior to your trip. However, if circumstances prevent this or if you're already on the island, please contact **Dr. Nicholson at +597965559**. His office is located at **Bon Bida, 74 Kaya Gob. N. Debrot, Kralendijk**.



eLearning

First, it's time to study

The PADI Open Water Diver Course is divided into two parts:

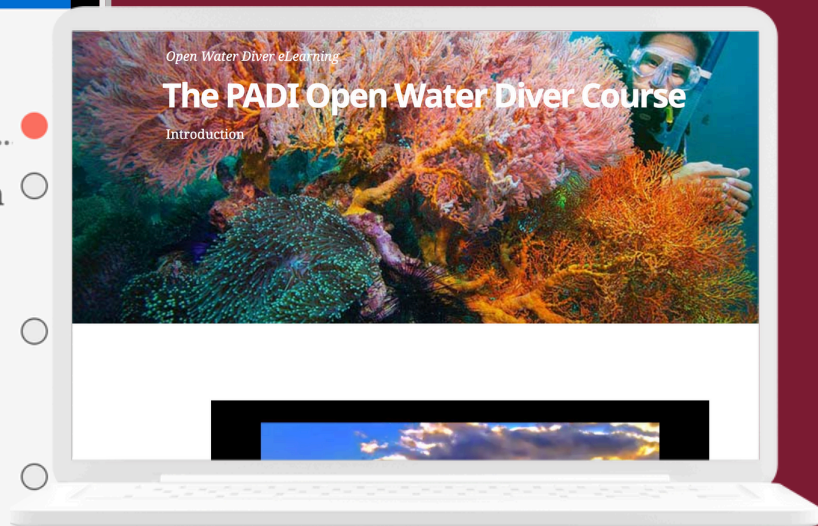
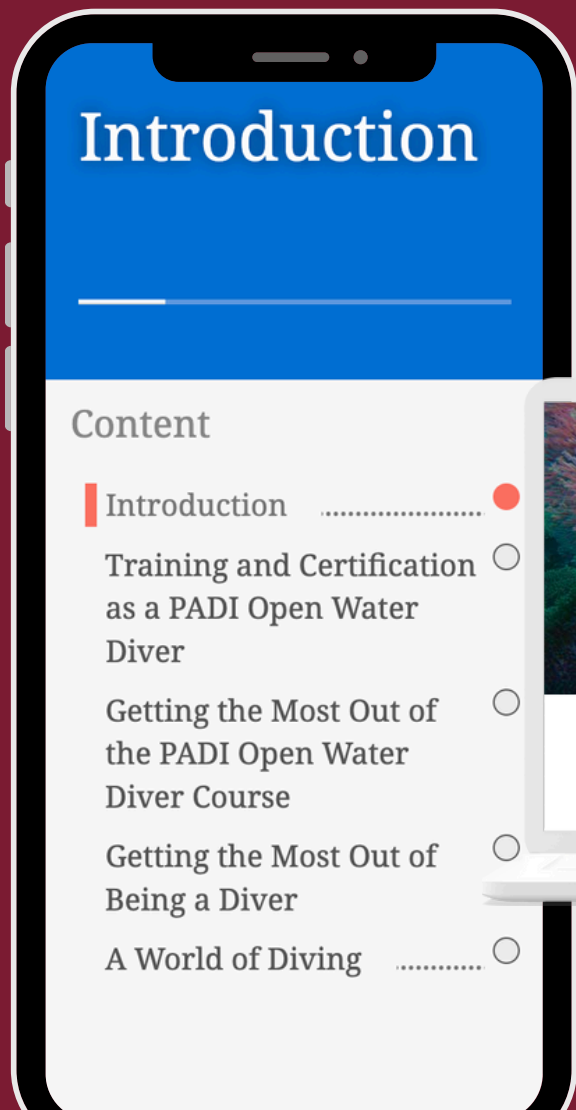
PART 1: Independent study with PADI Open Water Diver eLearning.

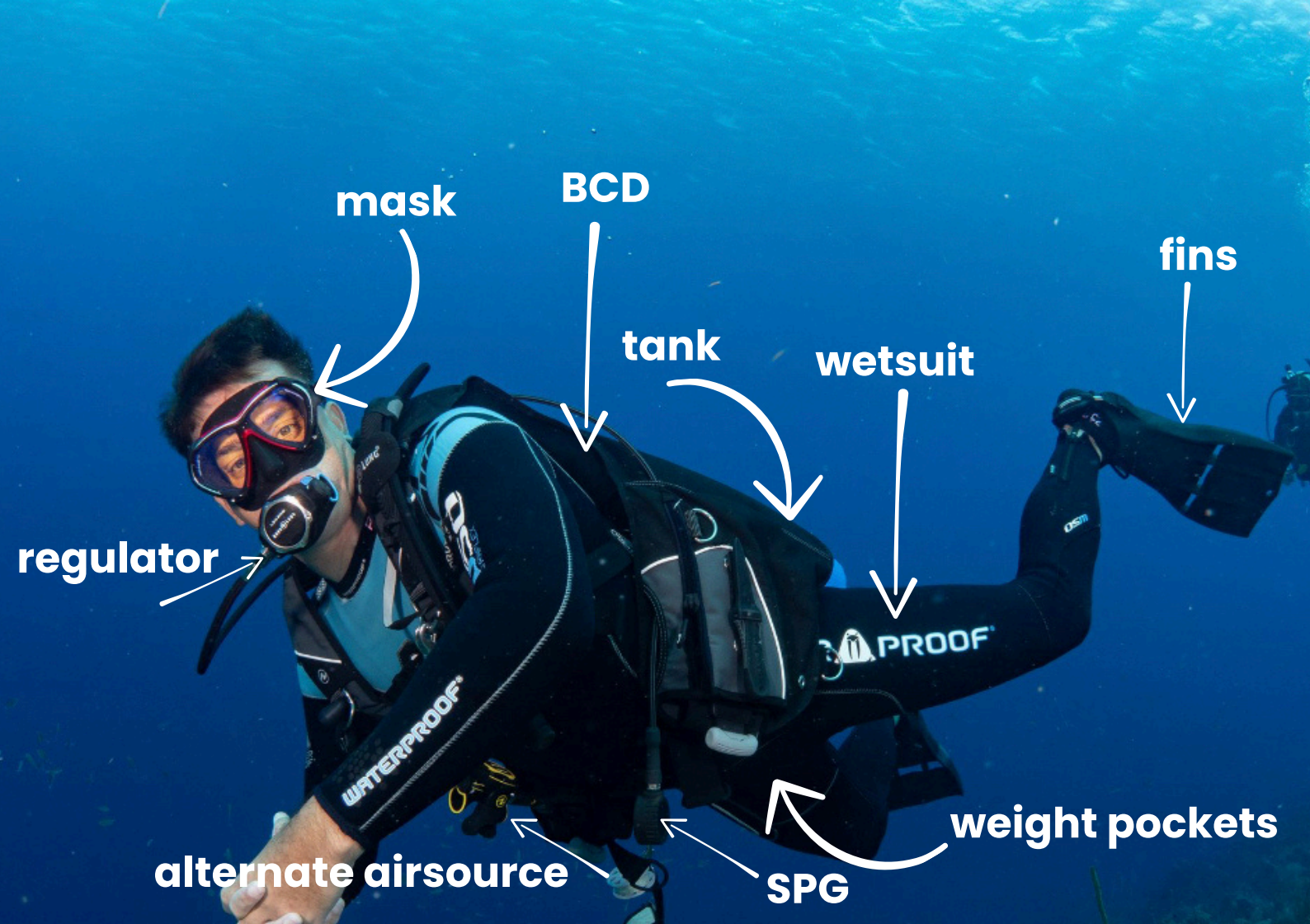
This initial phase of the course focuses on dive theory, covering topics such as scuba diving principles, equipment, and more. Use your phone (with the PADI app) or laptop to study at your own pace and convenience. Each chapter of the eLearning includes quizzes, culminating in a final exam.

Completing the full eLearning typically requires **5 to 10 hours**. Starting your studies at home allows for ample time to absorb the material, which allows you to have some more time to enjoy the island (and more diving of course!). eLearning prices vary and are for sale at the [PADI-website](#).

PART 2: In-water dive training with us.

**Start your PADI
Open Water Diver
eLearning here**





Your dive gear explained

During the eLearning, you'll learn more about all the dive equipment you will be using. Here's a quick overview.

- **Tank:** The big, metal air bottle that you wear on your back. It holds the air you breathe while you're underwater.
- **Regulator:** This is the device that lets you breathe from the tank. It's like your personal air delivery system.
- **Alternate Air Source:** It's an extra breathing device that you and your buddy can share in case one of you runs out of air, or your regulator malfunctions.
- **Mask:** Your underwater glasses, letting you see clearly underwater.
- **BCD (Buoyancy Control Device):** It's a special vest that helps you control whether you float, sink, or stay in place underwater.
- **SPG (Submersible Pressure Gauge):** This gadget shows you how much air you have left in your tank.
- **Weight Pockets:** These pouches on your vest that hold weights to help you stay underwater comfortably.
- **Wetsuit:** This waterproof outfit keeps you warm and protects your skin from scratches and stings.
- **Fins:** Help you move smoothly and efficiently through the water.



in-water training

Now comes the exciting part of the course: your in-water training. After completing the eLearning module, you've already familiarized yourself with diving principles and equipment. Now, it's time to put that knowledge into practice and start using the BCD, regulator, fins, and weights. This is where the course truly comes alive and the adventure begins!

Your in-water training consists of 2 parts: **confined water lessons** and **open water lessons**.

Confined water lessons

During the five confined water lessons, you'll practice essential diving skills in shallow waters or waters in which you can stand up on in. These sessions focus for example on buddy checking and mastering the proper use of your Buoyancy Control Device (BCD) to maintain a neutral position in the water. Additionally, you'll learn crucial techniques such as regulator breathing and clearing water from your mask. These skills are taught at a relaxed pace to ensure thorough understanding and proficiency.

Open Water lessons

During the open water training, you'll have the opportunity to rehearse the skills you learned during the confined lessons at slightly deeper depths. However, open water training is not just about practicing skills. You and your dive buddy will also learn how to properly plan dives and execute your dive plan. This includes understanding factors such as dive depth, bottom time, safety stops, and navigating underwater environments effectively. It's a comprehensive experience that prepares you for diving adventures with confidence and competence.

Based on how you progress through the course, we usually finish within **2 to 3 days**.

Pascal is teaching the buddy check at our house reef, Something Special.



PADI Open Water certified in Bonaire

Warm water, no currents

Starting your Open Water diver certification journey in Bonaire is an experience like no other. Picture yourself surrounded by tranquil, light blue and warm waters with unparalleled visibility – it's as if you've stepped into a huge living swimming pool. With temperatures consistently hovering between 28 and 29 degrees Celsius, you'll find the conditions just perfect for diving!

Turtles, eagle rays & more

Throughout your course, you'll have the opportunity to see an array of marine life. Our house reef, Something Special, serves as the ideal training ground. Here, we'll practice diving skills amidst sandy patches before venturing out to explore the diverse reefs during your training dives. Keep your eyes wide open for turtles, eagle rays, frogfish, and even seahorses – each dive promises "Something Special".

Shore diving experience

Learning to dive in Bonaire is always from the shore. It not only enhances your skills, but also prepares you for independent exploration of Bonaire's dive sites.

While the prospect of diving with your buddy post-certification may seem daunting, our instructors are dedicated to equipping you with the knowledge and confidence needed for your next adventures. From dive planning to mastering compass and natural navigation, you'll feel more than ready start exploring Bonaire's underwater wonders at your leisure.





You're now certified!

After completing the eLearning module, including all quizzes and final exams, as well as the in-water training sessions, you'll become a certified PADI Open Water Diver.

This certification marks your achievement and readiness to explore the underwater world with confidence and skill. This is a significant milestone in your diving journey!

Fast facts

After completion of the course, you are certified to dive to a depth of **18 meters**.

Divers certified between the ages of 10-14 earn a Junior Diver certification. Junior Open Water Divers automatically become Open Water Divers at age 15.



FAQs

I MIGHT NOT FEEL COMFORTABLE AT DEPTH

If you are diving for the first time, it's a natural feeling that you aren't sure how you react to the depth. Diving on Bonaire is easy because of the calm, clear and warm waters. It's basically a huge pool. We're moving at a pace that suits you best. You got this!

WHAT IF I CAN'T EQUALIZE MY EARS?

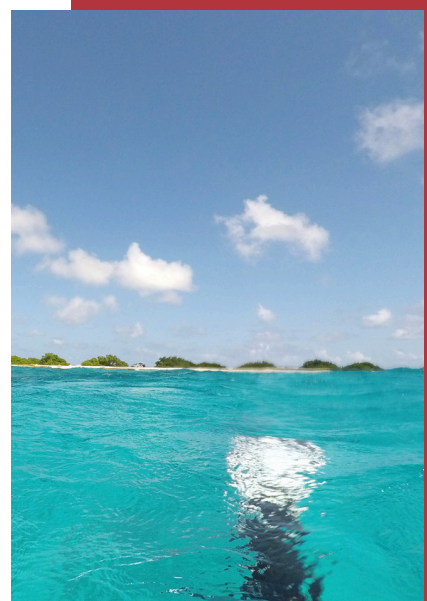
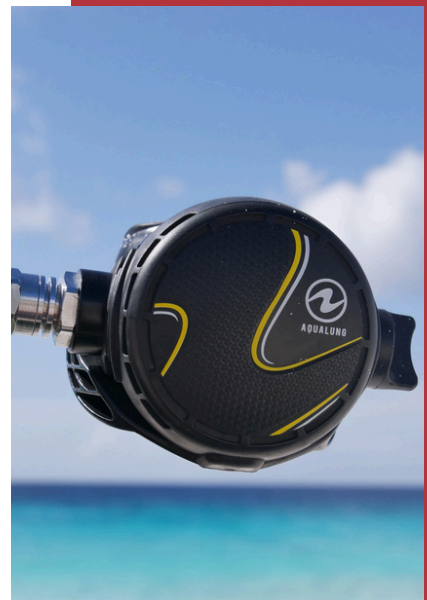
It's true, divers may encounter challenges, whether due to a cold, underlying medical issues, or simply the unknown nature of diving. However, our approach is centered around your comfort and safety. We proceed with caution, diving slowly and paying close attention to you and your ears. Our priority is to teach you correct techniques for equalizing pressure, ensuring a smooth and enjoyable dive experience.

I TRIED DIVING BEFORE, BUT HAD A BAD EXPERIENCE

We're truly sorry to hear about your previous negative experience with diving. If you're willing to give it another try, we're here to support you every step of the way. Your comfort and confidence are paramount to us, and we're committed to ensuring a positive and enjoyable experience for you. Everyone deserves to fulfill their dream of diving, and we'll do everything in our power to turn that previous bad experience into a memorable and fulfilling one. Let's work together to make this dive everything you've hoped for!

HOW MANY DIVERS ARE IN MY CLASS?

In our small group training, we limit the class size to a maximum of four students. However, most of the time, you'll find it's just you or one other student in the class. We prioritize personalized attention to ensure that you truly learn how to dive with confidence. At our dive shop, we believe in quality instruction without the distractions of larger groups.



FAQs

I AM NOT LOOKING FORWARD TO MASK CLEARING. IT'S ALREADY FREAKING ME OUT.

It's completely understandable to feel apprehensive about mask clearing, especially if it's a new skill for you. Rest assured, you're not alone in feeling this way, and it's okay to have concerns. Our instructors are trained to support you through every step of the process, including mask clearing. We'll take it at your pace, one step at a time. The skill is broken up into smaller segments, so you can get used to it. We're offering guidance and encouragement to help you overcome any anxieties. With patience and practice, you'll likely find that mask clearing becomes much more manageable, maybe even fun? In the end you'll feel more confident in your abilities underwater. Just remember, we're here to support you, and you're capable of mastering this skill!

HOW DO I KNOW IF YOUR TEAM IS QUALIFIED TO TEACH?

That's a valid question! Yes, it's important to ensure that you're receiving instruction from a qualified and experienced team. Our dive center has a proven track record, having trained over 200 students just last year. Our team members undergo rigorous training and receive quarterly updates, along with staff-training to enhance their expertise continually. Our instructors even won PADI awards in 2023 for teaching. You can rest assured that you're in capable hands, and we're dedicated to providing you with the highest quality instruction and support throughout your diving journey.

ARE YOU TAKING CARE OF THE ENVIRONMENT?

Certainly! We're passionate about our ocean home and strive to make it better for all. Through clean-up dives, reef presentations, and memberships in Adopt the Blue and Green Fins, we actively protect marine environments. With a focus on teaching excellent buoyancy skills and involvement in initiatives like Reef Renewal, we're dedicated to preserving coral reefs.



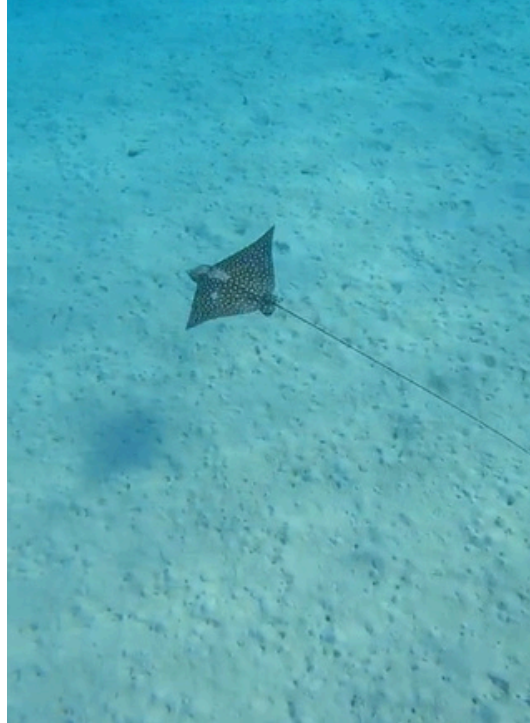
Are you ready? Here's what to do next

- 1 Check if you met all the prerequisites
- 2 Double check the medical and confirm that you are fit to dive (or schedule an appointment with the dive medical doctor).
- 3 Buy your PADI Open Water Diver eLearning [here](#). Start studying and finish all your quizzes and exams before your in-water training starts.



Send an email to info@scuba-elite.com and receive the first chapter of the PADI Open Water eLearning as a try-out for **FREE**.

- 4 Email us to schedule your in-water training with Scuba Elite and finish your confined & open water lessons.
- 5 Once you've completed all of the steps, **you're a certified PADI Open Water Diver!** It's now time to explore the reefs of Bonaire with your buddy (or under guidance of one of our instructors).



DON'T MISS OUT
ON ALL OF THIS!

