

## Guide to Purchasing SCUBA Gear

Purchasing your first set of scuba gear may seem overwhelming with the array of options available. We've created a cheat sheet to help you find a setup that is comfortable and practical for new divers. We will start with the basics such as mask, snorkel, fins, and wetsuit then work up to life-support equipment. This is to serve as a guide and does not cover everything available. With continued practice you will develop your own sense of what is needed out of your dive gear.

**Please always purchase gear, especially life-support equipment, from a dive shop and not an online retailer. Doing so will ensure you are purchasing equipment that has been inspected and serviced according to manufacturers standards. In addition, they will help size, assemble, and familiarize you with the gear. Don't let discounted online prices draw you in. Dive shops often offer discounts to students or package deals that are priced comparable to online retailers. Support your local shop and guarantee assembled, well-fit gear is a win-win!**

### THE BASICS

The best place to start purchasing gear is to acquire a mask, snorkel, fins, and wetsuit. It's likely that dive shops will not rent out this equipment because it is assumed you have your own (most dive shops require you to purchase these when enrolling in the Open Water course).

### **MASK**

In a variety of styles, you should remember one thing- pick the best for *your* face

- What to consider: The size of the mask skirt should fit your face properly. To fit a mask place it on your face without the head-strap and inhale through the nose. The mask should seal and not fall from your face until you exhale. Also check that the skirt does not come too close to the top lip, which may cause a leak if the regulator is in your mouth. Your nose should fit comfortably in the nose pocket and not push against the mask. The mask window should be large enough that you can view from your peripheral and should not be pressing against the forehead. Note that some mask windows can be replaced with prescription lenses.
- Cost: \$50-\$200
- Our Advice: Try each mask on at a shop and see which one feels best. Soft silicone will run at a high price but is very comfortable.
- URI Dive Locker: Atomic Aquatics frameless mask, Aqualung Linea mask



### **SNORKEL**

Unless you plan on snorkeling adventures, stick to the basics on this one

- What to consider: A snorkel should sit on your mask properly and not be too long or short. The mouthpiece should fit in the mouth comfortably for a prolonged period of time. Special features such as purge valves and splash guards are extras and up to personal preference.
- Cost: \$30-\$90
- Our Advice: Try it on with your mask (left side) to make sure it is not too long/short!
- URI Dive Locker: Aqualung Flex Impulse 2

