

Survey Results on Solo & Self-Reliant Scuba Diving

Complete survey results are [available here](#).

Why else do you dive solo (besides the lack of an available dive buddy)?

1. Dive buddies can be and are unreliable. My training and redundant gear are not.
2. Every time I got a near-miss, issue, or dangerous situation on a dive, it was always because of my dive buddy (and once, even the divemaster leading the dive). Maybe I should find better-trained dive buddies, but still...
3. Higher relaxation - Better focus on myself - No responsibility for others - High flexibility in dive planning - No time pressure before and after the dive - No risk of problems caused by a buddy - No peer pressure to exceed my personal limits
4. 1. To avoid diving with a buddy who increases my risk level and compromises my safety due to poor training and preparedness, and a lack of discipline. 2. To avoid the need to coordinate my dives with a buddy and to keep total freedom and control over my dives!
5. As a dive instructor, it is a nice release to dive alone and not have to concentrate on or look after others. I also undertake photography, which can be annoying to many other dive buddies.
6. As an instructor teaching new, inexperienced divers, I'm convinced that I'm always diving solo
7. As an instructor and dive center owner, there are a lot of situations that I have to dive doing stuff underwater
8. As photographer
9. Available buddy was inexperienced in local conditions, and I was managing a large camera rig
10. Because BSAC divers are idiots.
11. Because I like it. Diving Solo, I feel the dive at a deeper level.
12. Because I live in Oklahoma, where there is basically no scuba diving. In the summer, my wife and I dive together, but in the winter, she's not a drysuit diver, so I have to go alone. Further, nobody wants to dive in a brown lake with very limited visibility.
13. Because it is more tranquil than having to shepherd inexperienced buddies all the time. I feel like inexperienced buddies are less safe to have around than diving solo with training, full redundancy, and proper planning and support. Diving solo is also great for filming or taking photos.
14. Being capable of being self-reliant in almost any situation
15. Better being alone than in bad company. Exploring new places. Underwater work.
16. Better solo than with an incompetent buddy
17. bottom time, not have to babysit people with questionable or unknown experience levels,
18. Bouyancy training & practice
19. Buddy availability, greater sense of peace diving alone
20. Buddy can be a risk. Solo is more relaxed. Get more exploration and survey done
21. Calm and relax when solo
22. Calmness, undistracted, increased focus on environment
23. Can fully focus on my dive experience when diving alone. Can dive to places it would be harder to find a buddy to follow.
24. Can continue on a dive while those running out of gas have to end their dive, I can continue on.
25. Cave diving, training, self-consciousness
26. cave exploration, exploration sites

27. Concentrating on macro photography
28. The convenience of a spur-of-the-moment decision to go diving.
29. Convenience/circumstantial preference
30. Dive buddies more of a potential risk, skill isn't at same level and single tank divers don't bring skill or gear that are a benefit to me underwater.
31. do not need to take care of another diver
32. dont have to worry about anyone else
33. Don't like other people.
34. Don't want an instabuddy. Fossil diving, visibility goes bad, hard to stay with buddy
35. Don't want to burden others with my plans nor be burdened by theirs
36. Enjoy diving without having a partner to pay attention to.
37. Enjoyment of being alone
38. Enjoyment, lack of responsibility for others
39. Enjoyment. Focus. Peace
40. Even before having the training, I was diving in solo. Solo diving gives you more time and peace underwater. With proper training, interaction with animals is awesome. They easily integrate you in.
41. Feel safer in tight overhead environment. In open water, I feel more freedom.
42. Following from Q above, it's not because of the lack of an available buddy, but usually because either that person either has different dive style that is not compatible with mine or in a buddy dive we've agreed at the plan stage that we will at some point separate due to different deco tolerance for example; I would say this occurs in 10% or less of my dives only
43. For dives that might be boring for buddies, in whatever kind possible. Long-distance and long-duration dives... ..exploration for better orientation --> back-and-forth multiple times...
44. For photography and photogrammetry projects, for cave/mine exploration dives where lack of visibility is detrimental to teamwork, for specific training dives when diving alone means freedom on the schedule. For spontaneous chill and relaxed dives. Between, does teaching count as "solo diving with a dependent team"?
45. For professional reasons
46. For scalloping, for photography, to have nobody to look after, to have nobody in my way, to be able to do what I want, when I want.
47. For several years, I was the only CCR diver in all-OC dive center. Pretty quickly agreement was reached that I do what I do.
48. for solitude, quiet, less distraction, ability to explore at leisure
49. For underwater photography
50. For work
51. foraging for scallops
52. For fun
53. Freedom
54. Freedom to go where you want and when - no restrictions on having to have a buddy.
55. Go at my own pace. Relaxing. No need to coordinate dive schedules with other people.
56. Great sense of freedom. All diving is solo diving even with a buddy
57. Hard to find a good dive buddy. With my time frame.
58. Have fun on my own terms
59. I always dive sidemount with full redundancy in all systems.
60. I am an amateur photographer, and I want to have my peace while diving
61. I can depend on myself. Sometimes it is better to do something complex by yourself than have to depend on others

62. I can't switch off supervising other divers when I'm in a group. My concentration is on management rather than enjoying my own dive.
63. I consider that every dive I do has to be planned as a solo dive with backup options and I always use the same kit configuration. Shit can happen to anyone even after 3000 + dives I plan the backup in case I have to dive the backup, especially if I'm diving with my regular buddy.
64. I develop underwater navigation systems and diving solo means I can focus entirely upon exercising and testing the system. I solo dive only at a lake of max depth 10m which is a professionally run, private dive site.
65. I dive a lot with my LDS's drop in dives. My gas consumption sucks. My Solo cert, allows me to leave the group, and surface; when my gas levels are low; by myself, while still diving within my certification. The DM, leading the group, does not have to worry about me having a buddy, to surface. I always dive with redundant gear, solo or not.
66. I dive locally and repeatedly in the same area, sites, and wrecks. As such, I have a keen awareness for what to expect, where to go, and what to avoid. I never get bored, but my buddies do and would rather not dive... so I either dive solo or not at all. On other occasions, I find myself acting as a Dive Master constantly helping my buddy with his poorly maintained gear, terrible sense of direction, or overly conservative dive profiles. It's tiring and frustrating, and many times dangerous. I've had many many more buddy-related near mishaps than I've ever had when solo.
67. I dive solo because the habit of diving alone from many years as a commercial diver is still strong. I also do it because most so-called buddy diving is in practice solo diving, since most buddies stay too far apart during the dive to actually be able to help each other. And also, so I do not come across as a know-it-all before every dive, and to avoid the extra stress of having to keep up with a dive buddy, I often prefer to dive alone.
68. I dive solo, because it can be very peaceful. I plan and approach the dive as I would a technical or extended range dive (strict times, gas management, contact times, everything I can) then being able to execute it. It's nice then being able to go where I want, at my pace. Mentally taxing (at the end) but very rewarding and peaceful.
69. I do more challenging dives that make it difficult to find a decent buddy.
70. I don't know anybody else who can participate
71. I don't want interference with what I am doing, (spear fishing, bottle hunting, photography, etc.)
72. I feel free and I enjoy being by myself.
73. I feel safer diving solo than diving with a randomly assigned buddy on a dive boat.
74. I feel that I must always be self-reliant. Most dives have been with people less experienced than me. I still prefer diving with a group but in my head I do not rely on anyone else.
75. I find it safer.
76. I find that many buddies are more of a hazard than diving self-reliantly
77. I had different goals for the dive than available buddies. It would have exposed them to environments beyond the limits of their training/experience/equipment. More specifically, this means they don't have adequate exposure protection for the length of dive I want to do.
78. I have a pond behind my house. I know it very well because I built it and have been swimming in it for years. It is 15 ft. deep and good for buoyancy control practice.
79. I like being alone in the water sometimes without having to think about a buddy or team member or worry about them I can just do what I want ...although I do really enjoy team diving and diving with a buddy it just feels different.
80. I like not having to worry about others or having to pay attention to them.
81. I like the calmness and it is like meditation to me
82. I like the independence from others. Sometimes it's just to practice skills (e.g. handling stages) to build muscle memory and that's typically pretty boring for a buddy. Sometimes it's just easier to jump in without having to make a lot of arrangements in advance.

83. I like to be alone andbi have odd working hours.
84. I like to explore and many off my friends only stay on the safe zone Sometimes I don't like to feel responsible for others divers Mostly I like to be alone
85. I love the peace of not having to worry about a buddy. I dive a rebreather and have plenty of redundancy even on dives with a buddy (ie always two bailout tanks in sidemount).
86. I love the solitude, and also I take photographs so not having to worry about another diver allows me to focus on my photography.
87. I mostly dive solo, few people have the skills to dive with me with rebreather with deco for extended periods of time around me, and I like the liberty of diving solo as well as not having to pay attention to somebody else. Many dive buddies would be more a liability to me than a real help.
88. I much prefer the freedom it offers, especially when diving in low-vis UK waters. I am also much more comfortable resolving problems on my own and feel that a buddy is only likely to make matters worse in the majority of problem cases most likely to occur in my diving conditions. Note. I always plan my dives as Solo, so have appropriate redundancy with deco gas and equipment.
89. I normally do Cave survey
90. I only ever dove solo once, didn't have a buddy to to determine weighting in doubles before a tech course. It was a mistake, and I'd never do it again.
91. I prefer the focus that diving solo allows me.
92. I seldom plan to dive solo. I have ended many dives as a solo diver, either due to current or my air consumption
93. I simply like the feeling of being solo since my first solo dive, more focus on the environment and dive itself
94. I started solo diving when I was 12 years old and I liked it from the start. There were no diving courses for solo in that time. For me it's some kind of meditation but I also dive with a buddy or with a team.
95. I survey marine life and don't have the head space to monitor a buddy.
96. I try not to solo dive. Only rarely when without a buddy
97. If trained and properly equipped, why wouldn't I dive solo?
98. I'm a long exposure photographer, which is easier when alone. I enjoy solo diving, particularly when wreck diving. I always have the same configuration, regardless of whether I have a buddy. I would never not bring spare/emergency equipment just because I have a buddy. That's stupid - why rely on someone else to have something?
99. I'm a photographer and like to stop sometimes and take pics
100. I'm a photographer, so don't want to annoy my buddies hovering in 1 spot for 10-15 minutes.
101. I'm a photographer, we are the worst team mates
102. Im focus on myself, more awareness on me
103. I'm Photosub. I'm instructor. On holidays i don't want bad buddies.
104. Improve skills to react in Case of real miss buddy Situation without surface scenario or to teach new divers without experiences AND feel comfortable AND safe. Last reading Is because Many times I don't have a buddy to dive because there Is nonbody in Many kms
105. In cave exploration when having a buddy would present more hazard than going without due to the small nature of the caves.
106. In search and rescue missions with a rope to the surface
107. In some cases, the option of diving solo reduces risk factors compared to diving with a less competent buddy.
108. In UK waters that are cold, lack visibility and are infinitely more challenging than what can be expected in a warm water environment I don't want the responsibility of that other diver who

experience has taught me for a variety of reasons won't be looking out for me, won't be in a position to support me and is more of a liability than an asset.

109. Instructeur
110. It allows me to concentrate on the dive, see more and not have to dive to a buddies abilities/capabilities
111. It feel less stressful and less task loading. I dont have to worry about another diver in the water.
112. It is more slow and relaxing dive. I dive my pace (speed), stay where I want to be as long I want to be (to observe fish, crayfish, ..). Fits to my tight time schedule better.
113. It is not easy to find divers capable of doing the dives I do. And I do believe that I am less likely to take serious risk when alone -than if someone is there that I expect to pull me out of trouble should anything happen.
114. It is often difficult to find a dive buddy. As an experienced dive instructor and Tec Diver with training and safety measures, solo diving in optimal conditions is safe.
115. It's easier and usually safer.
116. It's easier then trying to arrange a buddy. I enjoy being alone and following my own plan. It's often more suitable for work
117. It's enjoyable to dive solo, just me and the ocean. It's also very practical for activities such as photography, as you can stay in one spot photographing something of interest without the pressure of a dive buddy wanting to move on.
118. It's much more enjoyable
119. Its nice not having to keep track of a buddy. Very freeing, though i don't do it any deeper than 25-30 feet.
120. It's peaceful to be on your own and relaxing
121. Its super relaxing. Enforces good habits related to following dive planning. Allows for quick dives without having to plan with other people. Don't have to be responsible for another person.
122. It's fun and adventurous
123. It's peaceful
124. It's very peaceful
125. I'm either working as a dive instructor , taking photos or collecting scallops which are all activities that include a risk of being separated or not having a competent buddy
126. Just find it easier on shollow water dives
127. Just one solo dive for the sake of it.
128. Lack of a qualified buddy
129. Lack of trust of insta-buddies
130. Last question of this section is wrong... I bring the same stuff (with redundancy) to solo dive and to dive with buddy
131. Less to worry about
132. Mainly for the lack of a dive buddy or a dive buddy with the same interests.
133. Many kids. No time that fit others, no buddies at the right time. Trained for it in mine exploration where I preffered to be solo. And I ended up really enjoying solo diving.
134. Many reasons...work schedule limits my availability and often dive during weekdays when most people are working. I also like the solitude solo diving affords me...I think divers should be self reliant even when buddy diving and I dive with redundancy and within my training
135. Me time
136. More peaceful and able to focus on underwater projects
137. More relaxing / autonomy
138. Most buddies have proven to be more of a liability than help. While diving in low vis environments a buddy is rarely available to help. I mostly dive caves and on a ccr. Buddies also add mental pressure to keep up or push things. When solo I set the pace and goal.

139. No buddy-stress, more thinking about safety and being self-reliant before, during and after the dive, easier than getting a new beginner for diving with me from my club, ...
140. No distractions My schedule Can night dive late
141. No distractions, can go at my own pace
142. No liability.
143. No other people to have to worry about
144. Nobody else to worry about
145. Not only did I not have a dive buddy. I do solo diving for my work. You are never let down by keeping it solo.
146. On holiday with no other diver available
147. Opportunistic.
148. Other divers aren't interested in my dive objectives.
149. Peace and quiet
150. Peace of mind
151. Peace of mind, organisation, challenge, focus
152. Peaceful. Self sufficient. Only do shallow inland sites with a dive plan and shore cover.
153. Perform simple underwater tasks (e.g. freeing an anchor) Taking time for photos
154. photo, video
155. Photographer
156. Photographer and instructor, diving alone is safer and more relaxed
157. Photographers are notorious for being oblivious to a buddy - you dive with a camera - you're both diving solo. Also every dive should be planned as if you were diving solo - whether you have a buddy or not. Separation happens, issues happen - if you can't self rescue, you're over dependent on your buddy - unfair on your buddy, you should be taking responsibility for yourself, not passing it on to someone else. If I have to find a buddy every time the weather, tides and visibility are right, I'd dive a lot less than I do,
158. Photography
159. Photography
160. Photography , Buddy not equal to my level and a hindrance , 2 photographers start dive but really are solo
161. Photography, Commercial, Repairs, Recoveries,
162. Photography, wreck dives
163. Photography. Metal detecting. Sometimes I just do not want to have to watch another person.
164. Pool cleaning, boat bottom scrubbing, exploring and mapping a dive site, photography. Just to Zen out underwater.
165. Prefer the experience being on own , not having to mind another person , doing things at my pace my style
166. quieter, less stressful
167. Really for short working dives in order to complete needed tasks. Not a habit or done with frequency
168. Relaxation
169. Remote sump diving, prefer being on my own, can dive to my schedule, less worry of "is someone else OK?"
170. Research/scientific
171. River, lake, Sea all around the world
172. Safer conditions without buddy hindering
173. Schedule
174. Scheduled time availability

175. Self-reliance enables and forces even more focus on safety and the experience of underwater environment
176. Serene quietness, able to focus, be able to do what I want, for deco dives no one else to worry about or coordinate with, flexible on the fly planning without discussions.
177. Serenity of alone time
178. Shark tooth diving in low viz conditions, depth of 20'. Hunting Lobsters, depth of up to 50'.
179. Slow and mindful diving which not all buddies like
180. Small confined poor visibility cave sump exploration
181. Small confined spaces
182. So I can go and do what I want, and not have to babysit.
183. Solo dive to complete my own objective. Also enjoy the the being alone part of solo diving.
184. Solo diving is incredibly peaceful.
185. Solo I'm not responsible for others. Solo I dive my speed and my way.
186. sometimes I have the gear ready for a simple leisure dive, but do not have anyone to do it with
187. Sometimes I just want to take my time & not worry about someone else.
188. Sometimes I'll just go for a scooter dive by myself; last minute ...; never checked in to see if anyone else was game. Further being a lone in a cave can be more calming; other times, in the world exploration, you find yourself in places two people can't fit, or shouldn't be together.
189. Sometimes in cave exploration inessentially dive solo because visibility goes to zero for long sections. Or because one person is laying new line and the other is surveying another section.
190. Sometimes it is good to enjoy the underwater world alone
191. Specislized search
192. Stay in remote area' enjoy my own company and ensure that you have more than adequate training, always keep on training. En believe in redundancy
193. Takes a weight off my shoulders so I can be responsible for myself only
194. taking photos
195. Taking pictures, 5 -10 m during day (natural light- cold water diver)
196. The dive's risk - I did not want to look after a buddy as well as the task at hand. It did not mean the dive was un-supervised but diving without a buddy in the water. There is more to my diving than looking a fish. As an instructor (not past) every open water dive was a solo dive in that the students could not be counted as a buddy - they were students.
197. The joy of being alone underwater. Extremely relaxing.
198. The peace and total sense of being while under water by yourself.
199. The visibility is so low a solo dive is the only way.
200. To be alone and quiet
201. to better focus on my jobs
202. To dive when I want to dive, for convenience, and so I can do my own thing.
203. To get in the water
204. To get some of the peace and tranquility that I came to diving for.
205. To increase my personal awareness of safety in buddy diving
206. To photograph
207. To relax
208. To train myself and be more comfortable and proficient as a diver. The question is always - also when you dive in a team - how much do you have to do on your own, how can you rely on your team.
209. To train, but of course not extreme or dangerous exercises; to check new equipment, but always taking enough back-up with me
210. Training

211. Underwater metal detecting, where I'm focused on the task - diving solo allows me to have clear attention, maintaining my own gas and environment situation in conjunction with the continuation of task without having to factor another's safety. Also very freeing from a mental health perspective to have that 'cocooned' alone time.
212. Usually because no buddy. Now that I'm older I don't anymore
213. Usually because of my focus, objective, or experience/certification/tech profiles. Photographer: I am more focused on my shots than my buddy. My DPV: Not many divers have them and here in San Diego, a scooter opens up a whole new world from La Jolla Shores. On my boat: I have a tight group and we do tech dives, although I don't do CCR. I am tech certified on sidemount so my profile is different from theirs. I can do my thing, they can do theirs. Travel: I don't have to have a buddy I've never seen, etc., and I always have the required kit (even if it's a SpareAir in Cozumel!) It is really handy at shore diving destinations since I bring my sidemount setup and ask for two tanks, Doesn't matter if one is "upside-down", I'm not in a cave... AND, my incentive for getting self-reliant certified was because of BAD BUDDIES!
214. Visibility issues is the primary driver of solo diving. As well, projects such as running transects for benthic surveys require separation from any other divers. Seagrass surveys in less than 3 meters of water are occasionally undertaken utilizing a surface supplied hookah rig. Solo.
215. Weight check for gear or new suit, shallow water small lake training dives
216. When I do training sessions, when I take photos, when I just want to dive by my self
217. When I just want to try gear/drill and don't want to bother someone else
218. When properly done it's very safe. It allows you to focus on the dive completely without worrying about another diver
219. With the proper equipment and training solo diving is no different than with a buddy except for a back up brain which may not always be reliable.
220. work and scientific