



Safety is a Discipline – Start with a thorough BWRAF

Here is a pretty comprehensive list of what a buddy check should entail for any recreational dive. Depending on your gear and configurations, there may be more, but this is a great starting place.

B – BCD: Check function of BCD. Operate inflator and deflator to ensure that BCD can accept and release air. Test the oral inflator to make sure it is working. Operate all dump valves to check that air can be dumped quickly. Ensure straps (shoulder straps, cummerbund) have no slack, and are lying flat.

W – Weights: If a weight belt is worn, check that the belt is secure, and the strap arranged so that it can be released with the right hand of the diver. Ensure that weights on the belt are not likely to shift during movement, and are suitable for the diver. A secondary aim is to ensure that the buddy is familiar with the weight system of the diver being checked, and is able to operate them in an emergency

R – Releases: Locate and check that all of your buddy's releases are properly secured and you know how to undo them in an emergency. This includes their Velcro waist band & clip and at least two shoulder clips. Many BCD's also have a chest strap. Remember to check the tank cam bands on the back to ensure they are done up and snug, holding the tank firmly.

A – Air: Open air valve on tank if not already on. Smell the air. Purge the reg. Breathe the air through the regulators to ensure that it is fresh and dry, no bad taste. Test operation of primary and secondary regulators. Both should breathe comfortably, and not 'free-flow' when purged. Two deep breaths on each will also drain most peoples hoses if the air was off. Watch the SPG needle for movement and find out how many breaths it takes to empty the hoses for you. Check hoses for damage/leaks. Ensure that the octo is attached in the triangle between the chin and the base of the ribs, and can be released easily.

F - Final Check: Conduct a final check of the diver. Ensure that hoses are clipped to the diver neatly, and are in the correct configuration. Make sure the diver has fins and a mask, and any other accessories (cameras, reels, knife, compass, torch etc.) needed for the dive. Check that these are secured to the diver, or else placed in a spot where they can be handed down once the diver is in the water. Correct anything else that needs doing. Enjoy a safe dive!