

## How to use the dive log

The format of the dive log is frequently updated with suggestions from divers using the log, if you have an idea for an improvement, please call.

The most recent suggestion resulted in two log formats. One for computer divers and one for those that use dive tables.

### The top section

Everyone numbers their dives; some people also like to keep track of their total hours spent underwater, so the top line has room for both. I use the **Objectives** line to indicate if I'm taking photos, doing a survey, searching for treasure, or just looking around. When I am taking photos, I use the **Equipment** line for listing what camera and lens I used on the dive. I also put what wetsuit combination I am wearing and indicate after the dive if I was comfortable.

### Describing Diving Conditions

Thermocline(s)	Keeping track of the depths of thermoclines provides very useful information for those spring and fall dives when the thermoclines are moving. Looking back at previous dives made about the same time of year, will give you an idea of what conditions may be like this year.
Waves and Surge	Surge is the underwater back and forth motion created by surface swells.
Wind	Direction and speed are usually available on the weather radio. Some near shore dive site may be affected by wind.
Current	I usually just use: NONE, SLIGHT, MODERATE or STRONG for current strength; and 8 compass points for direction (N, NE, E, etc).
Tides	Circle either High or Low and the time the last high or low occurred. Also show the location at which the tide tables were calculated for.  Combining this information with other dive information, may (after a number of dives at the same site), show whether or not tides affect currents or visibility at a site.

## Filling in the Actual Dive information

Max Depth	The deepest depth attained during the dive.
Residual Nitrogen Time	From your dive tables: time you must assume you have already spent at the MaxDepth to account for nitrogen still in your body from a previous dive.
Actual Bottom Time	Time from the beginning of descent until beginning of ascent. (Or until you reach your safety stop). NOTE: This is also the point at which you want to record your tank pressure if you want to perform air consumption calculations.
Total Bottom Time	Sum of Residual Nitrogen Time and Bottom Time. Used to find your Repetitive group letter for this dive.
Time Out	When you reached the surface. This is the start of your Surface Interval, and is important for repetitive dive calculations.
Group Letter	The Group Letter Designation from the dive tables which applies to the Maximum Depth and Total Equivalent Bottom Time for this dive.
Total U/W Hours	Add Previous U/W hours (at the top of the page) to your total time in the water for this dive. (This includes bottom time, ascent time and safety stop time.)

### Dive Profile and Notes

The grid at the bottom of the log serves (at least) five purposes.

- 1 You can plot your dive profile - a graph of your depth at various times during the dive. Some computers provide this information automatically.
- 2 You can sketch features of the dive site.
- 3 You can make notes of what you saw or who you were with.
- 4 You can use it as a scratch pad area for dive calculations.
- 5 You can have the log entry "certified" by having your buddy, Divemaster, boat or shop sign or stamp the log.

## Using the Dive Planning section (for tables divers)

The first line of this section has information carried over from the previous dive. It covers the Surface Interval calculations and provides the new Group Letter to be used in planning this next dive.

The planning section has four columns that can be filled in. This is so you can plan for the expected depth and for other "just in case" depths.

Refer to the dive log form as you read the following definitions.

Planned Depth(s)	The estimated maximum depth you will reach.
No Decompression Limit	The No Required Decompression Stop Limits as specified by the dive tables you are using.
Residual Nitrogen Time	Time in minutes (from the Residual Nitrogen Table for the depth of the next dive).
Maximum Bottom Time	Also known as Maximum Dive Time. This is your maximum allowable bottom time on the next dive. It is the difference between the NDL and Residual Nitrogen Time.
Estimated Air Time	Optional - If you have an estimate of your Air Time at a given depth, you can easily compare it with your Planned Bottom Time to see whether time or air will be determining factor for navigation and termination of the dive.  Air calculations should always allow for a reserve in addition to the ascent and safety stop time.
Planned Bottom Time	The time you plan to spend "on the bottom" (before beginning your ascent or arriving at the safety stop depth). This time should not be greater than either of the two preceding times.

## Using the Dive Planning section (for computer divers)

### PRE-DIVE Information (left column)

The first column here is simply the Bottom Time limits that your computer scrolls during the surface interval. This information should be copied to an U/W slate for reference just in case you have a computer failure during the dive.

The second column is your estimated air time (if you keep air consumption data).

### POST-DIVE Information (middle column)

Refer back to the section titled **Filling in the Actual Dive information**.

### DECOMPRESSION STATUS (right column)

Here again is space for the computer scroll of bottom time limits. Fill in the first column after the dive. The other two can be filled in at intervals of a couple of hours or so. In practice this is useful when your days schedule of diving is somewhat loose, and you and your buddy are planning the rest of the days activities.

Another theory here (for those paranoid computer divers) is that if the computer fails during the surface interval, you can always make one more dive using the most recent limits that you have recorded.

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