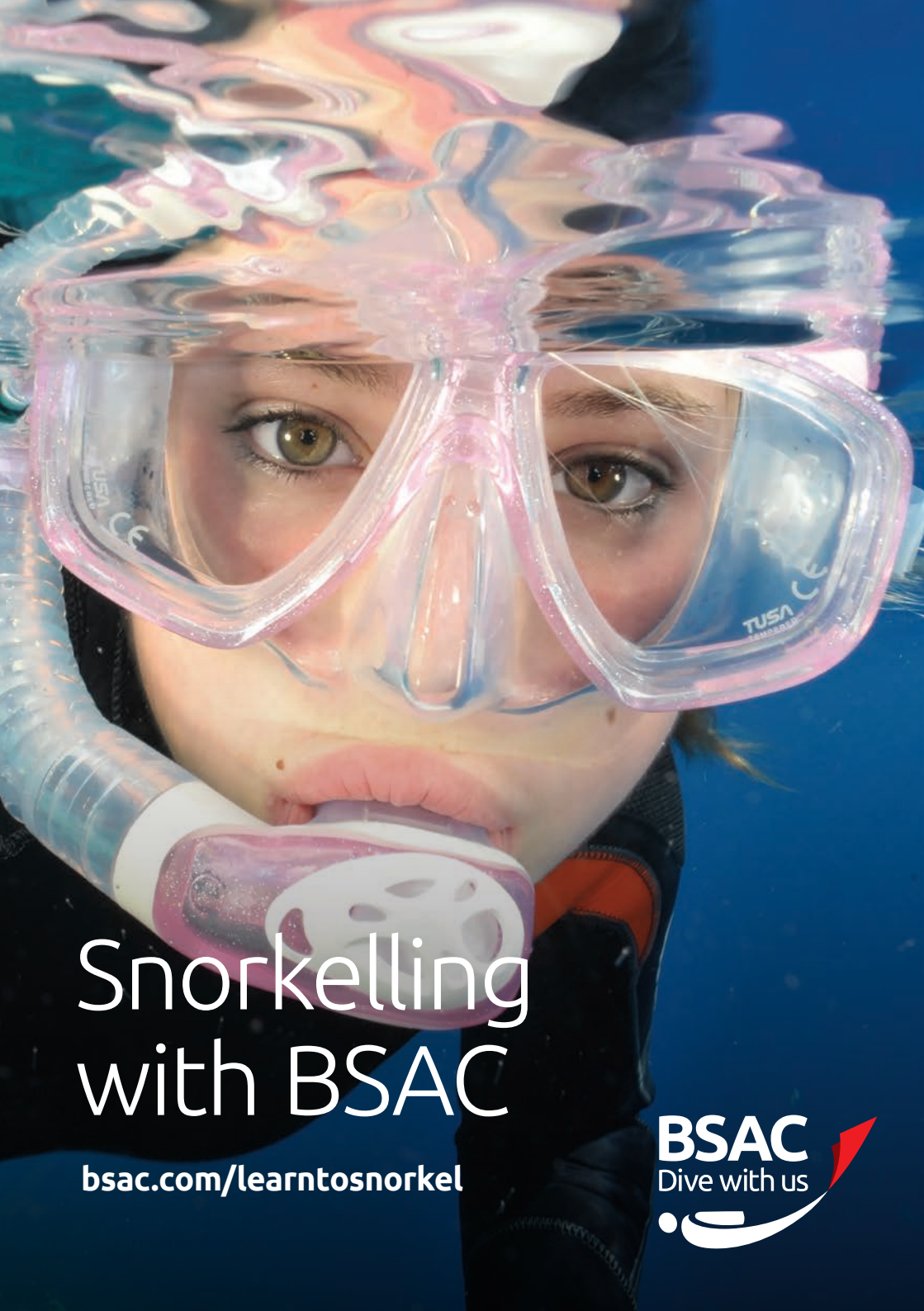




Snorkelling with BSAC

bsac.com/learntosnorkel

BSAC
Dive with us





Snorkelling is open to everyone – both children and adults – and is a great introduction to the underwater world. It's a fun way to get the whole family involved in an activity and can really build confidence in the water.

Read on to discover what you need to know to get started...



First training steps

BSAC offers fun snorkel training for all ages. Our clubs and centres across the UK and overseas can help you get in and under the water.

Getting started...

Dolphin Snorkeller – for children from six years old. This fun, pool-based course introduces snorkelling through a series of progressive sessions. Completing all the sessions earns the Dolphin Snorkeller grade. This course is a safe and playful way for young children to build water confidence and discover the underwater world.

More at: bsac.com/dolphin

Snorkel Diver – for older children and adults. This course combines classroom learning with practical sessions in the pool or sheltered water. You'll develop essential snorkelling skills, build confidence, and learn to explore safely in different environments. It's the perfect next step for anyone ready to take their snorkelling further.

More at: bsac.com/snorkeldiver

How long will it take?

Course duration varies – please ask your local BSAC club for details.



Progress your training

BSAC offers a range of training courses, designed to ensure you get the most out of your snorkelling.

Skill development and recognition of achievement are important for children and adults alike. Learn to snorkel with BSAC and receive certificates for each of the Snorkeller Training Programme courses.

Snorkeller Training Programme

There are four BSAC snorkeller grades which form the backbone of BSAC snorkeller training. You can progress through the courses from the entry-level Dolphin Snorkeller and Snorkel Diver grades (see page 3) through to our highest grade, Snorkel Dive Manager.

For more information on the BSAC Snorkeller Training Programme go to bsac.com/snorkeltraining

Skill Development Courses (SDCs)

BSAC also offers a range of special interest courses (usually a day long) called Skill Development Courses (SDCs). SDCs are regularly held by BSAC's Regional Teams, BSAC centres, and can also be staged in clubs.

So, whether your interest is in lifesaving, marine life, boats or photography, there is a BSAC specialist course for you.

Book SDCs at bsac.com/events

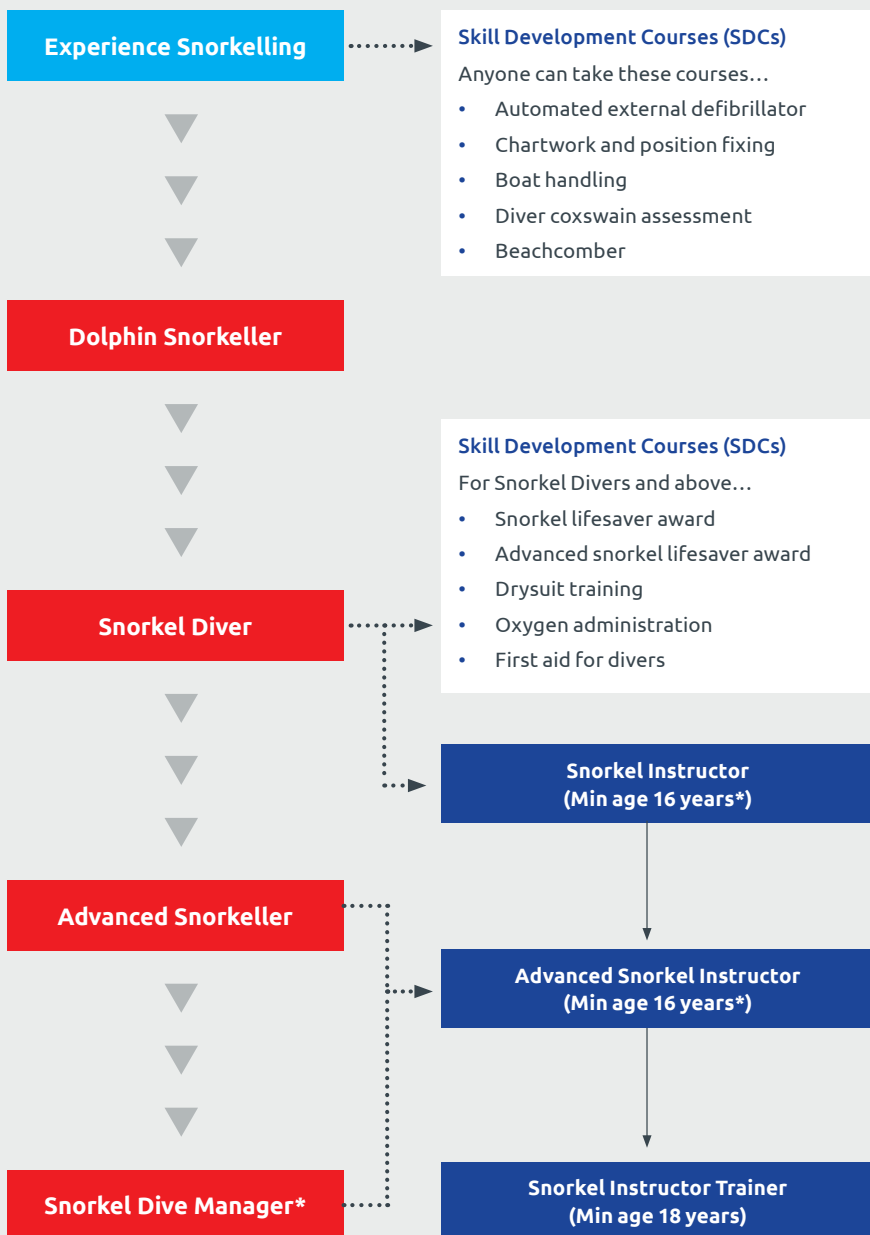
Instructor Training Scheme

BSAC's network of highly skilled Snorkelling Instructors is the driving force behind our worldwide reputation for training excellence and safety. Are you 16 or over? Then you could join them!

From the Snorkel Diver grade, you can start training to become an instructor, enabling you to get involved in delivering your club's own snorkel training programme.

More at bsac.com/snorkelinstructor





* Any Snorkel Dive Manager or Instructor under the age of 18 must be supervised by a responsible adult.



Snorkelling equipment

It's easy to get started. The core equipment you will need for snorkelling and training in a pool is just a mask, fins and a snorkel.

Most people prefer to buy their own mask, fins and snorkel although your BSAC club will be able to lend you starter kit to get you going.

Safe snorkelling requires quality equipment specifically made for snorkelling or diving, so make sure that it is intended for this use. Avoid low quality equipment that may have an attractive price but could fall down on safety, comfort, effectiveness and durability.

Here's our quick guide to finding the right basic equipment:

Mask

An important thing to consider when choosing a mask is that it fits your face, feels comfortable and does not pinch or squeeze anywhere. You can check the fit of a mask by clearing any hair out of the way and holding the mask on your face without pulling the strap over your head. Breathe in through your nose, let go of the mask and it should stay on your face.

Fins

Ensure that the fins are the right size for you. Shoe fins generally come in standard foot sizes but as with shoes, it is important to try them on first to check whether they are comfortable as ill-fitting shoe fins can cause blisters. Strap fins are generally sized as small, medium, large and extra-large to accommodate the general size of the boot being worn.

Snorkel

There are very simple, inexpensive snorkels that perform perfectly well but there are also snorkels that have been designed with additional features. A self-drain valve at the bottom of the snorkel assists in clearing water while a 'squash guard' on the top of the snorkel prevents water getting in, but still allows you to breathe comfortably and clear the snorkel of water.

Top tips to get the most out of your snorkelling

Snorkelling is a great way to explore the marine world and experience the vast array of life in our seas. Here's our quick guide to safe and fun open water snorkelling.

1. **Never dive alone.** The minimum snorkelling party is three: a buddy pair to look out for each other in the water and a shore look out.
2. **Get fit.** By being physically fit you will not only be able to enjoy your snorkelling more, you will also be safer.
3. **Train with a recognised scheme.** The BSAC Snorkeller Training Programme is a progressive system to help build skills and technique so you can enjoy the sea, safely.
4. **Check your equipment.** A strap breaking on a fin, a badly fitting mask or a leaking snorkel valve while you are at sea can all cause problems. Taking good care of your equipment and checking it carefully can reduce the chances of kit issues.
5. **Choose a safe site.** Avoid areas with heavy boat traffic, dangerous currents and rip tides. Make sure the entrances and exits to the water are easily accessible and that there are alternative places to exit if the dive is cut short.
6. **Check tides when planning your snorkel.** Safest times to snorkel are at slack water, which usually occurs near high or low tide.
7. **Check the weather and sea state.** Before setting off check the weather forecast. Although rain can be unpleasant, it isn't necessarily as bad to snorkel in the rain as in wind. Wind can cause waves to increase which makes snorkelling tough. Force 3-4 (12mph+) is usually enough to cancel.
8. **Don't hyperventilate.** Hyperventilation (over breathing) is rapid, unusually deep breathing which can reduce the levels of carbon dioxide concentration in your body tissues. This can mean that the stimulus to breathe is delayed, allowing the snorkeller to stay underwater longer than they should which can lead to black outs.
9. **Don't dive with a cold.** If you have a cold you could have mucus congestion which can cause a blockage in the air tube between your throat and your ears. This congestion can prevent your ears from 'popping' (like when you travel in an aircraft) and adjusting to the increased pressure under water. If your ears don't pop they may get damaged.
10. **One up, one down.** While diving with your buddy avoid both diving underwater at the same time: one should stay on the surface in case the other snorkeller has problems.

Please follow the advice in BSAC's Safe Diving guide to keep your snorkelling safe
bsac.com/safediving



UK snorkelling

From seals, dolphins and basking sharks to reefs and wrecks, our small island is home to a vast array of underwater treasures just waiting to be discovered.

Discover more at bsac.com/UKsnorkelling

Here are just a handful of our favourite UK snorkel sites:

Basking sharks on the west coast

These gentle giants visit the west coast from the Isle of Man to Scotland in the summer months each year. As the world's second biggest fish (up to 10m long) these filter-feeding sharks provide a thrilling and unforgettable snorkelling experience.

Grey seals at the Farne Islands, Northumberland

One of the Farnes' star acts are the grey seals, with between 3,000 – 4,000 of this rare species on and around the islands. The colonies in the Farnes are some of the most important in Europe and are a real treat for snorkellers.



Kimmeridge Bay, Dorset

With a maximum depth of around 2m, Kimmeridge Bay is ideal for snorkelling. Here you will find a real variety of fish, including wrasse and blennies as well as many different species of seaweed and kelp.

Conger Alley, Argyll

On the A83 between Succoth and Artgarten, there are two old piers which are best snorkelled at low tide when the legs of the piers come alive with crabs, mussels and starfish and the depth is only about 3m.



BSAC Snorkelling membership

When you join BSAC, you become part of a friendly community that loves exploring the water. Build your confidence, develop your skills, and share adventures with others through your local BSAC club.

As a BSAC snorkeller, you'll enjoy:

- ✓ **Keep learning**
BSAC training is world-respected, helping you grow your skills and confidence wherever you snorkel.
- ✓ **Expert support**
Get friendly advice from experienced snorkellers and the BSAC team on +44 (0)151 350 6203.
- ✓ **Member savings**
Enjoy discounts on holidays, BSAC Shop purchases, and great leisure and travel offers.
- ✓ **Peace of mind**
Includes free worldwide third-party liability insurance.*

Join today and start exploring with confidence. Full range of benefits at bsac.com/benefits

*terms and conditions of membership apply

Photo: Charles Hood

We're here to help

If there is anything we can help you with please get in touch, we would love to hear from you.

BSAC clubs are run by volunteers but we do have a small team in our Cheshire office who are very happy to talk to you. So do get in touch using the details below...

General enquiries

T. 0151 350 6200 E. info@bsac.com

Membership enquiries

T. 0151 350 6201 E. membership@bsac.com

Snorkelling and training enquiries

T. 0151 350 6203 E. drt@bsac.com

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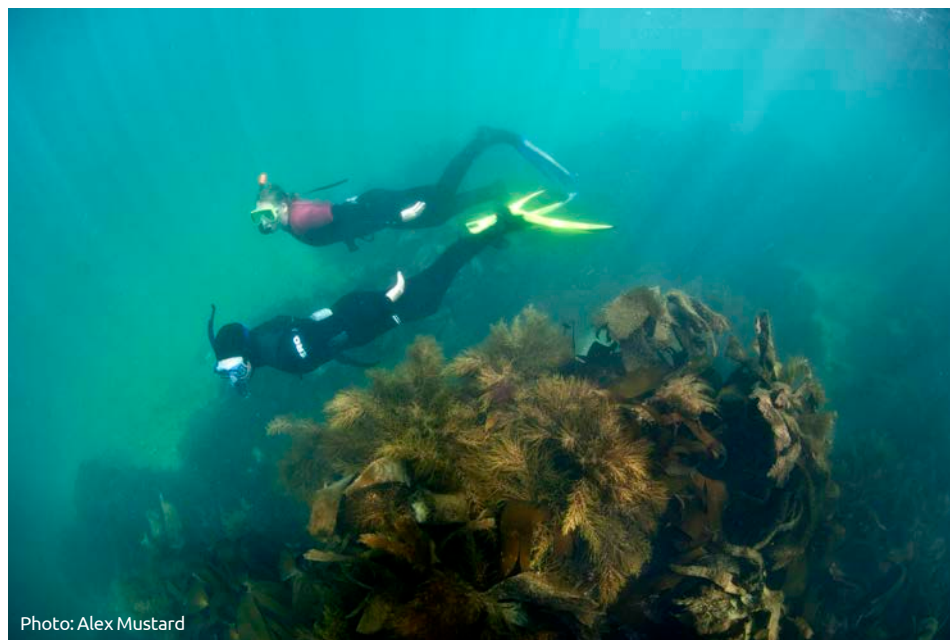


Photo: Alex Mustard



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More info at:



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UK National Governing Body for scuba diving and snorkelling

Photo: Charles Hood