



Advice for Cave Students



Congratulations on choosing to take cave training with Underworld! We have prepared the following advice to help you get the most from your cave course:

Skill Requirements

Cave diving requires finesse and control beyond that needed for open water recreational diving. You will be encouraged to demonstrate a high standard of buoyancy and trim, and anti-silting propulsion techniques (including frogkick, back kick and helicopter turns) before diving in the fragile caves here in Mexico. A good measure of your readiness and skill level is performing simple drills such as a valve drill or S-drill neutrally buoyant, in trim and holding position on a line in around 3m/10ft of water. Course timings are based on a short confined water session to review and confirm these skills. It may be necessary to build an extra day or two into the course to work on essential/ fundamental dive skills if they need some refinement. These sessions are a lot of fun and make for a better learning experience during the cave portion of the course, allowing us to focus on cave specific skills.

Pre Reading and Theory

We provide all our cave students with a link to a Dropbox containing some useful articles and information. Required course materials are included in the cost of courses. These are IANTD's The Tao of Cave Diving, TDI's Diving in Overhead Environments e-learning or RAID's e-learning package. Other useful texts to accompany the course are Jill Heinerth's *The Essentials of Cave Diving* (available from Amazon) and Jarrod Jablonski's *Beyond the Daylight Zone – The Fundamentals of Cave Diving*. We also strongly recommend that cave and tech divers invest in human factors training, either an online course or the book *Under Pressure* – available here: <https://www.thehumandiver.com>

Equipment Requirements

Although we advise students taking advanced and cave courses to have their own equipment, we can supply top quality kit from Halcyon (lights, wings & backplates), Apeks (regulators & fins), Scubapro (Jetfins) and wetsuits to avoid airline luggage charges. All equipment rental is free of charge during courses.

Specific Equipment Requirements – available to rent if required

Backplate and wing	Stainless steel or aluminium backplate with continuous webbing harness. Double tank wing without bungees and with around 20kg/40lb of lift.
or Sidemount harness	With floating bungee or multiple D-rings, suitable for use with aluminium cylinders.
Regulators	Long (2m/7ft) primary reg hose, short (56-61cm/22-24in) backup reg hose with necklace bungee, 56-66cm/24-26in HP hose with single SPG .
Primary light	Canister light with Goodman handle.
Back up lights	Two reliable back-up lights with small boltsnaps..
Fins	Stiff bladed fins with open heel, such as Jet Fins. No split fins.
Bottom timer	Wrist mounted digital depth and time gauge or computer
Primary reel	130m/400ft "Sidewinder" cave reel recommended. No ratchet reels.
Jump spools	Simple spools with double ender boltsnaps.
Exposure protection	Drysuit (P-valve recommended!) or 5-7mm wetsuit with pockets or pocket shorts, hood.
Masks	Two masks.
Knife	Small, sharp knife mounted on belt (backmount) or wrist/shoulder (sidemount).
Compass	Wrist mounted compass.

Personal Equipment – available to buy

Wetnotes	Underwater notebook with pencils
Navigation kit	Cookies and line arrows (or REMs) on shockcord pigtail with a small boltsnap
Safety Spools	Two simple spools with double ender boltsnaps

Please get in touch if you have any questions on the above or just want to talk through the course requirements – we are always happy to help. lanny@underworldtulum.com