

Cavern Diver Shopping List

Although a person who intends to progress into cave diving can take Cavern with cave gear (doubles, etc), generally speaking the Cavern Diver course does not require much equipment above and beyond regular open water gear. However, there are some things each of you will need to have:

1. A regulator with pressure gauge, octopus, power inflator, and primary second stage on a 7' low pressure hose.
2. A BCD. Jacket style is fine, but wing style is better. If you're shopping for a BC, I highly recommend the Light Monkey Single Tank System (back-plate and harness with single tank adapter and 28# wing combo), which is perfect for single tank diving and the back-plate and harness can be used with doubles. I use this combination for all of my recreational single tank diving and am convinced it is the best solution for most divers.

If you want something more on the “generic BC” side of the fence, then the Travepac from Dive Rite (<http://www.diverite.com/products/wings/travepac-bcd/>) will work.

A note of caution: with wings, “bigger” is not always better – a wing with too much lift can cause inordinate drag and can trap air in places, making it difficult/challenging to vent. For single tank diving, you do not want a wing with more than 30# of lift!

3. A line cutting device (knife, trilobite, z-knife, etc). If it's a knife, blade should be small (no more than 1” blade); none of these old-style 70s era spears.
4. A watch that is water resistant to 100m. I love Casio G-Shocks, and they're less than \$50 at Walmart.
5. A dive computer. Preferably one that is nitrox compatible, one of the dives will likely be to 90'.
7. A wrist slate. See this: <http://www.diverite.com/products/accessories/wrist-slate/>
8. A safety spool with at least 100' of line. See this: <http://www.diverite.com/products/reels/125-finger-spool/>
9. A primary light, please note primary lights can be rented during class. Generally speaking, the brighter the light, the better your dive. If you are unsure whether or not you plan to progress into cave diving, then I recommend the Light Monkey 3w 3 C-Cell light. It is bright enough for cavern diving, and if you progress into cave diving it can become your second backup light (cave divers need two backup lights and a primary, cavern divers need a primary and a backup).

If you already know you are going to progress into cave diving, then you should consider making an investment in a good primary light. Personally, I like rechargeable canister lights and alternate between a Light Monkey 21w HID and a Dive Rite LED light. The things to consider are brightness (the brighter, the better), burn-time (minimum of 3 hours, 4-5 hours is better), and beam focus (spot) for communicating with your team. Be warned, a good primary light will cost at least \$600 (my HID was \$1200), but as I said, if you are planning on pursuing cave diving, I recommend making that long term investment once rather than buying a light that isn't suitable for cave diving that you would need to replace later. One great light that has come out on the market recently is the Dive Rite LX-20 (<http://www.diverite.com/products/lights/lx20-handheld-primary-light/>), which is bright, compact, and offers a 4 hour burn-time, all for around \$600.

I have two Dive Rite LED Canister Lights available for use during the class, so you can see the differences and we will discuss primary lights as a group. Cave Country has several rental lights as well.

10. A backup light. I personally use the Light Monkey 2W LED lights and they are in stock at Cave Country Dive Shop. You can read more about them at <http://www.lightmonkey.us/#!2-watt-led/c8bc>. The Dive Rite BX-1 is also a decent option, and it should be about \$65 from Cave Country. However, if budget is a driving consideration, I have found these Princeton Tec lights to be extremely inexpensive, however their build quality is not very good and I have had two flood on me: <http://www.princetonotec.com/impact-xl>. The advantage of the LM lights are that they are very bright and are rated to go to 500' deep, which makes them perfectly suited for being in a cave environment – imagine being 1000' from the nearest exit and having to rely on a backup light to see your way out. Since Cavern is limited to remaining within the visible daylight zone, the Dive Rite is a great compromise, and the Princeton Tec light is acceptable (barely).

11. Two tanks. You can rent them from Cave Country during the class, I just need to know in advance to make sure they are reserved.

12. The TDI Diving in Overhead Environments (Cavern/Cave) manual. I can get you this for \$30+tax, or you can order it online.

13. I will supply a copy of “Basic Cave Diving: A Blueprint for Survival” by Sheck Exley. Although it was written in the 1970s, the material remains pertinent to this day.

Most of these items can be purchased at Cave Country Dive Shop in High Springs, 386-454-4444.

There will be some additional small parts you will need to get, including 3 line arrows and a way to hold them. You can purchase those parts from the dive shop when we do the gear workshop on the first day.

Please contact me first if you intend to take the course in doubles or sidemount ("cave configuration").