

Scuba Hand Signals Chart

Print this and take it to your course. The signals every diver must know — grouped so they're easy to learn and easy to remember underwater.



OK? / OK!



Go up



Go down



Stop / hold



Low on air



Out of air

Six signals to memorise before you ever get wet. Agree them with your buddy on the surface, every dive.

The one everyone gets wrong: underwater a **thumbs-up means "go up / end the dive"** — not "OK". To say you're fine, use the finger-and-thumb **OK circle**.

— Essential

OK? / I'm OK

Thumb and forefinger form a circle, other fingers up.
A question and its answer. Not a thumbs-up.

Something's wrong

Flat hand, palm down, rocked side to side.
Then point to the problem (ear, mask, etc.).

Stop

Flat palm held up, facing forward.
Hold position — used to pause the group.

Slow down

Flat hand, palm down, patted gently downward.
Ease off the pace or the ascent.

— Depth & direction

Go up / end the dive

Thumb pointing up.

This is NOT 'OK' — it means ascend.

Go down / descend

Thumb pointing down.

Begin or continue the descent.

Level off — stay here

Flat hand, palm down, held steady.

Maintain this depth.

This way / look

Point with a flat hand or finger.

Indicate a direction or something to see.

Come here

Beckon with the whole hand.

Call your buddy over.

— Air & gas

Low on air

Closed fist pressed against the chest.

You're near your turn/reserve pressure.

Out of air

Flat hand slicing across the throat.

Urgent — you need to share air now.

Share air / give me air

Hand moved toward the mouth.

Request your buddy's alternate air source.

How much air?

One hand's fingers tapped on the other palm.

Asking your buddy for their pressure.

— Problems & comfort

Can't equalize

Point to your ear.

Ears won't clear — stop or ascend slightly.

Cold

Arms hugged across the body (shiver).

You're getting chilled — may end the dive.

I'm low / not feeling right

Flat hand wobbled, then point to yourself.

Signal any discomfort early.

Which way is the boat?

Palms up, small shrug.

Asking for direction/orientation.

Safety stop

Three fingers held up, then a flat 'level' hand.

3 minutes at 5 m before surfacing.