

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Shark Swim

Why did The Florida Aquarium initiate this program?

The Shark Swim program was initiated as a way to immerse guests in the aquatic environment without needing to be dive certified and change any fears towards these animals into fascination. Our goal is to inspire and facilitate a greater understanding of these amazing animals through a personal interactive experience!

Where does the Shark Swim program take place?

You will be swimming in our Coral Reef exhibit, the largest exhibit at The Florida Aquarium. This exhibit is 70-76° F, ranges from 12 – 25 feet deep where you will be swimming, and overall holds 500,000 gallons of natural sea water. Our Coral Reef serves as home to our Sand Tiger Sharks, Nurse Sharks and more than 1,600 fish, representing over 50 species. You will easily see colorful angelfish, parrotfish, wrasse, grunts, and surgeonfish, but southern sting rays, spiny lobsters, filefish, pufferfish and many others also inhabit our reef waiting to be discovered!

Is it safe?

Of course! Our animals are not aggressive and are acclimated to having divers and swimmers in their home every day. Our dive masters are trained in CPR, first aid and emergency oxygen administration. Additionally, for your safety, swimmers are not allowed to touch or feed the animals.

Will I be swimming alone?

Each experience can accommodate up to four participants, and there will be a dive master in the water with you at all times. You are allowed to buy all four participant slots at one program time to swim alone.

What are the requirements to participate?

Anyone ages nine years old and or older can participate in the program. You do not need to be SCUBA certified; in fact, this experience is an introduction to SCUBA diving! You will breathe from a SCUBA regulator and tank while staying on the surface of the water. If you are a certified diver and 15 years old or older, you are welcome to participate in our Dive with the Sharks program.

What is included in the program?

The program includes Aquarium admission, a 30 minute swim in our Coral Reef exhibit, an educational session on our animals and conservation, and a view behind the scenes at The Florida Aquarium. All necessary equipment is provided.

When is this program available?

Currently, Shark Swim is offered daily at 1:45pm and 3:30pm. Walk-up registration is available; however, we encourage guests to pre-register as there are a limited number of spaces per program. You can make reservations on our website www.flaquarium.org.

What is your rescheduling policy?

Swimmers can reschedule their reservation up to six months from their booking date, but date changes less than 30 days prior to the reservation are subject to a \$25 charge. All reservation changes are subject to program availability. Changes must be made through our Reservation Office at (813) 273-4015. No-shows will not be refunded or rescheduled. Like all swimming environments, the schedule is subject to change based on the health of the animals, weather and your safety.

How do I get to the Aquarium and where do I go when I arrive?

The Florida Aquarium is located downtown on Channelside drive, next to Channelside Bay Plaza. [Click here](#) for directions. The program meets inside the aquarium at the Guest Services counter.

What should I bring with me?

All you will need to bring is your swimsuit and towel. The Florida Aquarium will supply all other equipment. Personal masks and waterproof cameras are permitted, but disinfection is required. Due to contamination concerns, you cannot bring your own equipment and wetsuit. Comfortable changing rooms with showers and lockers are provided.

Are guests welcome to watch?

Of course! Your friends and family will be escorted to the Coral Reef gallery where they can watch you in the exhibit. Aquarium admission is required for all guests. As a Shark Swim swimmer, you can receive \$2 off Aquarium admission for up to six guests. You may purchase guest tickets for your family and friends from the Guest Services desk upon arrival.

What if our swim ends after the Aquarium closes and our friends and family are still in the building?

As you finish up the program, your friends and family will be accompanied by a Team Member who will make sure you all meet up after the program concludes.

Can you accommodate a group of swimmers?

Yes! We can accommodate groups of 8-12 swimmers. All group swims are scheduled at 8:30am and on a limited basis. To register a group swim, please contact our Group Reservation Office at (813) 273-4042.

Can you accommodate guests with disabilities?

Yes! Our dive team members are trained Handicapped Scuba Association (HSA) buddies and are able to accommodate a wide range of physical and mental disabilities. Continue reading for more information about our accommodations for guests with disabilities.

Do I need to be able to swim to participate?

Not at all! You will be wearing a wetsuit and a jacket similar to a life vest, both of which comfortably allow you to float on the surface. A trained dive professional will also be in the water with you.

What is the temperature of the water?

Mid to high 70s. We provide a 1-piece 3mm, full-length wetsuit which zips in the back for you to wear. However, if your medical condition dictates a higher level of thermal protection, special arrangements may be made.

Can I wear my own wetsuit?

To protect the health of our animals, we cannot allow outside wetsuits into our habitats. However, if you require a special wetsuit, special arrangements can be made.

Do you have a pool lift or ramp into the water?

To access the water, our professional dive staff is trained in various lifting techniques and we will work with you to make your transition to and from the water as easy as possible. We are in the process of acquiring a professional grade pool lift.

If you have any other questions about our Shark Swim program, please contact our Reservations team at (813) 273-4015.