
SKYDIVING FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

The following are frequently asked questions by people with varying types of disability, who wish to experience the exhilaration of skydiving (sport parachuting).

- **Who is the controlling body for skydiving in the UK?**

British Skydiving is the trading name of the British Parachute Association (BPA) has the official Approval of the Civil Aviation Authority to conduct and control the sport of skydiving in the UK. Further information on British Skydiving may be obtained by visiting the British Skydiving website at www.britishskydiving.org or contacting British Skydiving HQ - details are at the top of this page.

- **What possibilities are there for disabled people to skydive?**

Skydiving is one of the most exciting and challenging action sports of modern times, and the growing popularity of Tandem skydiving has enabled people with a wide range of disabilities to experience the sport. Inevitably, though, the nature and severity of *some* disabilities does preclude participation.

Tandem skydiving offers a quick and easy introduction to freefall using a dual harness system, with the person concerned being securely strapped to a highly qualified instructor, who controls the descent, the parachute deployment and the landing. Once the main parachute is deployed, it is normal for the instructor to allow the student, where possible, to steer the parachute under the instructor's guidance during some stage of the descent.

- **Who can skydive, and what are the medical requirements?**

Anyone wishing to skydive must be at least 16 years of age. For people between 16 and 18 years of age, the written consent of a parent or guardian is required.

A Student Tandem Skydiver Medical Declaration (British Skydiving Form 115A) or Doctors' Medical Certificate (Form 115B) must be obtained before *anyone*, with or without a disability, is permitted to carry out a Skydive.

Full details of the medical requirements for such a Certificate are set out on the appropriate forms, which may be downloaded from the British Skydiving website or obtained from British Skydiving HQ or any British Skydiving Affiliated Parachute Training Organisation (PTO). Where further specific information is required, British Skydiving's Medical Adviser will be pleased to help, and may be contacted through British Skydiving HQ.

- **How can I find out if I can skydive with my particular disability?**

Before entering into any commitment, it would be wise to talk to the Chief Instructor (CI) at your chosen PTO and let them know the nature of your disability. The Chief Instructor may be able to form an opinion, based on the information provided, on whether or not a skydive is a practical proposition, or may suggest that a decision would be made depending upon the outcome of the application to your doctor for the issue of a Doctors' Medical Certificate.

Even though a disabled person may be declared medically fit to skydive, a Chief Instructor can, owing to the nature of the disability, *and in the overriding interests of safety*, decline to allow that person to undertake a skydive.

- **Where can I carry out Tandem skydive?**

There are around 28 Parachute Training Organisations Affiliated to British Skydiving, and the majority offer Tandem skydiving facilities. A full list of locations and contacts is available on the British Skydiving website or on request from British Skydiving HQ.

- **What special equipment is needed and who provides it?**

All the necessary equipment required for a Tandem skydive is provided by the PTOs.

- **What sort of clothing should I wear?**

Your selected PTO will be pleased to advise you about the most suitable clothing and footwear.

- **Will my Instructor be qualified, and how can I check on his/her qualifications and experience?**

All Instructors are highly trained and will be in possession of a Tandem Instructor rating approved by the British Skydiving. The Chief Instructor at an Affiliated PTO will be able to verify the qualifications and experience of any particular Tandem Instructor if necessary.

- **How much training will I be required to do?**

Unlike solo skydiving, which requires a minimum of 6 hours of ground training, Tandem skydiving needs much less in the way of preparation on the ground beforehand. The instructor will give the student a thorough briefing on all aspects of the jump, including procedures to be adopted when in the aircraft, during the climb to altitude, and during the descent and landing. This briefing will also include details of any procedures to be adopted in the unlikely event of an emergency.

- **What about insurance?**

Students are insured against the risk of injury to a third party or damage to property.

Students are *not* insured for Personal Accident risks, so persons intending to carry out a Tandem skydive may wish to make their own arrangements in this respect. Most British Skydiving Affiliated PTOs can advise on companies that specialise in personal accident insurance.

- **Will there be facilities at the PTO to cater for my particular needs?**

The nature of facilities on the ground varies considerably from place to place throughout the country, so if there is a specific requirement, this should be discussed during the initial contact with the PTO chosen to conduct the skydive. They will do everything that they can to provide whatever help is needed.