

*Handbook*  
**Troop 20**  
**BSA**

The purpose of this handbook is to introduce new members to Troop 20 and the overwhelming amount of BSA resources that are available. It does not contain all of the answers; it points to them.

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## Getting Started

### Welcome

We're glad you've chosen to join Boy Scout Troop 20, and we hope this information will help you and your son have the best possible Boy Scout experience.

**Troop 20's goal.** The major goal of Troop 20 is to provide superior Scouting programs. We emphasize the outdoor program by trying to have some type of outdoor activity every month. We also stress individual development, working with each boy toward improving leadership skills and achieving the rank of Eagle. Since the ultimate objective of Scouting is to develop good citizens and tomorrow's leaders, we enforce personal and leadership skills by having the boys—not the adults—lead the troop.

**Troop 20 basics.** Troop 20 was founded in 1955, and is part of the Toqua District and the Great Smoky Mountain Council. We are sponsored by First Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 6900 Nubbin Ridge Road, Knoxville.

Troop 20 meets every Monday night at First Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 7:00-8:30 p.m. We generally follow the Knox County Schools' schedule: when school is canceled, we don't hold meetings.

The troop is divided into patrols of about eight boys each. Each patrol elects its own leaders as well as troop leaders. These elected boys make up the Patrol Leaders' Council. The PLC plans the troop's programs, but each boy—including your son—has input into this planning by communicating his ideas, interests, and desires to his elected peer leaders.

Annually, Troop 20 enjoys several special outings and projects. The troop participates in the Toqua District Spring and Fall Camporees and attends summer camp at Camp Buck Toms.

To help the Scouts advance, the troop teaches Scout skills and merit badge classes during the fall and winter. The Scouts' individual advancements are recognized 3 times each year at Courts of Honor

## Boy Scout Basics

**Mission Statement.** The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

### Scout Oath.

On my honor I will do my best To do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; To help other people at all times; To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

### Scout Law.

A Scout is:

Trustworthy Loyal Helpful Friendly Courteous Kind Obedient Cheerful Thrifty Brave Clean Reverent.

**Scout Motto.** Be Prepared.

**Scout Slogan.** Do a Good Turn Daily.

**Troop 20 Common Law** can be found on the [Troop 20 web site](#)

## The Transition Into Boy Scouts

**From Cub Scouts.** Your son may join Troop 20 as soon as he is 11 years old **or** has finished the fifth grade **or** is 10 years old and has earned the Arrow of Light (even before the ceremony). In fact, as soon as you have signed up your son for the troop and paid your dues, *start coming to meetings!* Most boys benefit from a seamless transition from Cub to Boy Scouts, and we highly recommend that you not prolong his joining the troop and attending meetings solely for his Arrow of Light ceremony. Of course, the Arrow of Light is important, both as a Cub and a Boy Scout. The Arrow of Light patch is the only emblem that carries over from Cub Scouting into Boy Scouting, and your son will wear it on his Boy Scout uniform (and later as an adult).

**As a first-time Scout.** As soon as your son has signed up for Troop 20 and you pay his dues, *start coming to meetings!* The sooner your son becomes involved, the better experience he'll have and the sooner he will consider himself "part of the group." Soon afterwards, the troop will honor him a joining ceremony, where the Scoutmaster will welcome him into the troop.

## What To Do First

**Start coming to meetings.** As soon as you sign up your son for Troop 20 and pay his dues, start taking him to meetings. By being involved immediately, your Scout will be more excited about joining and get the most out of every Boy Scout opportunity.

**Read the Introduction to the Boy Scout Handbook.** It will answer many questions.

**Fill out the BSA Youth Application.** Along with your son, fill out the application and return it to the Scoutmaster.

**Fill out the Personal Emergency Information form.** Fill out the *Troop 20 Personal Emergency Information* form, and return it to the Scoutmaster. *Please keep a copy of this form for your own records once you've finished it.* (A copy of the form is at the end of this chapter of the handbook.)

**Fill out the Troop Resource Form** that lets the troop know your talents and abilities. (On the T20 site.)

**Buy a uniform.** Troop 20 has two uniforms: Official, which is formal, and Activity, which is informal. You can buy these uniforms at the Scout Shop, or through the Boy Scout Catalog. The following list describes each uniform and when it's worn. Used uniforms and insignia are sometimes available in the troop's storeroom. Scouts are encouraged to pass on uniform items that are no longer needed. Troop 20 provides a neckerchief, council patch, and troop numbers for each new Scout.

### **Official BSA Uniform (sometimes called Class A)**

*Consists of*

Official Scout shirt.

Troop 20 neckerchief (provided by the troop and worn for courts of honor).

Proper patches (Scouting patch, troop number, GSMC shoulder patch, and any other earned patches; the *Boy Scout Handbook* describes where these patches should go on the Boy Scout shirt).

Reasonable shorts or pants, if Scout pants are not in your budget (a single, neutral color, such as blue jean or khaki). No gym shorts.

Scout socks. Reasonable shoes. No open toed.

*Is worn for*

Troop meetings.

Traveling to and from outings and camp.

Courts of Honor and all other ceremonies. (With neckerchief and merit badge sash.)

Other special events.

### **Activity Uniform (sometimes called Class B)**

*Consists of*

Troop 20 t-shirt or other official Boy Scout t-shirt (Camp Buck Toms, Jamboree, etc.).

Reasonable shorts or pants (a single, neutral color, such as blue jean or khaki).

Scout socks.

Reasonable shoes.

*Is worn for*

Outings

Work days

Most boys wear short-sleeved shirts all year and wear jeans in the winter and Scout shorts and socks in warmer weather. Official Scout pants are recommended but not required. They're very sturdy, dry quickly, and have zip off legs and cargo pockets. The Boy Scout hat is also optional.

## Checklist of Initial Requirements

We hope that this checklist of requirements will help simplify your and your son's transition to into Troop 20. Please feel free to check off each item as you finish it.

### First

- Sign up for Troop 20.
- Pay dues.
- Start coming to meetings: troop meetings for your son and Troop Committee meetings for you.
- Give your name and email address to the ScoutParent Unit Coordinator. (This will ensure that you're placed on the email distribution list.)
- Fill out the *Join Boy Scouting* form.
- Fill out the *Troop 20 Personal Emergency Information* form.
- Return both forms to the Scoutmaster.

### Next, buy

- the *Boy Scout Handbook*.
- Official Boy Scout shirt.
- Green shoulder loops

### Buy or make sure you have

- Great Smoky Mountains Council patch. (provided by the troop)
  - Troop 20 numbers. (provided by the troop)
  - Reasonable (single, solid-colored) pants or shorts.
  - Reasonable (comfortable, durable) shoes and socks.
- (Neckerchief will be presented during the joining ceremony. You don't have to buy it.)

### You may (but don't have to) buy

- Subscription to *Boys' Life*, the official Boy Scout magazine.
- Official Boy Scout pants and/or shorts.
- Official Boy Scout hat.
- Official Boy Scout socks.

## Expectations for Your Scout

Each boy is expected to be the best Scout he can be. In order for him to do so, and for him to get the most out of his Boy Scout experience, he should always try to do the following:

**Live by the Boy Scout Oath.** The Boy Scout Oath provides a model for each boy to strive to live by, doing his best to be dutiful to God and country, to be obedient to the Scout Law, to be helpful, strong, mentally awake, and morally straight. For additional information on the Boy Scout codes, see Boy Scout Basics.

**Be active in Troop 20.** Each Scout is expected to attend meetings regularly, participate in required activities, and show interest in the troop.

**Strive for advancement.** One of our troop's goals is for every boy to advance to the Eagle rank. We provide as many opportunities for advancement as possible, but it's ultimately each boy's responsibility to work toward rank advancement. For additional information on advancement, please see the section on *Advancing*.

**Take responsibility.** Each Scout should be responsible. This includes his keeping up with events and activities, taking charge of his own advancement, accepting responsibility for his own actions, and learning to participate in positions of leadership.

**To abide by the Troop 20 Common Law.** The *Troop 20 Common Law* is a mutual agreement between Scouts and leaders. It helps govern our activities and behavior, and provides a safe and fun atmosphere. The *Common Law* can be found on the [Troop 20 web site](#).

## Expectations for You

As parents, you're no doubt excited—and nervous—about your son joining Boy Scouts! Remember, becoming acquainted with Boy Scouting will take time, and no one expects you to be an expert; the best way to learn is to jump right in!

**Encourage your son.** Perhaps the most important thing you can do to help your son be a successful Scout is to encourage him. Of course, we ultimately want each boy to take responsibility for his own citizenship in the troop, but your support—especially as he begins his Boy Scout life—is vital to his feeling at home in the troop.

**Start coming to the Troop Committee meetings as soon as possible.** We can't stress enough how important the Troop Committee is for both you and your son. We encourage you to start coming as soon as possible and enjoying all of its benefits. First, the committee provides parents with the company and support of other parents who are all experiencing the same thing! It's also a wonderful way to get to meet and work with troop leaders, including the Scoutmaster and his assistants. The Troop Committee lets you support Troop 20 and your son by volunteering short-term, long-term, and even one-time help. Keep in mind that your help does much more than promote the troop; it shows support for your son's Scouting endeavors!

**Ask questions.** For each of the many questions you have, there's someone in the troop who has the answer. If your question is one that your son can find the answer to, encourage him to do so; learning to interact with others in the troop will accelerate his becoming comfortable in the troop. If your question is one that only *you* can get the answer to, please contact either the Troop Committee Chairperson, the Scoutmaster, or one of his assistants. For more information on who to contact when, see the *Contacts* section in this chapter.

**Check your troop email.** If you haven't done so already, give your name and email address to the Troop Committee Chairperson, who will place you on the troop email distribution list. Please check your email often for notices from the troop; we communicate upcoming activities, announcement, reminders, and other information via this list.

**Volunteer if you can.** If you'd like to become more involved in Troop 20, we have numerous offices, positions, and activities open for you. These volunteer positions are listed and explained in a later chapter of this handbook, *Volunteering Yourself*. If you're interested in any of these in particular, please contact the Troop Committee Chairperson.

## Contacts

See the [Troop 20 web site](http://troop20knoxville.scoutlander.com) for current contact info. [troop20knoxville.scoutlander.com](http://troop20knoxville.scoutlander.com)

**For Scouts.** Since we're a large and active troop, communication is very important! *Remember, though, keeping track of troop activities is ultimately your Scout's responsibility* and will help him take charge of his own scheduling. Encourage your son to contact one of his patrol or troop leaders, an Assistant Scoutmaster, or the Scoutmaster with any questions or problems. The basic "chain of command" is on page 35 of the Boy Scout Handbook. Your son can get the names and numbers of these people from the troop web site.

**Assistant Patrol Leader** is a Scout leader who can answer questions about patrol activities.

**Patrol Leader** is a Scout leader who can answer questions about patrol activities. He's also your son's liaison to the Patrol Leaders' Council, which plans and conducts the troop's activities; as such, the patrol leader represents your son's interests to the council.

**Quartermaster** is a Scout leader who can help with questions about patrol supplies and equipment.

**Assistant Senior Patrol Leader** is a Scout leader who can deal with questions about troop activities.

**Senior Patrol Leader** is a Scout leader who can also handle questions about troop activities.

**ScoutParent Unit Coordinator** is an adult leader who can inform you about troop activities.

**For parents.** As parents, your primary resource will be the ScoutParent Unit Coordinator. Troop Committee meetings are held once a month during the boys' Scout meetings, and by attending them, you'll stay on top of the troop's activities. You will also get information about outings and activities via the troop web site and email distribution list. *Please contact the ScoutParent Unit Coordinator as soon as possible to have your name and email address added to the list, and remember to check these emails frequently!*

## Resources

Of course, this handbook could never answer all of your questions about Scouting. Keep the following resources in mind as other places to turn to for answers to questions or just to learn more about the BSA and Scouting!

[Troop 20 web site](#) includes calendar, advancement history, partial merit badge status, leader contact information, forms, documents, and information on the email distribution list.

[troop20knoxville.scoutlander.com](http://troop20knoxville.scoutlander.com) Ask a leader for the username and password.

**The Scout Shop** sells Boy Scout items including uniforms, publications, and equipment.  
1333 Old Weisgarber Rd, Knoxville, TN 37909 588-1940

**The Boy Scout Catalog** lists and sells all available Boy Scout paraphernalia and publications.  
1-800-323-0732 [www.scoutstuff.org](http://www.scoutstuff.org)

**Campmor** is an online catalog of camping equipment. [www.campmor.com](http://www.campmor.com)  
Local camping stores offer discounts to Scouts, if you show the ID card.

**Boy Scout Handbook** is the official Boy Scout guide that all boys should buy; it's available at the Scout Shop or through the Boy Scout Catalog. (In this handbook, reference will be made to pages in the 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the BSH.)

**Boys' Life** magazine is the national magazine for Boy Scouts. This magazine is recommended but not required. Discount subscriptions are available to Scouts through Troop 20. See the troop treasurer for more information. [www.boyslife.org](http://www.boyslife.org)

**Boy Scouts of America web site** contains general information on Boy Scouts, programs, purposes, organization, etc.  
[www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org)

**Great Smoky Mountain Council** web site has calendars and newsletters. [www.bsa-gsmc.org](http://www.bsa-gsmc.org)

[www.campbucktoms.org](http://www.campbucktoms.org) is the web site for the council's camps.

**U.S. Scouting Service Project** is a site that indexes and provides explanations on almost every aspect of Scouting.  
[www.usscouts.org](http://www.usscouts.org)

**BSA Field Book** is an advanced handbook for outdoor skills.

### Information for volunteers and parents.

**Scouting** magazine is the official magazine for Boy Scout volunteers. [www.scoutingmagazine.org](http://www.scoutingmagazine.org)

**Guide to Safe Scouting** is a guide for volunteers and parents to safe Scouting activities. Link on T20 site.

**Adult Training** requirements and links to online courses are on the T20 site.

**Scoutmaster Handbook** is to adults what the BSA Handbook is to youth.

**Passport to High Adventure** is a manual for older Scouts and volunteers about high-adventure treks.

**The MacScouter** is another user-friendly site that indexes online Scouting information. [www.macscouter.com](http://www.macscouter.com)

### Orientation for New Scout Parents

<http://www.scouting.org/training/adult/supplemental/orientationfornewboyscoutparents.aspx>

**Guide to a boy-led troop** <http://scoutmaster.org/Boy%20Led%20Troop.pdf>

### Information on advancement.

**Boy Scout Requirements** is a book that gives guidelines for merit badges, rank advancement, and other awards.

**Merit Badge pamphlets** are available for each badge. The Troop 20 library has many of them available for loan. Requirements and worksheets for each badge are also available at [www.meritbadge.com](http://www.meritbadge.com).

### Information on Boy Scout leadership for boys.

**Patrol Leader Handbook** and **Senior Patrol Leader Handbook** are essential for Scouts in those positions

**The NetCommish** is a valuable web page for exploring leadership positions. <http://usscouts.org/netresources/lead.asp>

## Organization of Troop 20

**Chartering Organization.** The Boy Scouts of America requires every troop to have a chartering organization whose values and goals are like the Boy Scouts'. Our chartering organization is First Cumberland Presbyterian Church, which lets us use its facilities and supports us in many other ways.

**Chartering Organization Representative.** The COR is an adult associated with the chartering organization that serves as a go-between for the organization and the troop. This individual helps the troop with issues about using the facilities and helps maintain and strengthen the relationship between the organization and the troop.

**Patrols.** Troop 20 is a boy-led troop divided into patrols loosely based on the boys' ages. A patrol is a grouping of six to eight boys who work together, and each patrol has its own peer leaders. Each patrol has a patrol parent who mentors the Patrol Leader and Assistant Patrol Leader. After joining the troop, your son will become part of a patrol composed of other first-year Scouts. The first year Scouts will have an older Scout assigned as a Troop Guide to help them learn the basics. The general organization and leadership of the troop are as follows.

**Patrol leaders.** Patrol leaders are Scouts who are elected by their patrols to lead and to represent the patrols.

Patrol Leaders give leadership to members of their patrol and represent them on the Patrol Leaders' Council.

**Assistant Patrol Leaders** fill in for the patrol leaders when the Patrol Leaders are absent. They also help lead their patrols.

**Troop leaders.** Troop leaders are Scouts who are elected by the troop to lead the troop, help plan activities, and be responsible for various troop activities.

**Senior Patrol Leader** is the top youth leader in the troop. He conducts the Patrol Leaders' Council and, in consultation with the adult leaders, guides the troop.

**Assistant Senior Patrol Leader** helps the Senior Patrol Leader and fills in for him when he must be absent.

**Quartermaster** is responsible for troop supplies and equipment.

**Historian** collects and maintains troop memorabilia and information on former troop members.

**Librarian** keeps troop books, pamphlets, magazines, and audiovisuals. All of these are available for use by any troop member.

**Instructor** teaches one or more advancement skills to troop members.

**Chaplain Aide** helps with troop religious services and promotes religious emblems program.

**Scribe** is the troop secretary; he takes attendance and helps collect dues and fines.

**The Patrol Leaders' Council.** The Patrol Leaders' Council, *not the adult leaders*, is responsible for planning and conducting the troop's activities. The following voting members compose the Council: Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders, and Patrol Leaders. At its monthly meetings, the Council organizes and assigns activity responsibilities for the weekly troop meetings. Also, the council plans troop activities every six months and then submits its plans to the Troop (Parents') Committee for approval.

### Adult leaders

**The Scoutmaster** is the adult leader responsible for the image and program of the troop. He is a registered volunteer who, along with the Assistant Scoutmasters, works directly with the boys by training and guiding them; he encourages other adult leaders to do the same. He conducts conferences with each Scout for all rank advancements, supervises elections, and aids in recruiting. To keep abreast of the newest developments in

Scouting, he participates in council and district events, and is familiar with Scouting policies and literature. He also meets with the Patrol Leaders' Council and the Troop (Parents') Committee.

**Assistant Scoutmasters** are assigned specific program duties and report to the Scoutmaster.

**The Troop Committee.** The Troop Committee is the parents' committee for Troop 20; it's a support group both for parents and leaders. Every parent, as soon as his or her son joins the troop, becomes a member of the Troop Committee. Involvement in the committee is *extremely* important; it has three main purposes:

- To keep parents informed about troop activities.
- To encourage parental involvement in the troop.
- To provide the troop with the assets it needs to operate.

*To keep yourself informed and to support your son during his Boy Scout experience, please make every effort to attend these meetings.* They are held on the second Monday of each month during the regular troop meeting time (7:00-8:30 p.m.) at First Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Minutes from each meeting are distributed via email to all parents on the distribution list. (To have your name and email address added to the list, please contact the Troop Committee Chairperson.) Troop 20 is a success because of the support and participation of all of our parents and guardians. You may be available only for short or one-time commitments or you may want to become a regular volunteer leader; whatever your skills, interests, and available time, *Troop 20 needs you!*

**Organizational Chart** see Boy Scout Handbook page 35

## Annual Events

Troop 20 is proud to have several very exciting annual events that are not only fun but also provide service to the community and give each boy the opportunity for advancement. *Activities marked with an asterisk are required for each Scout.* A short explanation of each event follows, but for more complete information on the camping activities, please see the chapter called *Enjoying Outings*.

**Scout Sunday.** Scout Sunday is a time for Troop 20 to show its support to Cumberland First Presbyterian Church. On this Sunday in February, Scouts and their parents are invited to First Cumberland's regular morning worship service. The church recognizes the Scouts, and the Scoutmaster talks about the troop's recent activities. Scout Sunday is a very important event; it's a chance for the church to recognize the value of Scouting and for our troop to show its appreciation for the church's support.

**Merit badge colleges** Scouts may attend four merit badge colleges held on Saturdays in January, February, and March. Signups begin in October at troop meetings. [www.tntech.edu/mbu](http://www.tntech.edu/mbu) [www.roanestate.edu/mbc](http://www.roanestate.edu/mbc)

**Scouting for Food** Scouts work shifts at the entrance to local supermarkets on two Saturdays in February, collecting food for local food banks.

**Fall and Spring Camporees.** The Toqua district holds two camporees each year, in the spring and the fall. During these camporees, Troop 20 comes together with other troops in our district to compete in games, help in service projects, and have fun.

**Courts of Honor** are usually scheduled for September, December, and May. Scouts are presented awards. (The actual date of an award is when the Scout completes a merit badge or passes a board of review.)

**Summer Camp.** Each June, Troop 20 attends summer camp at Camp Buck Toms. This is much more than just an exciting experience. During camp, each boy chooses classes that he takes to earn particular merit badges, works toward advancement, and learns more about Boy Scouts.

**Winter Camp** We spend the week between Christmas and New Years at Camp Pellissippi, having fun and taking merit badge classes.

**Water Weekend** usually happens around the start of school. The troop camps on the lake and works on aquatic merit badges.

**Troop elections** are held in August and February. The Senior Patrol Leader and Patrol Leaders are voted on by youth troop members. Other troop leaders are appointed.

**Virginia Creeper** outing normally happens in mid-October. The troop camps in downtown Damascus, VA and rides bicycles on the Creeper trail. Family members are welcome.

**WEBELOS visit day** usually occurs in the fall. The Scouts invite nearby WEBELOS dens to visit the troop and see what Scouts do.

**Popcorn sale** takes place in the fall. Proceeds go to the council, troop, and the individual Scouts.

## Enjoying Outings

**Scouting is  $\frac{3}{4}$  outing. Be prepared for outings.**

**The Scout Basic Essentials** for any outing BSH page 264

**Clothing Check Lists** for winter and summer BSH pages 272-273

**Camping Check List** BSH pages 292-293

Also see checklist on [Troop 20 web site](#)

Outings are posted on the troop calendar (which is on the [Troop 20 web site](#)), announced in troop meetings, and via email.

## Summer Camp

Summer Camp is an extremely important event for Troop 20. All Scouts—new and experienced alike—are encouraged to attend. Camp truly integrates each boy into the troop and BSA. It also puts Scouts on the road to advancement, with merit badge classes and activities. Most importantly, though, it's a fun-filled week that your son will never forget!

**Where.** Troop 20 attends summer camp at Camp Buck Toms each year. For directions to the camp, please see <http://troop20knoxville.scoutlander.com/publicsite/unitcustom.aspx?UID=23394&CUSTOMID=62849>

**When.** Troop 20 normally attends for one week in June.

**How much.** Camp fees are approximately \$185. The price is higher if not paid before May 1. First year Scouts get a discount. Some merit badges have additional fees for materials.

**How we keep informed.** Parents are notified of camp each January. Actual registration starts in April. We also have a special meeting in the late spring that gives more information about camp. The Leaders' Guide contains good information at [www.campbucktoms.org/](http://www.campbucktoms.org/)

**How we get there.** We carpool to and from Camp Buck Toms. Just before camp, volunteers sign up to provide transportation.

**What parents' involvement is.** To help supervise our Scouts, we must have Troop 20 parents at Camp Buck Toms during camp week. Usually, these volunteers choose to come to the camp in shifts. In other words, each volunteer will stay for a short time until another volunteer rotates in. To foster independence in each Scout, though, we try *not* to have every parent attend. Fathers traditionally volunteer to attend camp, but any interested parent is welcome and can sign up for camp in the early spring.

**What they do.** Camp Buck Toms offers a wide variety of activities for each boy, regardless of his age, rank, and abilities. From swimming to archery to hiking, there's something for everyone. Aside from the more traditional camping pastimes, each Scout chooses classes to take during the week that teach specific skills and help him work toward specific merit badges. The COPE and Mountain Man programs are challenging for older Scouts.

**How they sign up for classes.** In April, each boy receives a list of badges that he can work toward during camp. His class selection is due along with his registration forms and fees; the priority deadline is May 1. See page 16 of the Leaders' Guide at <http://www.bsa-qsmc.org/summer-camp-information-registration/40346>

**Summer camp checklist** is on Troop 20 web site.

**Buck Toms rules** can be found in chapter 8 of the Leader's Guide, which is at <http://www.campbucktoms.org/forms/2010/2010CBTLeadersGuidefinal.pdf>

## Camporees

The Toqua District holds two camporees each year, when Scouts from every troop in the district come together to camp, compete, and have fun!

**Where.** The camporees are generally held close to Knoxville, but the site varies each time.

**When.** Camporees are held each spring and fall. They will be posted on the calendar at [www.bsa-gsmc.org](http://www.bsa-gsmc.org)

**How we keep informed about it.** A camporee booklet is posted a few weeks prior to the event.

**How we get there.** We carpool to and from camporee sites. Just prior to the outing, volunteers sign up to provide transportation.

**What parents' involvement is.** As with most other outings, camporees require parents' help! Before each camporee, we ask for parent volunteers to stay with the troop during the outing. Camporees are unique, though, because all parents are invited attend Saturday night campfire, which is an impressive event you won't want to miss!

## Dump Camps

Dump camps are overnight outings such as the camporees where the boys don't have to hike into camp. . Instead, volunteers drive tents and patrol boxes to the campsite. So, any troop camping activity that doesn't involve the Scouts' hiking to the site is considered a dump camp. For these outings, Scouts need only basic personal items, such as sleeping bags, rain gear, and clothing. Backpacks are not required. The patrol boxes include cooking gear, Coleman stoves, cooking utensils, etc. The troop trailer has tents.

**Where.** The locations for these camps vary, but they are always announced well before each outing.

**When.** Dump camps are held when weather permits, usually early fall and late spring.

**How we get there.** We carpool to and from campsites; just prior to the outing, volunteers sign up to provide transportation.

**What parents' involvement is.** Prior to each outing, we recruit parents to go with us; sign-ups are held during troop meetings.

## Backpacking Trips

When backpacking, Scouts carry a pack with their own sleeping bag and basic personal items, plus a portion of their patrol or crew food and tents. The boys break into groups of two to share tents and then pair up with another group for meals. Your son may need some specialized equipment for a backpacking trip, but please ask before you buy anything expensive; you may be able to borrow it! A sleeping bag and good, broken-in boots are necessities.

Mummy style bags are warmest and can be compressed more compactly than others. Avoid cotton and down.

**When to buy a tent.** Owning a tent is not mandatory, although a lightweight backing tent is a nice gift. Still, there are enough tents in the troop that the boys can share. Any personal tent should be equipped with a rain fly. If you're interested in purchasing one, check with an adult leader for suggestions.

**When to buy a backpack.** Although the troop has some extra packs that may be borrowed, most boys prefer to have their own for a comfortable fit. Borrow a troop backpack for a few outings before buying one.

**Where.** The locations for these camps vary, but they are always announced well before each outing.

**When.** Backpacking trips are held when weather permits, usually fall and spring.

**How we get there.** We carpool to the trail head and hike to the campsite.

**What parents' involvement is.** Before each outing, we recruit parents go with us. Sign-ups are held during the Troop Meetings.

# Advancing

## Advancement Basics

Advancement is an important part of Boy Scouts. As your son progresses, he'll advance in two different ways: through merit badges and ranks. Merit badges are rewards that Scouts earn for mastering certain skills. Ranks are rewards for completing merit badges, being involved in the troop and in BSA, serving the community, and showing leadership ability. This chapter gives an overview of merit badge and rank advancement, but it doesn't explain every requirement for advancement, especially rank advancement. For more detailed information, please have your son check his *Boy Scout Requirements* book and the chapter called "Rank Requirements" in his *Boy Scout Handbook*.

**Responsibility.** It's up to each boy to take advantage of advancement opportunities and to take the initiative for his own advancement. Each Scout is responsible for finding merit badges he wants to work on, meeting all of the requirements for new merit badges and ranks, and keeping up with his own advancement (including service hours, campouts, troop activities, and leadership positions). His *Boy Scout Handbook* has a section for him to record his advancement information, starting on page 432. Please encourage your Scout to take responsibility for his advancement. When he's in charge, he'll take even more pride in each of his accomplishments!

**Ranks.** There are six ranks in Boy Scouts:

- |                 |                |          |
|-----------------|----------------|----------|
| 1. Tenderfoot   | 3. First Class | 5. Life  |
| 2. Second Class | 4. Star        | 6. Eagle |

When a Scout first joins Troop 20, he's awarded the joining insignia as part of his joining ceremony. He wears that insignia until he's satisfied the requirements for Tenderfoot.

A Scout may continue to earn merit badges and can be awarded Palms after he is an Eagle.

**Merit Badges.** There are well over 100 merit badges that the boys can choose from. Each one lets them explore a particular area, teaches them new skills, and introduces them to subjects that can become lifelong interests or careers. If a Scout is interested in a subject, he should take the badge. Scouts in Troop 20 can earn as many as 10 badges a year, if they take advantage of all opportunities.

## Merit Badge Advancement

**How merit badges are earned.** Scouts can earn merit badges two ways: through troop (or camp) classes or on their own. Throughout the year and at summer camp, Scouts take part in activities that let them earn particular badges. However, when an individual Scout finds a merit badge that interests him and that he'd like to pursue, he can work on that badge on his own. The steps for this process are described in this section in *Steps Toward Earning Merit Badges*.

**When to start working on them.** A Scout can start working on merit badges as soon as he wants to! He can choose any badge at any time; there are no rank requirements. Some are definitely harder than others, though, and he can consult his *Boy Scout Requirements* book for levels of difficulty. *If he plans on working on the badge independently, though, he should follow the steps outlined in this section in Steps Toward Earning Merit Badges.* Of course, each Scout should be careful not to overwhelm himself at first. He should concentrate on achieving the rank of First Class before devoting a great deal of time to working on merit badges.

**Number of merit badges to take on.** Although there's no limit to the number of merit badges a Scout can take on, we recommend that he actively work on no more than two at a time until he reaches First Class rank. After that, we recommend no more than five at a time.

**Which merit badges are required.** Advancement to each new rank demands a certain *number* of merit badges, some of which are required badges. See the Rank Requirements chapter in the BSH, starting on page 432.

## Rank Advancement

This section will help you understand rank advancement, outlining the advancement process and recommending a timetable for advancement.

**How to advance in rank.** Advancing in rank involves a combination of skills, merit badges, and—most importantly—personal commitment. *Boy Scout Handbook* outlines the specific requirements for each rank. The requirements for Tenderfoot and Second Class and First Class are designed to help boys get the most out of Scouting. Star, Life, and Eagle focus more on service to others and leadership skills. So, each rank has different requirements. Each Scout can work on advancement requirements with family members, other Scouts, or with adult leaders. He can do so on his own, during Scout meetings, or during other Scout activities. He can also complete any requirement for any rank at any time, but he must still earn the ranks in order. (For example, he could pass a First Class requirement before reaching Tenderfoot, but he'd still have to earn Tenderfoot before reaching Second or First Class.)

**When to start advancing.** A Scout should start working toward Tenderfoot as soon as he joins the troop. Most boys should earn this rank within a few months of joining. Then, Scouts should plan to earn Second and First Class within one year.

**Special requirements for Star, Life, and Eagle.** To earn these three highest ranks, the Scout will need to meet BSA leadership requirements. During his Scouting career, he will need to hold several leadership positions in the troop. He can find a description of the available positions in the *Junior Leader's Handbook*, or a short listing of them in this handbook (*Getting Started: Organization of Troop 20*). As a leader and a high-ranking Scout, he should also attend at least half of the troop meetings, and try to come to every planned troop and district event. Patrol leaders must also organize at least one patrol activity each quarter. Before actually taking a leadership position, he will fill out the *Troop 20 Leadership Agreement* form, which explains his responsibilities in more detail. He will turn in this form along with his *Board of Review* sheet to the Advancement Chairperson before his Board of Review. A copy of the *Leadership Agreement* is on the [Troop 20 web site](#)

**Timetable for advancement.** This timetable is a very general guide to staying on track in rank advancement; *keep in mind that a Scout cannot continue to advance after he turns 18.*

**Tenderfoot:** within a few months of joining.

**Second Class:** within one year of joining.

**First Class:** one year after joining.

**Star:** four months to one year after reaching First Class.

**Life:** six months to one year after reaching Star.

**Eagle:** at least six months after reaching Life. (Most boys take much longer to earn Eagle. A very early age to reach Eagle is 14; a good target age is 15.)

## Steps Toward Advancement

**Start working on requirements.** The requirements for advancement (merit badges, service, and others) can be found on pages 432-443 of the *Boy Scout Handbook*. Each Scout can—and should—start working on the requirements for his next rank as soon as he can.

**Be tested on requirements.** As he finishes each requirement, the Scout will tell his counselor, and his counselor will test him on that particular skill. Then the counselor will verify completion of that particular requirement in the back of the boy's *Boy Scout Handbook*, pages 432-443. An entry will also be made in Troopmaster, which is the software that tracks advancement and participation for the troop.

**Contact the Advancement Chairperson.** After a Scout has met all of the requirements for a rank, he'll show his *Handbook* to the Advancement Chairperson. The chair will check to make sure that the Scout has met all of the requirements, and mark the *Handbook* as ready for the next stage.

**Fill out a *Board of Review* form.** The next step is filling out a *Board of Review* form. The Scout should get this form and the instructions from the [Troop 20 web site](#). He should then return the *Board of Review* form to the Advancement Chairperson. *If he is advancing to Star or Life, he should attach his Leadership Agreement sheet to his Board of Review form.* (Copies of these forms are also available on the web site.)

**Have a Scoutmaster Conference.** Next, the Scout will get in touch with the Scoutmaster for a Scoutmaster Conference. (If necessary, the Scoutmaster may ask an Assistant Scoutmaster to hold the conference in his place.) This meeting takes place at every level of advancements, and it's designed to make sure the Scout is ready for his Board of Review. It also allows the Scoutmaster to review the Scout's personal growth and help the Scout set goals for further advancement. Afterwards, the Scoutmaster will sign the boy's *Handbook*, verifying the conference. *The Scoutmaster Conference must be held after the Scout has finished all of his requirements but before he has his Board of Review.* The meetings are usually held at troop meetings or on campouts.

**Have a Board of Review.** A Board of Review is a meeting between the Scout and several troop adult leaders (parents or registered leaders); it's usually held during a regular troop meeting. During the Board of Review, the adults make sure that the Scout has met all of the rank requirements, talk about the boy's troop experience and goals, and encourage him to continue to advance. The Board of Review should be a learning experience for the Scout and a chance for the adults to see how the Scout is developing. *For a Board of Review, a Scout must wear his uniform and bring his Handbook.*

**Get the new badge of rank.** Shortly after a successful Board of Review, the Scout will receive his new badge of rank and a wallet-sized certificate card at the next Court of Honor. Eagle Awards are presented at special Eagle Courts of Honor.

**Record-keeping.** Each Scout should keep his rank certificate cards and his signed *Boy Scout Handbook* in a very safe place until he is 18 years old or earns his Eagle Award, whichever is earlier. In case of a discrepancy or missing record, these certificates are proof of each rank earned.

## Steps Toward Earning Merit Badges

See pages 28-29 in the Requirements book.

### Through troop or camp classes.

**Attend the badge sessions.** When a Scout is working toward a badge either in his patrol or during camp, he should attend a majority of the sessions (usually four out of six).

**Meet the requirements.** Even if he misses a session, a Scout must complete all of the requirements for each badge; these are outlined in *Boy Scout Requirements*. If he has any questions or problems, he can contact his Merit Badge Counselor, the adult leader who is supervising the badge sessions. *When a Scout receives partial credit for a merit badge through summer or troop classes, he must finish work on the badge in a timely manner.*

**Receive his merit badge.** After finishing the badge requirements, each Scout will receive his new merit badge at the next Court of Honor, where the Scoutmaster will also award him a wallet-sized certificate card.

### On his own.

**Choose a merit badge.** Although the Scouts work on merit badges during meetings, we encourage each Scout to choose merit badges that interest *him* and to work toward those on his own. *Boy Scout Requirements* describes the various badges, and BSA publishes a pamphlet about each individual badge, which you can find in the troop library, in the Scout Shop, or through the *Boy Scout Catalog*.

**Get a blue Merit Badge Card.** These blue cards are available from the troop web site or the Scout Shop. A Scout will need to get a new Merit Badge Card for each merit badge he starts on outside of class or summer camp; he'll use these blue cards to record work toward each merit badge. He'll also fill in his name, address, and the name of the badge he's working toward. Then he'll ask an Assistant Scoutmaster to sign the card for him, authorizing the beginning of the work toward that merit badge.

**Contact a counselor.** When the Assistant Scoutmaster signs the Scout's blue card, he will recommend a counselor. This counselor is a registered adult leader who will help the Scout meet all of the requirements for that particular badge, and the Scout will have different counselors for the different merit badges that he's working toward. Next, the Scout will meet with his counselor, who will explain the merit badge requirements and help him get started.

**Work on the merit badge.** With his counselor's help, the Scout will start working on the merit badge requirements. *During this process, the Scout—not his counselor—keeps up with these requirements and with his blue card.* After he meets all of the requirements, the boy will have his counselor sign the blue card and keep the counselor's section of it.

**Give the blue card to the Advancement Chairperson.** After finishing the merit badge requirements and getting his card signed by his counselor, the Scout will turn in his blue card to the Advancement Chairperson. The chair will keep the troop section of the blue card for the troop records.

**Put the blue card in a safe place.** When his merit badge is finished, the boy will still have the Scout section of the blue card. *He should keep his section of the blue card in the same place as the merit badge certificate that he is awarded at the Court of Honor.* Baseball card protectors that fit a 3-ring binder are just the right size for holding these, protecting them and keeping them all together.

**Receive the merit badge.** The Scout will get his new merit badge and will receive a wallet-sized certificate card at the next Court of Honor.

**Late badges.** Sometimes a Scout earns a badge but cannot meet with his counselor to have the counselor sign off on the badge before a Court of Honor. Also, a merit badge counselor sometimes forgets to give all of the appropriate information about an earned badge to the Advancement Chairperson in time for the next Court of Honor. When either of these things happens, the Scout will get his badge at a later troop meeting or will be recognized at the next Court of Honor.

## Eagle Award

Eagle is the highest rank in Boy Scouts, and reaching this rank is a tremendous honor. After a Scout reaches Life, he should download a *Life to Eagle* packet and will be counseled on how to complete the Eagle requirements.

Troop 20 has a Life coach who is available to guide Scouts after they achieve the Life rank. There is also an Eagle coach who will work with Scouts who are actively pursuing the requirements for Eagle. The contact information for these adults may be found on the Troop 20 web site.

Eagle requirements may be found on pages 440-441 of the *BSH*. There are several documents related to Eagle on Troop 20 web site also. Also see pages 20-27 in the *Requirements* book.

**Leadership.** All Eagle Scouts must have fulfilled BSA's leadership requirements, which are explained in the *Rank Advancement* section of this chapter. They also sign the *Troop 20 Leadership Agreement* form, found at Troop 20 web site.

**Eagle Scout project.** Each Eagle candidate finishes an Eagle Scout Project that helps him fill his service requirement. An adult leader will meet with the candidate to talk about ideas and suggestions for the project, but the project is ultimately the Scout's responsibility. It also must conform to the special guidelines that have been outlined by BSA, which the *Life to Eagle* packet explains. The candidate must have his project approved by the Scoutmaster, Advancement Chairperson, and a representative from the Toqua District Advancement Committee before he begins it.

## Beyond Eagle

**Besides Eagle,** there is a vast world of Scouting waiting to be enjoyed.

See <http://troop20knoxville.scoutlander.com/publicsite/unitcustom.aspx?UID=23394&CUSTOMID=63105>

**Religious Emblems.** A Scout is reverent. Each faith has its own requirements for the Religious Emblem, which can also be worn as an adult leader. Check the *Requirement* book or [www.praypub.org](http://www.praypub.org).

## **Volunteering Your Time**

**Administrative Positions.** These administrative offices generally require a yearlong commitment to the troop. Many of them also call for weekly or monthly activity on the part of the volunteer.

### **Troop Committee Chairperson.**

Calls and presides over regular meetings of the Troop Committee. Recruits adults for the following positions and coordinates their efforts.

### **Troop Committee Co-Chairperson.**

Presides over committee meetings in the absence of the chairman.

### **Secretary.**

Takes minutes of Troop Committee meetings.

Keeps the committee's historical records.

Compiles and types information for the troop newsletters.

### **Treasurer.**

Collects and keeps records of dues paid.

Records the amount of money raised and paid out by the troop.

Takes care of the troop accident insurance.

Prepares a brief treasurer's report for Troop Committee meetings.

Prepares the annual financial statement, including a balance sheet & a total annual income & expense statement.

Assists with the annual rechartering process.

### **Medical Forms coordinator**

Maintains health records on all registered members. Notifies members whose records need updating. Ensures that tour leaders get copies of health records

### **Registration Chairperson.**

Maintains a re-registration list of all boys with their proper information.

Collects money for re-registration and for adult registration.

Collects money for *Boy's Life*.

With the Scoutmaster, makes sure that our charter is up-to-date.

### **Youth Advisers.**

Mentor Scouts in leadership positions, such as: Scribe, Patrol Leader, Librarian, Den Chief, Historian, and Quartermaster.

### **Eagle Plaque Chairperson.**

Makes a framed plaque for each Eagle Scout.

Collects all appropriate badges each Eagle's award.

### **Venture Scouts Assistant Scoutmaster.**

Works with older Scouts, ages 13 and up.

Helps develop a program of high adventure.

Promotes activities to keep older Scouts interested in Scouting.

### **First-Year Scouts Assistant Scoutmaster.**

Works with new Scouts during their first year.

Helps each new Scout reach the rank of First Class.

Makes sure all new Scouts have the necessary records.

Trains and advises Den chiefs

### **Equipment Volunteer.**

Keeps all troop gear in working order.

Recommends new equipment.

Advises the Quartermaster

## **Activities Positions**

Activities volunteers usually work with the troop on very specific activities. These positions don't require as great of a time commitment as the administrative positions do, but they're still extremely important to the troop! Of course, the amount of time for each position will vary based upon that chairperson's responsibilities, but most of these positions call for seasonal or yearly activity.

### **Outdoor/activities Coordinator**

Helps Scouts select outing locations and activities.  
Signs up drivers and Scouts.  
Requests tour permits.  
Participates in as many outings as possible.  
Prepares for outings.

### **Summer Camp Volunteer.**

Promotes summer camp attendance.  
Collects payments from Scouts for summer camp.  
Makes sure that each Scout turns in a correct, complete medical form.  
Makes sure that the troop meets the Scout Office deadlines for camp.  
Helps Scouts determine what classes they need to take at summer camp.  
Helps Scouts sign up for summer camp classes.

### **Order of the Arrow Volunteer.**

Advises the youth OA Rep.  
Provides transportation to OA events.  
Promotes Order of the Arrow.  
Organizes Order of the Arrow elections.

### **Scouting for Food Volunteer.**

Reserves dates at supermarkets.  
Organizes Scouts and parents to work shifts at the entrance to supermarkets.  
Coordinates with the district, including reporting progress.  
Makes sure that participating Scouts receive service hour credits.

### **Popcorn coordinator**

Promotes the program within the troop and coordinates with the district.

## **Advancement Positions**

Advancement volunteers work very closely with the Scouts to help the Scouts advance. Their responsibilities are on going and last throughout the year. To learn more about advancement, see *Advancing*.

### **Court of Honor Volunteer.**

Helps Scoutmaster get ready for Courts of Honor.

Helps collect the awards that will be presented during Courts of Honor.

Advises youth who plan and conduct the Court of Honor.

### **Training Coordinator.**

Determines which required merit badges should be taught.

Recruits counselors (teachers) for troop merit badge classes.

Coordinates registration for three merit badge colleges.

### **Advancement Coordinator.**

Prepares and submits Advancement Reports to the Scout office.

Keeps track of each boy's merit badges, ranks, and the dates they're earned.

### **Eagle Advancement Coordinator.**

Helps and advises boys who are trying to earn the Eagle award.

Reviews all Eagle award paperwork regularly, and guides the boys in filling it out.

### **Life Coach.**

Counsels new Life Scouts and introduces them to the resources available on the path to Eagle.

### **Leadership Chair.**

Approves and tracks leadership forms.

Helps recruit advisers for youth leaders.

Follows up with advisers to ensure that they know their responsibilities and are counseling youth on an ongoing basis.

## **Being Safe**

### **Safety Measures in BSA and Troop 20**

Safety is one of biggest concerns both of BSA and of Troop 20, and the Troop makes a special effort to teach each Scout the steps to safety.

**A Guide to Safe Scouting** covers just about every type of activity. It is linked from the Troop 20 web site. A copy is required to be taken on all outings.

#### **Adult Supervision**

BSA knows that adult supervision is necessary in keeping our Scouts safe; therefore, for any Boy Scout activity, there must be at least two adults present at all times.

**Youth Protection Training** is required every two years for all registered adults. It can be taken on line.

#### **Firem'n Chit**

A Firem'n Chit is a card given to Scouts who finish the BSA fire safety program. The requirements are in the *Boy Scout Requirements* book. A Scout must earn his Firem'n Chit *and have it with him* before he can start or attend any fire on any Troop 20 outing.

#### **Totin' Chip**

Before any Scout is allowed to carry outdoor tools (knives, axes, or saws) on any Boy Scout outing, he must prove that he knows how to use them safely and responsibly by earning his Totin' Chip. The requirements are in the *Boy Scout Requirements* book. When any Scout wants to carry an outdoor tool on any Troop 20 outing, he *must* have his Totin' Chip with him.