





Transitioning to Scouts BSA: A Family's Guide

Comparing Cub Scouts & Scouts BSA

Cub Scouts and Scouts BSA share many common features—perhaps greatest among them is their **Scout Oath** and **Scout Law**. These fundamentals are solidly reflected in both groups; although, there are several differences as well. The chart below highlights some of the similarities & differences. The transition from parent or other adult-led den to a scout-led troop is a natural one as the scouts begin to mature and gain independence. Awareness of some of the similarities and differences can help to make the transition a bit easier.

	
<p>Two-deep leadership. All registered leaders are required to complete Youth Protection training.</p> <p>Den leader records advancements and passes information on to Advancement Chair.</p> <p>Scouts typically once a month as a pack to celebrate achievements and advancements.</p> <p>Cubs earn belt loops for various sports/academic achievements. These are often not required for advancement until Webelos rank. Belt loops may be worn on a Cub Scout belt at any time.</p> <p>Cub Scouts do not hold positions of leadership until they become Webelos. Leadership positions are not required for advancement.</p> <p>Service hours are not required for advancement, but encouraged.</p>	<p>Two-deep leadership. All registered leaders are required to complete Youth Protection training.</p> <p>Scouts are responsible for keeping track of their advancements toward rank by noting in their <i>Scout Handbook</i> the dates earned and having an adult leader initial their completion.</p> <p>Scouts typically weekly as patrols and advancements are celebrated a few times a year at Courts of Honor.</p> <p>Scouts earn merit badges that require multiple steps. Must work with a Merit Badge Counselor to demonstrate and explain their understanding of the merit badge achievement. Requires “blue cards” that are signed by counselor, scout, and troop leader. To earn Eagle, a Scout must earn a total of 21 merit badges (13 of which are specifically required for Eagle). Merit badges are worn only on a merit badge sash during formal ceremonies or events.</p> <p>Scouts may hold leadership positions (in both patrol and troop levels) that are achieved by patrol or troop-level vote.</p> <p>Scouts must complete service hours to advance to the next rank. Scouts are responsible for recording their hours in their handbooks and should be prepared to discuss during a Scoutmaster conference.</p>

<p>Cub Scouts camp with their parents/guardians.</p> <p>Fundraising helps scouts to contribute to the success of the pack. Traditionally, packs participate in popcorn sales in the fall, and Scout Coupon Book sales in the spring. Money earned is applied to the pack as a whole rather than individual scout.</p> <p>Cub Scouts typically wear their full field uniform (Class "A") during pack meetings and when representing their pack at various outings and camp. The activity uniform (Class "B") is typically worn for den meetings and other campouts.</p> <p>Cub Scouts may camp with the pack/families only a few times a year.</p> <p>Cub Scouts typically earn a rank together as a den.</p> <p>Cub Scouts are not required to demonstrate the EDGE method for advancement.</p> <p>Cub Scouts must be able to demonstrate to their leader they understand their requirements and are ready to advance.</p> <p>There are seven levels of advancement in Cub Scouts: <i>Lion, Bobcat, Tiger, Wolf, Bear, Webelos, and Arrow of Light</i></p> <p>Cub Scouts may not always carry their handbook with them at all times.</p>	<p>Scouts camp and cook together as a patrol/troop. Adults camp separately.</p> <p>Fundraising helps scouts to earn their way in scouting. Traditionally troops participate in popcorn sales in the fall and Scout Coupon Book sales in the spring. Many troops have individual scout accounts in which money earned is applied directly to scout's account.</p> <p>Scouts typically wear their full field uniform (Class "A") most of the time, and at all patrol meetings and other Troop functions (save for winter and summer camping), when they may have a more relaxed activity uniform with troop information.</p> <p>Scouts typically camp once a month, with longer week-long camp opportunities during the summer and winter.</p> <p>Scouts may earn rank at any time in which they complete their requirements, and may not complete together as a patrol.</p> <p>Scouts are required to demonstrate the EDGE Method for advancement.</p> <p>Scouts must complete a Scoutmaster Conference and Board of Review as final approval before each rank advancement beyond <i>Scout</i>.</p> <p>There are seven ranks in Scouts: <i>Scout, Tenderfoot, 2nd Class, 1st Class, Star, Life, and Eagle.</i></p> <p>Scouts are required to carry their handbook with them at all times and record their various advancements, merit badges, and service hours.</p>
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Get to Know the Scout Lingo!

Scouts BSA, like Cub Scouts, enjoy a variety of shared experiences that includes outdoor adventures, games, cooking, hiking, and other bonding events. There are some slight differences in the words and phrases used in Scouts BSA of which you might not yet be familiar. The following lists just a few of the new terms or phrases you might overhear while at a patrol meeting or on a campout with Scouts. Each troop may have its own unique phrases as well. The *Boy Scout Handbook* is the ultimate resource for explaining the various, unique Boy Scout terminology. You might also check out the following *Glossary of Scouting Terms* found online: <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/Glossary.pdf>

Board of Review – For a scout to achieve rank advancements beyond “Scout,” he or she is required to participate in a Board of Review. The Board is comprised of adults who are not troop leaders. The purpose of a review is not to “grill” or “test” the scouts on their experiences; rather, it is an opportunity for the scout to reflect on his or her experiences thus far, ask questions, and look ahead to the next adventures.

Scout-Led – Unlike Cub Scouting, which relies more on adult leaders who guide the program and plan the adventures, many troops adopt a Scout-led approach in which the Scouts themselves are in charge of planning, organizing, and leading their meetings and activities. There may be adult mentors in the troop whose purpose is to offer guidance and support.

Campfire – A program that may occur with or without fire, often at a campout, in which scouts share skits, songs, stories, games, celebrate advancements, reflect on the day’s events, and just celebrate the fun of being a scout. There may be a designated scout campfire leader or emcee who develops the campfire program.

Court of Honor – A troop-wide celebration that is often held several times during a scouting year in which advancements are awarded, special recognitions given, and announcements made. A scout will serve as the emcee for the event, with the various patrols serving in some role to assist the program.

Cracker Barrel- A time during an outing (commonly a campout) designated for scouts to enjoy light refreshments, for leaders to make announcements, hand out or discuss the itinerary for the event, and/or answer questions about the schedule

EDGE Method – Required for rank advancement, the EDGE Method is a four-step method for teaching a skill. The acronym EDGE stands for **Explain, Demonstrate, Guide, and Enable**. This method is used by both scouts and adult leaders of the troop.

Order of the Arrow (OA) –The National Honor Society of the BSA that promotes Scouting ideals, including selfless leadership and service to others. Its members are voted by members of the troop.

Patrol – Consists of a smaller group of Scouts who may be grouped according to rank, age, grade level, or any combination thereof. Typically each patrol elects its own leadership positions and selects an individual name.

Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) – The PLC consists of the troop and patrol leadership. The PLC typically meets once a month, and is led by the Senior Patrol Leader. Troop decisions, patrol updates, and other leadership matters are typically discussed during these council meetings.

Patrol Meetings – Most often held once a week during the year, meetings often begin with a brief introduction at the troop level. Each patrol will then meet to plan activities and complete rank advancements. A Scoutmaster's Minute may occur at the beginning or end of the meeting.

Scout Motto – The Scout Motto is "Be Prepared."

Scout Ranks – Ranks achieved in Boy Scouts (in order) are: Scout; Tenderfoot; Second Class; First Class; Star; Life; and Eagle.

Senior Patrol Leader – The top leader of the troop who is responsible for the troop's overall operation. The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) is guided by the Scoutmaster, and is in charge of troop meetings, patrol leaders' council, and any other troop activity. He or she does everything they can to help each patrol be successful. As with all leadership positions in Boy Scouts, the SPL is elected by the troop. Leadership terms are usually for 6 or 12-month terms, depending on the troop.

Troop – Consists of any number of Scouts (usually aged 10-18) that is run by the Scouts themselves under adult mentorship. The troop is made up of patrols.

Troop Visits

Visiting troop meetings and camping with troops is an excellent way for you and your scout to get to know more about what to expect in Scouts BSA. By seeing a troop meeting in action, taking part in a troop activity, and (even better) camping with a troop, you and your scout will soon know which troop fits the best. Scouts are encouraged to visit troops (and consider joining) as a den, as much of a Scout's success toward Eagle rank is due in large part to the support and friendship with scouts in which he or she is already familiar and with whom they share common experiences.

Following are some areas of topics/questions that you can consider when meeting with each troop.

- How many scouts are in your troop?
- What are your typical scheduled activities each year?
- Are family members allowed to attend troop campouts?
- What type of structural support is provided to help new scouts progress through scouting? For example, is there a special program in place for helping a new scout to achieve First Class rank?
- How are the patrols organized?
- What kind of mentorship is available to scouts?
- Describe leadership in your troop.
- What are the expectations of parental involvement in the troop?
- What volunteer opportunities are available to parents?
- What are the required dues each year?
- What type of fundraising do you participate in?
- What gear/equipment is provided by the troop?
- What service opportunities do you offer?
- What campouts do you attend each year? How often do you camp? Hike?
- What can a scout expect at a typical patrol meeting?



What Every New Scout (and Parent/Mentor) Should Know

- Scouting is about leadership. Let them lead. Don't do for them what they could/should be doing for themselves.
- Keep track of and save everything (including blue cards, rank cards, old rank patches, activity patches) in a 3-ring binder with plastic baseball card holder pages. You will want these items at their Eagle Court of Honor.
- Hang the neckerchief on the same hanger that you hang the scout shirt on.
- Keep a 3-foot length of rope in the side pocket of scout pants/shorts. Make this part of the uniform. A scout should always have a length of rope to practice knots.
- Having friends in the troop is critical to help a scout get anchored; however, switching troops is a possibility and easy to do if the initial choice does not work out.
- Summer camp is a must for so many reasons. Scouts can really bond with their fellow scouts, learn to become more independent, care for themselves and others, participate in an activity they might not otherwise get to try, earn merit badges, learn about the patrol method, and most important—have fun! Scout founder Lord Baden-Powell said, "A week of camp life is worth six months of theoretical teaching in the meeting room."
- A scout does not have to join a troop that is chartered by the same organization that charters the Cub Scout pack.
- If a scout is active, he or she will advance quickly. Attend the troop meetings, campouts, hikes, and other troop activities.
- Help fellow scouts with their Eagle projects. Any scout at any stage can assist with some job. They will learn what it is like to lead and participate in a project with a real result.
- Do not worry too much about the merit badges in the first year-18 months of joining a troop; instead, focus on the fundamentals of achieving First-Class rank.
- Seek out opportunities to learn about different careers.
- Try for a leadership position that really challenges your abilities. It's not a permanent position, but you may find a confidence in doing something you didn't think you could achieve.
- Always take photos regularly of your achievement pages in your handbook. You never know if it might go missing.
- Participate in fundraisers. Scouts learn so much by promoting scouting principles in their community.
- When an opportunity arises to represent the troop, take it! For example, help to lead a Flag Ceremony at a Veteran's Day event.
- Attend an Eagle Court of Honor within your first year. It is very moving to celebrate a scout's journey to this highest achievement.
- Invite friends to a scout meeting. This might change their lives forever.

How Parents and Mentors Can Stay Active and Involved in a Troop

For many years, adults took on a much more active role in ensuring their Cub Scouts were advancing and becoming more independent. As youth transition to Scouts BSA, they still rely on parents, guardians, and adult mentors to guide them toward being the leader they wish to be and experiencing the joys of scouting; however, the patrol method works to truly help the scouts learn to lead one another.

One Troopmaster says, "Every parent should ask what they can do to help the troop. Even small things make a big difference. It takes a community to make a troop go." Parents and mentors are strongly encouraged to remain active in the troop, and seek out opportunities to assist. Below are just a few ways that parents and mentors can help remain active and involved in a troop.

- Join the troop's committee. A troop committee works much like a pack committee with a Committee Chair, Chartered Organization Representative, Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, Treasurer, Secretary, Outdoor/Activities Coordinator, Advancement Coordinator and other interested adults with troop committee-specific roles
- Serve on Boards of Review for scout advancement
- Assist with the Friends of Scouting (FOS) campaign
- Serve as a Fundraising Coordinator or assist with fundraisers in some way
- Mentor a patrol
- Apply to be a Merit Badge Counselor or Coordinator
- Serve as Outdoor/Activities Coordinator
- Serve as Advancement Coordinator
- Assist with a religious emblem achievements
- Offer training for various activities (water safety, canoeing, camping, hiking, shooting, etc.)
- Serve as Equipment Coordinator to supervise and help the troop procure camping equipment
- Serve as a Membership Coordinator who is responsible for planning year-round membership recruitment and retention for the troop
- Offer to lead hikes or coordinate a day trip
- Seek out possible area events of interest to scouts and share with troop
- Camp with the troop and assist adults with cooking
- Help to drive scouts to and from campouts
- Coordinate, lead, and/or offer guidance for various STEM-based programs

Tall Timbers District ACORN ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



The Acorn Achievement Award recognizes those Webelos Scouts who have gone above and beyond the Arrow of Light requirements and have a strong start on their Boy Scout adventure. The pack and troop must work together to ensure that all Webelos transitioning into a troop have the opportunity to enjoy the complete Scouting adventure and earn this award.

This progress form should be presented to the Webelos Scout when he earns the Webelos badge. The Den Leader verifies the completion of the Webelos Requirements and the troop leadership signs and dates the completion of the Boy Scout requirements.

Scout's Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State/Zip _____
Pack # _____ / Troop # _____

WEBELOS REQUIREMENTS

Webelos leader signs & dates upon completion.

1. Earn the Arrow of Light award plus two additional elective adventures. _____
2. Attend one Boy Scout outing or a Troop Court of Honor. _____
3. Complete three hours of community service with a troop. _____
4. Join a Boy Scout Troop of your choice. _____

BOY SCOUT REQUIREMENTS

SM/ASM signs & dates upon completion.

1. Be active in your troop and patrol for six months. _____
2. Within six months from time of registration, attend at least 3 troop outings. _____
3. Within six months from the time of registration, earn the Tenderfoot rank. _____

Webelos Scout Leader / Date

Boy Scout Leader / Date

UPON COMPLETION: Mail or email the completed form to Tall Timbers' Webelos to Scout Transition Committee Representative (Lori Hughes, 159 Sandpebble Drive, The Woodlands, TX 77381 or lori.r.hughes@gmail.com).

Patches & Certificate will be provided to Troop Scoutmaster for presentation.

Please note: The Tall Timbers District Acorn Achievement Award patch is only available through Tall Timbers District Program or Advancement Chairs and is not available at the Scout Shop.

