

# Transitioning from the Cub Scout program to Scouts BSA

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## Scouts BSA basic knowledge

Scout Handshake: this is a regular handshake but done with the left hand instead of the right.

Scout Law: does not change from the Cub Scout level to the Scouts BSA level.

A Scout is:

TRUSTWORTHY, LOYAL, HELPFUL, FRIENDLY, COURTEOUS, KIND, OBEDIENT, CHEERFUL, THRIFTY, BRAVE, CLEAN, REVERENT.

Scout Oath: does not change from the Cub Scout level to the Scouts BSA level

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 Salute: form the Scout sign with your right hand using your middle three fingers, then finish the salute by bringing that hand up, palm down, until your forefinger touches the brim of your hat or the tip of your right eyebrow. The Scout salute is a form of greeting that also shows respect. Use it to salute the flag of the United States of America. You may also salute other Scouts and Scout leaders.

Scout Sign: changes from holding your right arm straight up with your index and middle fingers separated at the Pack level, to raising your right arm to shoulder height with your elbow bent at a right angle, with your pinky nail being covered by your thumb and your three middle fingers of your hand are held together and are facing outward at the Troop level.

## Outdoor program

Outdoor activities: is a central part of most Troop's activities, including camping and hiking. Camping in Scouts BSA units is planned and executed by the Scouts in the unit, and often provides opportunities to complete advancement requirements.

Summer camp: is a full week, with much less adult participation compared to Cub Scout summer camp. Scouts select which Merit Badges they want to work on from a list of offerings at camp. The Scouts can also participate in other outdoor program opportunities. They are expected to build and follow their own schedule, as well as complete merit badge requirements without adult intervention.

Trail to Eagle: program to help newer Scouts learn and reinforce the necessary knowledge and skills to complete advancement requirements for the ranks of Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class.

Safety procedures: consult the Guide to Safe Scouting for the most recent safety policies and procedures (<https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/>)

## Unit structure

Troop: Each Scouts BSA unit is organized as a Troop. Currently, Troops can either be composed of all male Scouts or all female Scouts. However, there are a select number of Troops that are piloting combined gender troops, just like Family Cub Scout Packs.

Patrols: Within a troop, Scouts are organized into patrols. Typically, a Scout patrol is a small team of normally six to eight members where Scouts learn skills together, share responsibilities and take on leadership roles. The number and size of patrols, and how they are organized, will depend on the number of Scouts in the troop and unit practice.

Meetings: date, time and location are specific to each Troop.

## Unit leadership/roles

Scout led: In the troop, Scouts plan, organize, and lead the Troop's meetings and activities. The adult leaders coach and mentor the Scouts. There are monthly planning meetings called Patrol Leader Council (PLC) meetings, where the Troop's Scouts plan the meetings, events, and activities for the Troop.

Scouts hold all the leadership positions in the troop. Troop level positions: Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL), Quartermaster, and other positions. Patrol level positions: Patrol Leader (PL) and Assistant Patrol Leader (APL).

The Patrol method: The Patrol is the foundational unit in the Scouts BSA program. The Patrol method is one of the means used to achieve the mission and aims of Scouting. The patrol method helps Scouts develop leadership skills, learn to work together, and take responsibility.

Adult leadership/roles:

Parent/guardians: should mentor and encourage their Scout at home, and allow their Scout the space to advance on their own, by trying to do the work themselves and then demonstrate what they have learned. This may mean that they fail at first, but they will figure it out and will succeed with guidance.

Adult leadership roles in the Troop: Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, Committee chair, Committee member, Secretary, and Treasurer

## Uniform

Numbers: change from the Pack's red/white numbers to the Troop's tan/green numbers.

Shoulder loops: change color from blue in the Cub Scout program to green in the Scouts BSA program.

Neckerchiefs and neckerchief slides: are no longer based on the Scout's rank. Troops select their own neckerchiefs and slides. Some Troops present the neckerchief and slides to their new Scouts at specific times.

Patches, awards and insignia: all Cub Scout patches and awards are removed from the uniform except for the Council Service patch, World Crest and Ring, and Arrow of Light patch. Depending on the Troop, the AOL patrol emblem may also stay.

Belts: changes from the blue Pack belt to the green Scouts BSA belt. The Scouts BSA belt is not used to display advancements.

Hats: In Scouts BSA, hats are no longer specific to rank. Like neckerchiefs, some Troops will have custom hats, while others will choose to use stock BSA hats, or not use hats at all.

Sash: earned Merit Badges are sewn to a green Scouts BSA sash.

Uniform Website: (<https://www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/resources/scouts-bsa-uniform/>)

## Advancement

Scouts plan their own advancement and progress at their own pace as they meet each challenge. The unit's program provides opportunities for advancement. Scouts in the troop and adult leaders assist Scouts in learning. Personal growth is the primary goal through experiential learning.

Rank requirements: not based on grade/age level. Scouts work on and complete rank requirements at their own pace and comfort level. Troop meetings often provide the opportunity to learn, practice, and then demonstrate requirements for rank advancement.

Conferences and Board of Review: For each rank in Scouts BSA, the final requirements are for a Scout to participate in an individual Scoutmaster conference and a board of review. The purpose of the board of review is to determine the quality of the Scout's experience and decide whether the requirements for the rank have been fulfilled. It is also an opportunity to encourage the Scout's involvement in the program and to continue the quest for the next rank. The board is composed of members of the troop committee.

Merit Badges: Scouts learn life skills and about sports, crafts, science, trades, business, and future careers as they earn merit badges. Many merit badges will introduce Scouts to possible hobbies and vocations. The ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle require the Scout to earn a minimum number of merit badges. Some merit badges are required to earn the rank of Eagle.

Merit badge requirements: It is the Scout's responsibility to learn and do what is required to earn the merit badge.

Merit badge counselor role: An adult leader, approved by the council for specific merit badges, will work with the Scout to help them learn what is required and verify that the Scout meets the Merit Badge requirements.

Blue card: used to document completion of merit badge requirements. More information can be found here: [https://scoutingmagazine.org/2021/06/scouting-faq-merit-badge-blue-cards/#google\\_vignette](https://scoutingmagazine.org/2021/06/scouting-faq-merit-badge-blue-cards/#google_vignette)