

## Scout Advancement

- **RANKS**—There are seven ‘ranks’, from ‘Scout’ to ‘Eagle’. [The ‘Scout’ rank replaced the non-rank ‘Scout Badge’ in 2016.]
- **INITIATIVE**—The troop will strongly help new Scouts with their early advancement, expecting them to show increasing initiative and independence as they advance.
- **WHO SIGNS?**—Most requirements are signed off by other Scouts (First Class rank & higher, especially troop guides and patrol leaders), by uniformed adult leaders, or by approved adult merit badge counselors (usually *not* the Scout’s parents).

- **SCOUT RANK**—New Scouts should earn the **Scout** rank during their first month.

➔ **Requirement 6**—Scouting America has dropped **Cyber Chip** in favor of **Personal Safety Awareness** training, which involves videos from the Scouting America website (*parent should be involved*):  
<https://www.scouting.org/training/youth-protection/scouts-bsa/>

- **TENDERFOOT**—New Scouts should earn **Tenderfoot** soon after their first campout. **NOTE the 30-day fitness requirement, which new Scouts should be sure to start at their first meeting!**

### Key Requirements for Each Rank (Note that this is NOT a complete list of all requirements for each rank)

	Scout 	Tenderfoot 	Second Class 	First Class 	Star 	Life 	Eagle 
 <b>Requirements that may take the most time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• memorize <i>Oath, Law, Motto, Slogan, Outdoor Code</i></li> <li>• <i>Personal Safety Awareness</i> videos for Scout rank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>30-day fitness</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cooking</li> <li>• <u>4-week fitness</u></li> <li>• map &amp; compass</li> <li>• swimming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cooking</li> <li>• <u>4-week fitness</u></li> <li>• orienteering</li> <li>• swimming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eagle-required merit badges</li> <li>• <i>Personal Safety Awareness</i> videos for Star rank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eagle-required merit badges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eagle-required merit badges</li> <li>• Eagle Scout service project</li> </ul>
<b>Total Activities since joining *</b> (not counting regular troop & patrol meetings)	— —	1 overnight in a tent	5 total activities, including 3 outdoor activities, at least 2 of which must be overnights in a tent	10 total activities, including 6 outdoor activities, at least 3 of which must be overnights in a tent	active	active	active
<b>Fitness</b>	— —	<u>30 days</u>	<u>4 weeks</u>	<u>4 weeks</u>	active	active	active
<b>Service</b>	— —	1 hour	2 hours since Tenderfoot	3 hours since Second Class	6 hours since First Class	6 hours since Star (min. 3 hours conservation-related)	plan & lead a major project
<b>Leadership</b>	— —	teach square knot using EDGE	— —	invite non-Scout to join	4 months (not APL)	6 months (not APL)	6 months (not APL or bugler)
<b>Merit Badges</b>	— —	— —	— —	— —	4 Eagle +2 additional (6 total)	total of 7 Eagle +4 additional (11 total)	total of 14 Eagle +7 additional (21 total)
<b>Scout Handbook pages (14<sup>th</sup> Edition)</b>	441	442–443	444–446	447–449	450	451	452–453

\* (1) Note that for Second Class & First Class, you can count ALL activities, ALL outdoor activities, and ALL overnights since joining a Scout troop.

3/2025

(2) Overnights require sleeping in a tent or other shelter you helped set up. Other outdoor activities can include day outings, outdoor service projects, etc. Non-outdoor activities can include a swim night, court of honor, merit badge session, or any other Scouting activity except regular troop or patrol meetings.

## Scout Advancement Summary (& important hints on back)

### Advancement Guidelines

**Purpose**—The advancement system (one of Scouting's eight "methods") teaches Scouts the necessary basic skills, promotes service to others, and helps develop leadership and initiative.

**Who Signs off the Requirements**—Scouts learn leadership (another of the eight methods) in part by teaching skills to other Scouts. Basic skills are taught by other Scouts and the troop's uniformed adult leaders \*. Merit badges are taught by adult counselors, drawn mostly from our troop parents. It's good for a Scout to learn to approach others for help with advancement.

[\* We refer to the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters as our 'uniformed adult leaders', although other registered adults can also wear a uniform.]

### The Parts of Each Rank

**Basic Skills**—The first four ranks (Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class) are composed mostly of basic Scouting skills and experience. These skills focus primarily on outdoor requirements, and they help develop initiative, independence, and leadership.

**Merit Badges**—Scouting America's more than 130 merit badges focus on a wide range of interests, some of which may lead to lifelong hobbies or vocations. Scouts may earn merit badges any time they want, although no merit badges are required for the first four ranks. We sometimes offer merit badge classes (Swimming, for example), but Scouts can (and should) find a buddy and earn badges themselves by checking with our Scoutmaster to find out who the counselor is. If Scouts meet with a counselor outside of a troop meeting, remember that they should have a buddy or parent with them (no private one-on-one meetings between an adult and a Scout per National policy). For Star, Life, and Eagle, Scouts must earn a certain number of Eagle-required merit badges plus their choice of additional merit badges.

**Leadership**—Younger Scouts will begin to practice leadership in the course of their Scouting activities. For the higher ranks (Star, Life, Eagle), Scouts are required to hold one or more 'positions of responsibility' for a certain period of time. These positions are listed with the rank requirements. Note that Assistant Patrol Leader cannot be used for Star/Life/Eagle advancement, and bugler cannot be used for Eagle.

**Service**—Service to others is a valuable trait, and all ranks after Scout require a certain number of hours of service to others. Scouts can (and should) do service on their own (buddy system, of course), and both the troop and our Eagle Scout candidates organize some group projects. Eagle Scout candidates are required to plan and lead a significant service project for the community.

**Scoutmaster Conference**—For every rank, Scouts ask one of the uniformed adult leaders to discuss with them their progress and plans for advancement and for Scouting. Although it's called a 'Scoutmaster Conference', the Scout may ask any Assistant Scoutmaster to do the conference.

**Board of Review**—For every rank except Scout and Eagle, Scouts ask the troop advancement coordinator (ask the Scoutmaster if you're not sure who that is) to set up a board of review after they have completed all other requirements for the rank. The board consists of about three committee members or parents (but not the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, or the Scout's parent), who will review their performance, help them with any weak areas, and encourage them to continue their success. This is a good experience for Scouts to learn to relate to adults.

Note that the Scout rank doesn't have a board of review (the badge is earned when the Scoutmaster Conference is completed). The Eagle Scout board of review is conducted by the Adventure West Council's Eagle advancement coordinator for our district.

### Aims and Methods

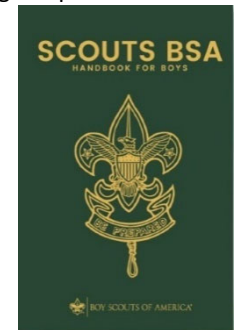
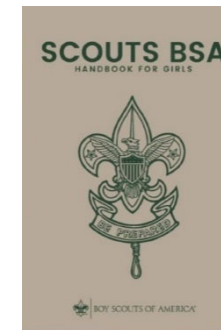
#### Aims of Scouting

- Character
- Citizenship
- Personal Fitness
- Leadership

#### Methods of Scouting

The Troop Leader Guidebook compares the eight methods to an eight-cylinder engine: "When all eight pistons are firing, the car moves powerfully yet smoothly toward its destination. When a few pistons get fouled, the car lurches haltingly along. When only one or two pistons are firing, you might as well get out and walk." It is the combination of all eight methods that makes Scouting unique.

- Adult Association
- Advancement
- Ideals
- Leadership Development
- Outdoors
- Patrol Method
- Personal Growth
- Uniform



Based on information in the *Scout Handbook* and *Troop Leader Guidebook*

© 2017–2025, Troop 97 BSA

Rank badges & Handbook covers are © Scouting America