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# TROOP 66



BIG HATCHIE DISTRICT  
WEST TENNESSEE AREA COUNCIL  
MUNFORD, TENNESSEE

Troop Guidebook 2007 Edition

## **PREFACE and ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This guidebook is intended to be just what the title implies – a guide. Its purpose is to provide parents, leaders, and committee members a written point of reference for dealing with Troop related issues. It was adapted from Troop 55 of Houston, TX and updated to reflect current BSA and Troop 66 policy.

This document can be considered to be a living document. There will be changes and additions as needed or as situations arise. This guide has been compiled and tailored by the Troop 66 Committee members to benefit all members of Troop 66.

If anyone has any questions about the Troop Guidebook or comments that will improve the content and clarity, please contact a Scoutmaster or Committee Member. The main purpose of the guide is to answer questions which Scouts or parents might have. It is also a guide as to what is expected from each Scout and, if necessary, any disciplinary action required if the rules are not followed.

Any suggestions that you may have on the contents of this book, should be in typed or written legibly and submitted to an adult leader or committee member so your suggestions can be presented to the Patrol Leaders Council and Troop Committee for consideration.

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## Table of Contents

<b>Welcome/General Info</b>	<b>1</b>
Staying in touch	1
Meeting times/location	1
Getting Started	2
Checklist of Forms	2
Things to buy	2
<b>Troop Organization</b>	<b>3</b>
Troop elections	3
High Adventure Program	4
Adult Leadership	4
<b>Advancement</b>	<b>5</b>
Suggested timetable	5
Merit badges	5
Merit Badge list	6
How to earn a merit badge	7
<b>Personal Gear Checklist</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Rules of Conduct/Discipline Policy</b>	<b>9</b>
Attendance policy	10
<b>Training</b>	<b>11</b>
Youth Training opportunities	11
Adult Leadership Training	12
<b>Merit Badge Counselors</b>	<b>12</b>
Requirements to be a counselor	12
Restrictions	12
<b>Boards of Review</b>	<b>13</b>
Basic information (who, what, why)	13
Conducting a Board of Review	13
Board of Review deliberations	14
<b>Troop Finances</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Useful information</b>	<b>15</b>
Courts of Honor	15
Order of the Arrow	15
Venture Crew 66	16
Useful websites	16
<b>Frequently Asked Questions</b>	<b>17</b>

## Welcome!

We are delighted to have you as part of our organization. To get you started, here are a few facts and general information about our Troop and how we're organized.

### Membership

Over 20 boys, divided into small patrols, with 4 registered adult leaders. We are part of the West Tennessee Area Council and chartered by the Munford United Methodist Church.

### Staying in Touch

Each Scout is expected to keep in touch by telephone or email with his patrol leader. The patrol leader should know whether the Scout is coming to meetings, going on a campout or participating in one of the other activities. Likewise, the patrol leader is a good source of information and should call his patrol members when changes in events arise.

Troop 66 relies heavily on the internet and e-mail. The Troop has a website at <http://troop66.munfordbsa.org> and contains the official troop calendar and most forms and information needed for most Troop functions.

In addition to the website, the Troop has e-mail addresses available to any Scout or adult leader who wishes to have one. This can be a dedicated mailbox with web-based access (Internet Explorer, Firefox, AOL, etc.) or e-mail client access (Outlook, Outlook Express, etc.). It can also be a forwarding address to an existing e-mail address. Contact Quad Dean at 901-475-0482 or at [quad@munfordbsa.org](mailto:quad@munfordbsa.org) to set up an e-mail account.

Currently there are 2 mailing lists used for announcements and important information. These are subscriber-only lists for privacy and spam-prevention purposes, so you must be a subscriber before participating in either mailing list. You may subscribe or unsubscribe to either of these mailing lists by contacting Quad Dean at [quad@munfordbsa.org](mailto:quad@munfordbsa.org).

[troop66@munfordbsa.org](mailto:troop66@munfordbsa.org)

used for Troop-wide announcements.

[troopcommittee@munfordbsa.org](mailto:troopcommittee@munfordbsa.org)

for adults-only announcements and info.

### Selected leadership contact info

Scoutmaster: Al Cresanto,

901-835-0422, [scoutmaster@munfordbsa.org](mailto:scoutmaster@munfordbsa.org)

Troop Committee Chair: Dawn Billings,

901-837-4163, [committeechair@munfordbsa.org](mailto:committeechair@munfordbsa.org)

### Regular activities

We try to have at least one outing each month during the regular school year and one week of Summer Camp during the summer break.

### Troop meetings

Weekly meetings are held year-round every Monday from 7:00 to 8:30 PM at the Munford United Methodist Church. The only exceptions are holidays and Mondays following overnight weekend outings. Scouts are expected to attend troop meetings in uniform and bring their Boy Scout Handbook, along with pencil and paper.

### Patrol Meetings

Patrol meetings may be held at any time and place. Many troops (including Troop 66) set aside a portion of each troop meeting for its patrols to gather. Patrols can also meet at a different time at the home of a patrol member. The frequency of patrol meetings is determined by upcoming events and activities and the required planning and discussion for those activities. Patrol meetings should be well-planned, short, and businesslike. Typically, the patrol leader calls the meeting to order, the scribe collects dues, and the assistant patrol leader reports on advancement. The patrol leader should report any information from the latest patrol leaders' council meeting. The bulk of each patrol meeting should be devoted to planning upcoming activities, with specific assignments made to each patrol member.

### Patrol Leaders Council meetings

Meetings for PLC members are held on the first Monday of every month at 6:30 PM before the regular troop meeting.

### Summer camp

We spend one week each year at summer camp, which is typically Camp Mack Morris near Camden, Tennessee.

## Getting Started

### Checklist of Forms to Fill Out

**BSA Scout registration form** – the fact you are reading this means you have probably done this already. If you are not sure, contact the Scoutmaster.

**Health form** – required for insurance and safety purposes for each Scout and adult. A Class 1 form can be used initially and does not need a doctor's signature. A class 2 is required for Summer Camp and requires a doctor's signature. A Class 3 also requires a doctor's signature and is needed prior to most High Adventure camps and all adults over 40. Class 1 & 2 is good for 36 months. The Class 3 form is good for 12 months. These forms are available at the Council web site.

**Consent to Treat form** – this is an optional but highly recommended form. Should a scout need emergency treatment by a physician while on an outing, this would allow him to be treated immediately before contacting his parent. A sample form can be found on our website and should be signed, notarized by a Notary Public, and given to the Scoutmaster.

**Driver information** – BSA rules require that each adult driving to a campout provide driver's license number, make and model of car (including number of seat belts), and insurance coverage.

**BSA adult-leader registration form** – BSA requires ALL adults wishing to participate in Scouting functions be registered and consent to a background check. NO EXCEPTIONS!

### Uniforms

Each Scout is expected to wear the appropriate Scout uniform to every Scout function. Uniforms can be purchased at one of the two local Scout Shops listed on this page.

Troop 66 shirts are available from the Scoutmaster and are typically worn to/from Scout outings. The official Scout Uniform should be worn at Troop meetings, Boards of Review, Courts of Honor, and special occasions.

### Dues and Other expenses

In addition to annual dues paid at registration, each Scout should expect to pay approximately the following:

Uniform: \$80.

Campouts: \$10 per campout for food, plus \$5 to \$10 per campout for travel meals and spending money (special activities such as canoeing, boating and shooting will have additional costs). Summer camp: \$125-\$350, depending on the camp and activities selected. The troop has fund raisers to help offset this cost.

### Things to buy

Each Scout is expected to wear the appropriate Scout uniform to every Scout function. Uniforms can be purchased at the Scout Shop on Hollywood Drive in Memphis or on Hollywood Drive in Jackson, TN.

- Scout Handbook
- Khaki Boy Scout Shirt
- Council strip (West Tennessee Area Council)
- Troop numerals (66)
- Red eppletts (shoulder loops)
- Green BSA neckerchief.
- Belt
- Pants or shorts
- Socks (optional unless wearing shorts).
- Handbook

### Things NOT to buy (yet)

A common question asked is what kind of backpack or tent should I buy. The most common answer is none. Wait until your Scout has been with the Troop at least a year before investing heavily into camping gear. Borrow whenever possible and let your Scout first decide if camping and backpacking is for him. All too often parents spend lots of money on camping gear (or musical instruments or sporting gear or dancing shoes, etc) only to find out a year later that they made the wrong choice. Let him discover what works for him and *then* if he is still interested a year later, not only will you know he's really interested, but he will likely know *exactly* what he wants.

## Troop Organization

### The Patrol Method

The patrol method is at the heart of Boy Scouting. The boy leadership and responsibility inherent in the patrol method create the fundamental difference between Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts. Parents should make an effort to meet their Scout's patrol leader and troop guide (if applicable) and the Troop's senior patrol leader (SPL).

### The Patrol Leaders' Council

The troop is governed by a Patrol Leaders' Council or "PLC" and the Senior Patrol Leader, who leads the PLC. The PLC comprises the SPL, the patrol leaders from each patrol, troop guides, and certain other troop officers, such as the assistant senior patrol leaders and troop quartermasters. The PLC plans the yearly troop program at the annual troop program planning conference. It then meets monthly to fine tune the plans for the upcoming month.

### Patrol Leaders and Assistant Patrol Leaders

The patrol leader for each patrol is elected by, the Scouts in that patrol. Assistant Patrol Leaders are appointed by the patrol leaders, with the advice and consent of the Patrol's Assistant Scoutmaster. The patrol leader (or in his absence, the assistant patrol leader) is responsible for organizing and leading all activities of his patrol. This includes, for example, the preparation and implementation of duty rosters for campout or program activities. It allows each boy to assume responsibility for and take part in successfully implementing the troop's program.

### Selection of the Troop Youth Leadership

The leadership in Troop 66 is elected by the members of the troop. Part of the advancement requirements towards Eagle includes holding a position of responsibility within the Troop. This must be an elected position, not an appointed one. A detailed list of positions and their job descriptions are available online at our website, <http://troop66.munfordbsa.org/pubs/TroopPositions.pdf>, or in print by requesting a copy from the current Troop Librarian.

Troop elections run on a one year cycle and are held on the second meeting of the twelfth month. This will allow for a two or three week transition period. The incumbent is expected, during the transition period, to orient his replacement on the present and future business of the troop and any other information that would be beneficial.

**Positions of leadership require a lot of time and attention to the troop and his peers. To be a good and effective leader, he should be present at nearly all PLC and Troop meetings and most troop functions. He must also attend a Troop Leader Training course during his tenure to receive credit for his leadership position. Part of leadership is learning to prioritize things of importance and, when necessary, make sacrifices based on those priorities. Therefore, careful consideration should be given before deciding to run for a leadership position. If the Scout is currently active in sports or other activities, it is strongly suggested that he wait until he is finished with those activities and be prepared to devote their full time and attention to Scouting for the full time span the office requires.**

### The Patrol

The patrol is a group of Scouts who belong to a troop and who are probably similar in age, development, and interests. The patrol method allows Scouts to interact in a small group outside the larger troop context, working together as a team and sharing the responsibility of making their patrol a success. A patrol takes pride in its identity, and the members strive to make their patrol the best it can be. Patrols will sometimes join with other patrols to learn skills and complete advancement requirements. At other times they will compete against those same patrols in Scout skills and athletic competitions. The members of each patrol elect one of their own to serve as patrol leader. The troop determines the requirements for patrol leaders, such as rank and age. Patrol size depends upon a troop's enrollment and the needs of its members, though an ideal patrol size is eight Scouts. Patrols with fewer than eight Scouts should try to recruit new members to get their patrol size up to the ideal number.

Patrol spirit is the glue that holds the patrol together and keeps it going. Building patrol spirit takes time, because it is shaped by a patrol's experiences—good and bad. Often misadventures such as enduring a thunderstorm or getting lost in the woods will contribute much in pulling a patrol together. Many other elements also will help build patrol spirit. Creating a patrol identity and traditions will help build each patrol member's sense of belonging. Some patrols like to specialize in doing something extremely well, such as cooking peach cobbler or hobo stew.

### **High Adventure Program or “Venture” Patrol**

Many High Adventure program opportunities exist for experienced, older Scouts. This is the culmination of all the things that Scouting should have taught to a boy; character development, citizenship, and personal fitness. The monthly weekend campout gets stale after three years. Older boys need more from their Scouting program than newer boys do. High Adventure can help fulfill that need. Most, but not all, High Adventure Trips are expeditions with one or more purposes that involve a week or more in remote outdoor settings. Participants of a High Adventure trip should have mastered all of the basic outdoor skills and be ready for an outing that will offer new challenges. Adequate personal preparation and conditioning is required for all participants of High Adventure trips. If a unit is losing older boys because of a lack of interest or they have other things to do it may be that the program is only addressing the 11–13 year old age bracket.

#### Adult requirements

- Must be a registered, trained leader with BSA.
- Must be an experienced camper and have current First Aid/CPR training required by BSA.
- Must be in good physical condition – current Class 3 medical may be required depending on the activity.
- Must be approved by the Scoutmaster and Troop Committee.
- Must have completed the required training, in addition to First Aid and CPR, for the specific activity as determined by BSA policy as some activities require specific training.

#### Youth requirements

- Must be 14 years old at the time the trip starts.
- Must have completed the 1st Class Rank
- Must be in good physical condition and, depending on the activity, may be required to obtain a Class 3 physical as determined by BSA policy.
- Must have completed any Merit Badges and/or specific training required for any given activity as determined by BSA policy.

### **Adult Leadership**

*Portions adapted from various BSA publications.*

The troop is actually run by its boy leaders, the Patrol Leader’s Council, to the greatest extent possible. With the guidance of the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters, the boy leaders are expected to plan the program, conduct troop meetings, and provide leadership among their peers. Even so, all Troop 66 parents are

encouraged and expected to be actively involved in the troop. Everyone’s help is needed. Volunteer opportunities (and appropriate training) exist to match the level of interest and available time of every adult.

### **Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters**

The Scoutmaster is the adult leader responsible for the image and program of the troop. The Scoutmaster is appointed by the head of the chartered organization with input from the troop committee. The Scoutmaster’s job is crucial, because the quality of the Scoutmaster’s guidance will affect every youth and adult involved in the troop. Assistant Scoutmasters are appointed by the Scoutmaster and must be approved by the chartered organization representative. Most patrols have one or two specially-designated “Patrol Assistant Scoutmasters” assigned to work with them. The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters normally must successfully complete the required BSA training; see the Adult Leader Training section of this Handbook.

### **Troop Committee**

The troop committee may be seen as the “board of directors” of the troop. The Troop Committee Chair is appointed by the head of the chartered organization with input from the troop committee. Under BSA policies, the troop committee’s primary responsibilities are (i) supporting the Scoutmaster in delivering quality troop programs, and (ii) handling troop administration. Troop 66 has a very active committee, almost all of whom are parents of current or former Troop 66 Scouts. The troop committee meets monthly, normally on the first Tuesday of each month. All parents are invited to participate in the troop committee. Please feel free to call the committee chair or any committee member for more information.

### **Chartered Organization**

Boy Scout troops do not exist in a vacuum. Every troop is actually a youth program of a specific church or other community organization that has been granted a one-year charter by the Boy Scouts of American (“BSA”) to use the Scouting program in its youth work. Troop 66’s chartered organization is Munford United Methodist Church.

## Advancement

Scouting's advancement program is a self-paced program of early generally divided into two areas by ranks. Tenderfoot, Second Class and First class ranks consist of basic Scouting skills like first aid, camping and hiking. Star, Life, and Eagle focus on merit badges and specialized skills like canoeing, fishing and archery and advanced ranks.

A Scout should follow these basic procedures for advancing in rank:

1. Meet the requirements for the advancement or award and have all required spaces in your Scout Handbook signed by the appropriate authority. In Troop 66, Scouts working on ranks of Scout to First Class may have their requirements signed off by older Scouts of First Class and above. Star, Life, and Eagle ranks should only be signed off by the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster.
2. Make an appointment for a Scoutmaster conference (see below for details). The Scout himself should do this, not the parent.
3. Notify the Troop Committee Chair that the scout requires a board of review. Troop 66 holds these on the third Monday of each month during the regular meeting. The Scout himself should do this, not the parent. Parents should familiarize themselves with the advancement program, but it is essential that parents step back and allow their sons to experience and learn from the safe failures, recoveries, and successes of the advancement program. Each Scout should set a specific target date for a board of review for his next rank, then work backwards from that date to set target dates for completing the necessary requirements. Scouts are responsible for keeping track of their own progress, setting their advancement goals, and designing their own course and pace. The adult leaders will encourage them, but success or failure is theirs to control. A Scout can check his advancement status by requesting an advancement report from an Assistant Scoutmaster.

### Suggested Advancement Timetable

Although the Boy Scout advancement program is self-paced, the following is a suggested time frame for minimum time and experience for rank advancement.

Tenderfoot to First Class: 9 to 12 months as an active scout and one week of summer camp.

Star: 12+ months active; two camps (summer camp or Junior Leader Training Camp)

Life: 2+ years active; two camps (summer camp or Junior Leader Training Camp) and one high adventure camp.

### Advancement Requirements

The advancement program is designed to provide the Boy Scout with a chance to achieve the aims of Scouting. As a Scout advances, he is measured and grows in confidence and self-reliance. When a badge and certificate are awarded to a Boy Scout to recognize that he has achieved a rank, they represent that the young man has:

- Been an active participant in his troop and patrol.
- Demonstrated living the Scout Oath and Law in his daily life.
- Met the other requirements and/or earned the merit badges for the rank.
- Participated in a Scoutmaster conference.
- Satisfactorily appeared before a board of review.

In the advanced ranks (Star, Life, and Eagle), the badge represents that the young man has also:

- Served in a position of responsibility in the troop
- Performed service to others.

### Merit Badges

Each Boy Scout rank above First Class requires that a Scout earn a minimum number of merit badges, including a specified minimum number of Eagle-required merit badges, in order to earn the rank. Many of these are offered by Troop 66 merit-badge counselors on a scheduled basis during the year. Announcements and sign ups for merit badge activities generally take place at troop meetings. Other merit badges can be earned at summer camp, merit badge fairs, or on an individual basis from BSA merit badge counselors. There are more than 100 merit badges. Any Boy Scout may earn any merit badge at any time, but some merit badges are designed to be of interest to younger Scouts and others to older Scouts. A Scout does not need to have had rank advancement to be eligible. The BSA changes the requirements of approximately 10% of the merit badges each year. The BSA publishes an annual book ("Boy Scout Requirements 200x"), available at the Scout Shop, listing the requirements for all merit badges. Current requirements may also be found free of charge online at <http://www.meritbadge.com>.

## Merit Badges

Eagle rank requires a total of 21, including 12 listed in **bold**.

American Business  
American Culture  
American Heritage  
American Labor  
Animal Science  
Archaeology  
Archery  
Architecture  
Art  
Astronomy  
Athletics  
Auto Mechanics, and Aviation.  
Backpacking  
Basketry  
Bird Study  
Bugling.  
**Camping**  
Canoeing  
Chemistry  
Cinematography  
**Citizenship in the Community**  
**Citizenship in the Nation**  
**Citizenship in the World**  
Climbing  
Coin Collecting  
Collections  
**Communications**  
Composite Materials  
Computers  
Cooking  
Crime Prevention  
**Cycling\***  
Dentistry  
Disabilities Awareness  
Dog Care  
Drafting  
Electricity  
Electronics  
**Emergency Preparedness\*\***  
Energy  
Engineering  
Entrepreneurship  
**Environmental Science**  
**Family Life**  
Farm Mechanics  
Fingerprinting  
Fire Safety  
**First Aid**  
Fish and Wildlife Management  
Fishing  
Fly Fishing  
Forestry  
Gardening  
Genealogy  
Geology  
Golf  
Graphic Arts  
**Hiking\***  
Home Repairs  
Horsemanship  
Indian Lore  
Insect Study  
Journalism  
Landscape  
Architecture  
Law  
Leatherwork  
**Lifesaving\*\***  
Mammal Study

Medicine  
Metalwork  
Model Design and Building  
Motorboating  
Music  
Nature  
Nuclear Science  
Oceanography  
Orienteering  
Painting  
**Personal Fitness**  
**Personal Management**  
Pets  
Photography  
Pioneering  
Plant Science  
Plumbing  
Pottery  
Public Health  
Public Speaking  
Pulp and Paper  
Radio  
Railroading  
Reading  
Reptile and Amphibian Study  
Rifle Shooting  
Rowing  
Safety  
Salesmanship  
Scholarship  
Sculpture  
Shotgun Shooting  
Skating  
Small-Boat Sailing  
Snow Sports  
Soil and Water Conservation  
Space Exploration  
Sports  
Stamp Collecting  
Surveying  
**Swimming\***  
Textile  
Theater  
Traffic Safety  
Truck Transportation  
Veterinary Medicine  
Water Skiing  
Weather  
Whitewater  
Wilderness Survival  
Wood Carving  
Woodwork

You must choose one from each \* group for Eagle requirement. The remaining badges, if earned, may be applied toward the 21 total required.

\* Cycling, or Hiking, or Swimming

\*\* Emergency Preparedness or Lifesaving

## How to Earn a Merit Badge

*Pick a Subject.* Talk to your Scoutmaster about your interests. Read the requirements of the merit badges you think might interest you. Pick one to earn. Your Scoutmaster or Patrol Assistant Scoutmaster (PASM) will give you the name of a person with whom to work from a list of counselors.

*Scout Buddy System.* You must have another person with you at each meeting with the merit badge counselor. This person can be another Scout, your parents or guardian, a brother or sister, a relative, or a friend.

*Get Ready.* Get a signed merit badge application (blue card) from the Scoutmaster, an ASM, or the Troop Committee Chair. Get in touch with the merit badge counselor and tell him or her that you want to earn the merit badge. Get a copy of the merit-badge pamphlet, if possible, or at minimum download the requirements from <http://www.meritbadge.com>. Troop 66 maintains a small library of merit badge pamphlets, so check with the Troop Librarian before purchasing one.

*Requirements.* You are expected to do exactly what is stated in the merit badge pamphlet – no more and no less. If it says “show or demonstrate,” that is what you must do. Just telling about it isn’t enough. The same thing holds true for such words as “make,” “list,” “in the field,” and “collect,” “identify,” and “label.” If you participate in a merit badge class, you must do these things, not just watch others do them.

*Show Your Stuff.* When you are ready, call the counselor again to make an appointment to meet the requirements. When you go, bring the things you have made to meet the requirements. If they are too big to move, take pictures or have an adult tell in writing what you have done. The counselor will ask you to do each requirement to make sure that you know your stuff and have done or can do what’s required.

*Get the Badge – and Don’t Lose Your Paperwork!* When the counselor is satisfied that you have met each requirement, he or she will sign your application. Give the signed application to your Scoutmaster or the troop’s Merit Badge Coordinator. At the next appropriate court of honor, you will receive the merit badge and an achievement card.

**Note:** Troop 66 strongly recommends that a Scout not earn (i) more than three Eagle-required

merit badges with any one counselor, nor (ii) more than five total merit badges with the same counselor, nor (iii) any merit badge with the Scout’s parent unless the Scout is part of a merit badge class other Scouts being counseled by the parent.

## Recommended Merit Badge Sequence

Here is a recommended, age-appropriate sequence for earning the Eagle-required merit badges and some sample age-appropriate non-Eagle required merit badges. This is not an exclusive list of the non-Eagle required badges.

### Level 1- New Scouts

Ages 11-12 / 5th-6th Grades

First Aid \*  
Swimming \*\*  
Family Life \*  
Emergency Preparedness \*\* (First Aid MB required)  
Cooking  
Basketry/Woodcarving/Leatherwork  
Fishing  
Climbing  
Mammal Study  
Pets / Dog Care

### Level 2 - First Class & Star

Ages 12-13 / 6th- 7th Grades

Camping \*  
Citizenship in the Nation \*  
Communications \*  
Citizenship in the Community \* (7th Grade)  
Environmental Science \* (7th grade)  
Hiking \*\*  
Personal Fitness \*  
Pioneering  
Canoeing  
Geology  
Nature  
Golf  
Sports  
Home Repairs  
Collections  
Medicine  
Law  
Scholarship  
Reading  
Photography  
Radio

### Level 3 (Star & Life / Ages 14-15 / 8th Grade and Up)

Citizenship in the World \*  
Personal Management \*  
Lifesaving \*\* (Swimming MB required)  
Cycling \*\*  
Backpacking  
Wilderness Survival  
Rowing  
Whitewater  
BSA Lifeguard  
Auto Mechanics

An asterisk (\*) indicates an Eagle-required merit badge; a double-asterisk (\*\*) indicates a merit badge that is one of several choices in an Eagle-required merit-badge group.

## Recommended Personal Gear

Copy this page and use it as a checklist for each campout.

Equipment: Troop 66 provides shared patrol gear, including lanterns, stoves and cooking equipment, for each patrol. Each Scout is responsible for his personal gear listed below. Scouts should strive to bring the minimum gear necessary, and to pack it so that all gear can be carried by the Scout to his patrol's campsite in a single trip. The Boy Scout Handbook has helpful information on camping and camping gear.

- SIGNED permission slip. Parents must sign a permission slip before a scout can leave on a Troop outing.
- Scout uniform
- Hiking boots or other appropriate water resistant footwear (athletic shoes or sneakers not typically recommended).
- Extra pair of socks and underwear to sleep in.
- All synthetic or wool hiking socks (plus extra pair)\*
- Synthetic t-shirt or shirt (plus one extra) \*
- Synthetic fleece jacket or pullover \*
- Synthetic pants, either fleece or nylon, with pockets (plus one extra pair)\*
- Synthetic walking shorts with good pockets \*
- A warm hat (not just a baseball cap) that will shed water
- Extra underwear (thermal if weather demands)
- Swim trunks
- Sleeping bag (should be sufficient for occasional below freezing temperatures)
- Ground pad for sleeping bag.
- Backpack (preferred), duffel bag, or plastic tote.
- Tent (no larger than 2- or 3-man size). Tents are shared with other Scouts in the same patrol, so it would be a good idea to check with other patrol members before investing in a tent
- Ground cloth for tent
- Water bottle(s) or platypus-type water sack with drinking tube (sized to carry a minimum of 2 liters of water)
- Mess kit, preferably small, lightweight metal that is self-contained.
- Folding pocket knife (up to 4" blade – no sheath knives)
- Waterproof matches.

- Sturdy rain jacket and pants (ponchos do not provide sufficient protection, especially in wet winter weather)
- LED head lamp (preferred) or flashlight (head lamps are handy for hands-free work in camp)
- Extra batteries for flashlight.
- Scout Handbook, pen, notebook
- Small towel and toiletries (soap, toothbrush, non-aerosol insect repellent and sunscreen)
- Wristwatch
- Sunglasses if desired.
- Personal first aid kit (small bandages, disinfectant, blister care, etc.)
- Glasses, contact lenses, prescription drugs and related items. PLEASE note on permission slip so adults are aware of their presence and can assist if necessary.
- Compass and applicable map(s), if required.

\* Parents please note: Cotton clothes are a very poor choice for cold weather camping, as cotton is bulky, cold and slow to dry when wet. When possible, one or two light layers, made of quick-drying synthetic materials is excellent for layering and remains warm even when wet. More information for outing-specific gear will be posted on the troop's website and announced at Troop meetings before the outing.

### Medication on Campouts

If a Scout is taking medication during a campout, the Scout's parent should advise the Scoutmaster if the parent wishes for an adult to supervise medication administration.

#### Items to NOT bring on any Scout Activity

- Sheath knives or knives with blades longer than 4 inches.
- Sling shots, bows/arrows, firearms (including BB guns), fireworks, or ammunition.
- Un-prescribed drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products. Infractions of this rule could result in criminal charges, as they are ILLEGAL!
- Anything not permitted by Official BSA policy as defined in the Guide to Safe Scouting.
- Electronics (except cameras) must have prior approval from the Scoutmaster. Any approved item is brought at the scout's own risk. This includes, but is not limited to, MP3 players, iPods, radios, GPS receivers, handheld games, pagers and cell phones. Anyone with prohibited gear without the consent of the Scoutmaster could have that item confiscated until the end of the outing. Repeat infractions could result in disciplinary action.
- Aerosol cans

## Rules of Conduct/Discipline Policy

The guiding principals of the Troop 66 rules of conduct are contained in the Scout Oath and Law. It is expected that every Scout and Adult Leader strive to follow these guidelines at all times. Any behavior that goes against the Scout Oath and Law disgraces the Scout, his parents, and the Scouting program as a whole.

In general, **DIRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR WILL NOT BE TOLERATED**. All youth and adult leaders are entitled to a program that is free of such behavior. The Patrol Leader's Council and Scoutmaster will enforce the rules of conduct at their discretion.

**Consequences:** The consequences of failing to abide by the camp and troop rules may include quiet time isolation, extra work detail, calls home, *being sent home*, or in severe cases being suspended or even expelled from the troop. Such infractions are determined on a case-by-case basis by the Troop Committee. Parents may be required to travel to camp at their expense and take a Scout home who fails to abide by the troop and camp rules. A warning system will be in effect for minor inappropriate behavior problems. Consequences will be assigned as warranted.

The most severe consequences may be assigned directly without assignment of less-severe consequences first.

**Uniform requirements:** Scout and adult leaders should wear their uniform shirt to and from outings and, when applicable, at chapel on Sunday. The uniform pants, belt & scout socks are optional.

**Camping is by patrols:** At campouts, patrol members camp together in the location designated for their patrol. Sharing of tents by Scouts within a patrol is encouraged. *Adults do not share tents with Scouts, including their own sons, and generally avoid the area of their own son's patrol.* Adults ordinarily will camp in their own designated campsite. On some occasions, two to four adults will be assigned to camp with each Scout patrol.

**Stay out of other patrol and other Troop's areas:** Scouts and adults should request permission before entering another Troop's campsite.

**Hands off:** Don't touch someone else's equipment, tent, or belongings, unless you have the owner's prior permission.

**Everyone works:** Each patrol leader designates individual Scouts to be in charge of planning patrol menus, collecting money, arranging transportation, preparing equipment, buying food ("grubmaster"), cooking and clean up. Every patrol, including the adults, should have a duty roster. All Scouts and adults are expected to do their share of patrol duties in accordance with the duty roster.

**Keep the campsite clean and tidy:** All Scouts and adults are to maintain their tents and personal, patrol, and Troop gear in a clean and neat condition on an ongoing basis. The entire troop assembles for a "F.O.D. walk" of the camping area at the end of each campout.

**Fire safety:** Scouts may build and light ground fires (cooking and campfires) only *when and where* authorized by the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, and/or local authority (property owner, Park Ranger, etc.) No unauthorized fires are permitted. Fire safety rules will be strictly enforced. *A fire must never be left unattended.*

**No flames in or near tents.** No fires or open flames (including stoves, lanterns or propane bottles) are allowed in or near tents.

**The Buddy System.** The buddy system is very simple:

No Scout is to leave the campsite without another Scout. Never leave your buddy nor let him leave you.

The buddy system is in force:

- (a) for all water activities;
- (b) when outside immediate camp area; or
- (c) if separating from the main group when traveling. Consequences for being caught without a buddy vary with activity. If a Scout is caught without his buddy while swimming, for example, both of will have to get out of the water either temporarily or permanently, depending on the Lifeguard in charge.

**Water-safety rules.** Scouts and adults will follow Safety Afloat and Safe Swim Defense procedures and policies at all times for all water activities.

**Lights out:** All Scouts will be inside their tents at the time specified for Lights Out.

**No fighting, hazing, harassment, or excessive roughhousing:**

Hazing or harassment of any kind, physical, verbal, or otherwise will NOT be tolerated and could result in being sent home and/or prohibited from future campouts. Such infractions will be handled case-by-case by the Troop Committee. Fighting, hitting, wrestling, or rough horseplay are not permitted.

**No early departures unless excused by the Scoutmaster AND Senior Patrol Leader:** The Troop travels to camp together, and returns home together whenever practical. Scouts are expected to return home with the troop unless he has an urgent need to leave early, such as a family emergency, sickness, school, or church commitment.

**No alcoholic beverages (BSA policy) or illegal drugs (law).**

**Tobacco use** by adults on campouts is strongly discouraged by BSA and Troop policy. If an adult must smoke, he should do so out of sight and smell of Scouts and other adults. Tobacco use by Scouts is strictly *prohibited by law*.

**No non-Scout siblings:** Non-Scout siblings are not to attend campouts. Their presence tends to detract from the program focus and undermine enforcement of campout rules.

**Attendance:** The Boy Scouts of America does not encourage any troop enforce any type of attendance policy. In fact, the only requirement given as BSA policy is that if a boy wishes to earn his Eagle rank, he must do so before his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**All members of the Patrol Leader's Council, however, are strongly urged and expected by the troop to attend all of the monthly PLC meetings. Attendance by the elected leaders is mandatory. Failure to regularly attend could result in not receiving credit for the leadership position held.**

## Youth Leadership Training

### **Troop Leadership Training (TLT)**

This is a 4 to 8 hour training conference conducted by the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster. Its purpose is to reinforce the patrol method and to allow members of the patrol leaders' council to set goals for themselves, their patrols, and their troop.

### **National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT)**

National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) is a BSA leadership development training program designed to teach scouts how to become better leaders. The program was designed with the hope that scouts trained at NYLT will learn leadership skills that can be used within their home unit, and also in everyday life to improve their leadership potential. Most NYLT programs are conducted for one week during the summer months or winter breaks, however, some areas conduct NYLT courses over two 3-day weekends and during spring. Most NYLT courses are conducted at council-level camps, primarily because these camps are established, have proper facilities for a week long course, and are already affiliated with the Boy Scouts.

### **Adult Leader Training**

*Portions adapted from various BSA publications.*

#### **Troop 66 Adult Training Philosophy**

Troop 66 strongly encourages all parents to take the Boy Scout leader basic training courses described on this page. This helps all parents understand and assist in achieving the troop's program and goals.

Many courses are now available online at <https://scoutnet.scouting.org/elearning>

#### **Scoutmaster / Assistant Scoutmaster**

- New Leader Essentials
- Youth Protection Training
- Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills
- Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training

#### **Troop committee member**

- New Leader Essentials
- Troop Committee Specific Training
- Youth Protection Training

#### **Merit badge counselor**

- New Leader Essentials
- Youth Protection Training

## Training Courses

### **Fast Start Training**

Fast Start training is the first step for any new volunteer. The Boy Scout Fast Start video includes segments on how to run a troop meeting; how to plan, organize, and execute outdoor activities; and how a Scout troop is organized.

### **New Leader Essentials**

New Leader Essentials is a 90-minute introductory session that highlights the values, aims, history, funding, and methods of Scouting. Videos, discussions, and hands-on reinforcement are presented during the training. Each leader completes New Leader Essentials training only once.

### **Leader Specific Training**

Once a volunteer has a solid overview of the BSA's values based program, s/he can begin training for a specific Scouting position. Leader-Specific Training provides the specialized knowledge a new leader needs to assume a leadership role. Training time varies because each course is designed for a specific leadership position.

### **Youth Protection Training**

Youth Protection Training is a video with discussion periods; the total time is approximately 45 minutes.

### **Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills**

The Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills weekend campout, preceded by an introductory meeting, is for any Scout leader who wants to help lead troop outdoor activities.

### **Wood Badge**

Wood Badge is the most advanced training available for adult leaders of the Boy Scouts of America. Wood Badge graduates will be able to view Scouting as a family of interrelated, values-based programs that provide age-appropriate activities for youth; to recognize the contemporary leadership concepts utilized in corporate America that are relevant to our values-based movement; to apply the skills they learn from their participation as a member of a successful working team; and to revitalize their commitment by sharing in an overall inspirational experience that helps provide Scouting with the leadership it needs to accomplish its mission on an ongoing basis.

## Other Skills Requiring Trained Adults

The troop also needs as many adults as possible to be trained in the following skills to support our outdoor program:

- Safe Swim Defense / Safety Afloat
- Flatwater / Whitewater Canoe Certifications
- BSA Lifeguard or American Red Cross Lifesaving
- CPR / defibrillator
- First Aid

## Merit Badge Counselors

*Portions adapted from various BSA publications; see [www.meritbadge.com](http://www.meritbadge.com).*

### Introduction

Every parent can help the Scouts by serving as a merit-badge counselor for one, several, or many merit badges. As a “coach” the counselor advises the Scout concerning steps to take to fulfill the requirements for the merit badge. As a “counselor” he or she evaluates the Scout’s performance and determines whether or not the Scout has met the prescribed objectives in the requirements.

### Requirements to Serve as a Counselor

Merit badge counselors must be men and women of good character, age 18 or older, who are recognized as having the skills and education in the subjects for which they are to serve as merit badge counselors, as well as the ability to work with Scout-age boys. Merit badge counselors must be registered for that position with the Boy Scouts of America (using the basic adult leader registration form). Merit badge counselors are not required to pay a registration fee if they are only registered as merit badge counselors. Merit badge counselors should complete the New Leader Essentials and Youth Protection Training classes; see the “Adult Leader Training” page of this Handbook for more details. An older Scout (who by definition is not yet 18 years old) may assist an adult merit badge counselor in teaching a merit badge subject, but the adult counselor must verify that each Scout who works on the badge has completed all requirements for the badge.

### Restrictions on Counseling Badges

There are no restrictions or limits on the number of merit badges for which an individual may be approved as a counselor. There is no limit on the number of merit badges a Scout may earn from one counselor. However, Troop 66 strongly encourages

Scouts to earn no more than three Eagle-required badges or five total badges from any one counselor. A registered merit badge counselor may counsel any Scout, including his or her own son, ward, or relative. However, Troop 66 strongly encourages adults not to counsel their own sons except as part of a class of at least five Scouts.

### Merit Badge Requirements

The current *Boy Scout Requirements* booklet lists the requirements a Scout meets to earn each of the more than 100 merit badges that are available. The requirements are also available at <http://www.meritbadge.com>. Each Scout must be tested individually to confirm that he has met the requirements for a merit badge. A Scout must meet all requirements for a merit badge – no more and no less. Neither the counselor nor the troop may add or delete requirements. On the other hand, it is always acceptable for a Scout on his own initiative to do more than the requirements call for. Any registered Scout, regardless of rank, may work on any merit badge and receive the award when he earns it. However, Troop 66 recommends that Scouts work on age appropriate badges as described in more detail in the “Merit Badge” section of this Handbook. There is no time limit for completion of merit badge requirements other than age 18. A merit badge cannot be taken away once earned, provided the counselor is a registered counselor for that badge.

### Working with Scouts

Follow the Scout Buddy System, discussed below. The Scout should teach himself the necessary knowledge to the greatest extent possible, using the merit badge pamphlet and other resources. One of the benefits of the merit badge program is teaching Scouts to teach themselves. (“Give a man a fish and he’ll eat today; teach him to fish and he’ll eat for his whole life.”) Get the *Scout* to develop a timetable of short- and long-term goals for completing the merit badge. An important objective of Scouting is to teach Scouts to set goals for themselves and to plan and execute the tasks required to reach those goals. You may find that a Scout needs help in learning particular skills that are required for the merit badge. One of your jobs in that situation is to help teach the Scout the required skills. If you stop hearing from a Scout who has started but not finished a merit badge, follow up periodically (e.g., once a month or so) to check on his progress and on his plans for completing the requirements. Again, the

Scout should be setting goals; the counselor's job is simply to help the Scout achieve those goals and confirm that he has done so. Be supportive, not critical – but make sure the Scout has indeed satisfactorily completed each requirement.

### **Scout Buddy System**

To protect both the Scout and the merit badge counselor, a Scout must have a buddy with him at each meeting with the counselor. A Scout's buddy can be another Scout, a parent or guardian, a brother or sister, or a relative or friend.

### **Merit Badge Classes**

Troop 66 offers various merit badge classes during the year. The troop's merit badge counselors often teach such classes in teams. Remember that a Scout cannot earn a merit badge merely by sitting through a class. Each Scout must *individually* demonstrate to the counselor that he has met each requirement for the badge. This is often difficult (or impossible) to do in a class-type setting.

### **Boards of Review**

*Adapted from*

<http://www.meritbadge.com/bsa/info/policy2.htm>, which is based on the BSA publication Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures, #33088B.

#### **Basic Information**

A periodic review of the progress of a Scout is vital in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Scouting program in the unit. The unit committee can judge how well the Scout being reviewed is benefiting from the program. The unit leader can measure the effectiveness of his or her leadership. The Scout can sense that he is, or is not, advancing properly and can be encouraged to make the most of his Scouting experience. A board of review cannot be conducted until the Scoutmaster conference has been completed. A board of review is made up of at least three and not more than six members of the troop committee. The Scout must present himself at the scheduled time *in full "Class A" uniform with his Scout Handbook properly signed* for the requirements for rank to which he is advancing. *The review is not an examination; the board does not retest the candidate.* The Scout has learned his skill and has been examined; this is a review. The Scout should be asked where he learned his skill, who taught him, and the value he gained from passing this requirement. Unit leaders, assistant unit leaders, relatives, or guardians

may not serve as members of a Scout's board of review. The decision of the board of review is arrived at through discussion and must be unanimous. In Troop 66, each Scout must personally contact the Troop Committee Chair or the Advancement Chair to arrange a time for a board of review. Not only is it important to review those Scouts who have learned and been tested for a rank, but also to review those Scouts who have shown no progress in their advancement over the past few months.

#### **Conducting a Board of Review**

A board of review should take approximately fifteen minutes. The board members should have the following objectives in mind when they conduct the review:

- To make sure that the Scoutmaster and ASMs have confirmed that the Scout did what he was supposed to do for the rank.
- To see how good an experience the Scout is having in the unit.
- To encourage the Scout to progress further. The board should attempt to determine the Scout's attitude and his acceptance of Scouting ideals. *Scout spirit is defined as living the Scout Oath and Scout Law in a Scout's everyday life.* The board should make sure that good standards have been met in all phases of the Scout's life. A discussion of the Scout Oath and Scout Law is in keeping with the purpose of the review, to make sure that the candidate recognizes and understands the value of Scouting in his home, unit, school, and community. The board of review members should feel free to refer to the *Boy Scout Handbook*, *Scoutmaster Handbook*, or any other references during the review. The *Troop Committee Guidebook* contains examples of questions that could be asked during a review. A certain amount of formality and meaningful questioning should be used during the review, but because many boys are ill at ease when talking to adults, it is important that the board be held in a relaxed atmosphere. The Scout should be neat in appearance and his uniform should be as correct as possible, with the badges worn properly. It should be the desire of the board to encourage the Scout to talk so that the review can be a learning experience for the candidate and the members of the board. The Scout reviews what he did for his rank. From this review, it can be determined whether he did what he was supposed to do. The review also reveals what kind of experience the Scout is having in the troop. With that knowledge, the troop leaders can shape the

program to meet the needs and interests of the Scouts.

### **Board of Review Deliberations**

At the conclusion of the review, the board should know whether a boy is qualified for the rank or Palm. *The Scout is asked to leave the room* while the board members discuss his achievements. If members are satisfied that the Scout is ready to advance, he is called in, congratulated, notified as to when he will receive his recognition, and encouraged to continue his advancement or earn the next Palm.

### **Paperwork: Reporting the Board's Decision**

The chair of the board of review fills out a Board of Review Report Form and gives it to the Troop Committee Chair or Advancement Chair.

### **What if the Board Says "No"?**

If the board decides that the Scout is not ready to advance, the candidate should be informed and told what he has not done satisfactorily. Most Scouts accept responsibility for not completing the requirements properly. Should the Scout disagree with the board's decision, the appeal procedures should be explained to him (see the Web site at the beginning of this section) The members of the board of review should specify what must be done to rework the candidate's weaknesses and schedule another board of review for him. A follow-up letter must be sent to a Scout who is turned down for rank advancement, confirming the agreements reached on the actions necessary for advancement.

## **Troop Finances**

### **Dues**

One of the most significant sources of troop income is the annual dues of the Scouts.

### **Campout Fees**

The troop requires Scouts and adults attending troop campouts to pay for their own food and for any third-party activity charges. See the "Getting started" page of this Handbook for more details.

### **Fund Raisers**

The Troop attempts to hold no more than 2 or 3 Troop fund raisers each year to aid in offsetting the high cost of Summer Camp. This is usually in the form of an annual Pancake Breakfast/Rummage Sale and 2 or 3 car washes.

### **Friends of Scouting**

Troop 66 participates in the Council's fundraising campaign each winter. Contributions are entirely voluntary but strongly encouraged. For many years, parents and friends of Troop 66 and Cub Scout Pack 66 have generated larger contributions than any other troop in the Council.

### **Expense Reimbursement**

The Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, troop committee members, and others who have or will extend personal funds for Scout activities, and expect to receive reimbursement for those funds, must know that such funds are: 1) to be within the established budget or; 2) approved by the troop treasurer, Scoutmaster and/or Troop Committee Chairman as funds which are available, but which are not so budgeted. This means that campmasters who have responsibility for monthly camping activities, summer camps, or other such activities must project costs and assess participants for the expenses associated with that specific activity in order to not exceed any budgeted funds which may be available from the troop committee. Otherwise, those who spend personal funds on troop programs do so at the risk that they may not be fully reimbursed.

## **Other Useful Information**

### **Summer Camp**

Summer camp is a great time for advancement and practicing the patrol method.

### **Merit Badge Camps**

The West Tennessee Area Council holds a “Winter Fest Encampment” merit badge “fair” each January. This is an excellent opportunity for Scouts to earn challenging or unique merit badges not typically offered in a group setting.

Brighton Troop 260 also hold an annual Merit Badge Day. Details for this event are announced at regular Troop meetings

### **High-Adventure Camps**

The Boy Scouts of America (National) offers outstanding high adventure programs for older Scouts. Search online for info these opportunities:

Philmont Scout Ranch, New Mexico

Sea Base, Florida

Northern Tier, Minnesota

### **Courts of Honor**

Advancement is recognized at a formal troop court of honor held periodically throughout the year, typically one each quarter. Dates are posted on the online Troop Calendar. The court of honor provides an opportunity for Scouts to be acknowledged for their work. *Families are strongly encouraged to attend as the court of honor is a special occasion.*

### **Order of the Arrow**

The Order of the Arrow (OA) is a national brotherhood of Scout honor campers, based on brotherhood with fellow Scouts and cheerful service to others. Its purpose is to

- (1) recognize those Scout campers who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives;
- (2) develop and maintain camping traditions and spirit;
- (3) promote Scout camping;
- (4) crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into a life purpose of leadership in cheerful service to others.

The Order of the Arrow program is conducted through a separate lodge under the jurisdiction of the local Boy Scouts of America executive. Troop members are nominated and elected to membership by their fellow Scouts in their own troops. They must meet certain entry qualifications, which include: hold a rank of First Class or higher, and spend at least 15 days and nights of camping within the preceding 24 months (6 nights of which must be at no more than one long-term Scout summer camp, and the remainder of which should be weekend trips).

More information on the OA can be obtained by contacting the troop’s OA advisor or liaison.

### **Venture Crew 66**

Venture Crew 55 is a separate Scouting organization, sponsored by Munford United Methodist Church as the chartered organization. The crew is open to young men and women ages 14-20, who have completed 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Scouts may have dual registration in the troop and the crew, but no dues discount is available. Dual-registered Scouts who seek to complete regular Scout advancement through the troop (rather than crew) will be subject to troop oversight and requirements. Members of the venture crew who seek regular Scout advancement will be required for advancement purposes to fulfill the six months of leadership requirement for advancement from Life Scout to Eagle Scout through leadership in the troop. All other regular scout advancement requirements of Venture Crew members will be fulfilled as established by the Venture Crew Advisor, and overseen by the Venture Crew Advisor or his designee. Assuming completion of the foregoing, troop approval of the Eagle Scout project and an Eagle Scout board of review at the troop level, Venture Crew members will have the opportunity to participate in troop-administered Courts of Honor, should they so desire. Venture Crew members who are not also current dues paying troop members may be directly assessed incremental costs associated with their participation.

### **Service Projects**

Service projects, which include troop projects and projects organized by Scouts who are working on their Eagle rank, are an integral part of the Scouting program designed to aid the development of character and citizenship. Hours (outside troop meetings) working on approved troop and Eagle Scout projects are required for advancement to most ranks. Announcements and sign-ups for service projects generally take place at troop meetings.

### **Useful Web Sites**

Some useful Web sites containing a plethora of additional information include:

Munford Scouting Home Page:

<http://www.munfordbsa.org>

West Tennessee Area Council

<http://www.boyscouts.tn.org>

Ittawamba Lodge (West TN OA Lodge)

<http://www.ittawamba.org>

BSA National Website

<http://www.scouting.org>

Current Advancement and Merit badge requirements and recourses information

<http://www.meritbadge.com> – includes online copies of merit badge and advancement requirements, worksheets, and related information.

<http://www.usscouts.org> – links to Scouting-related materials provided by various Scouters.

<http://www.macscouter.com> – Scouting resources online.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**1. What are my son's obligations as a Boy Scout?** As a Boy Scout, your son should:

- Obey the Scout Oath and Law. (If you don't know what that means, ask your son!)
- Come to the meetings, in uniform, as often as possible.
- Participate in troop and patrol activities (the troop's calendar is available at [troop66.munfordbsa.org](http://troop66.munfordbsa.org)).
- Work on advancement and merit badges – on his own timetable, but to the best of his ability.

**2. How can I help my son?** You can:

- Support your Scout.
- Offer to lend a hand with the indoor- and/or outdoor adult work that's necessary to keep the troop running.
- Come to the monthly troop committee meetings.
- Sign up to be a merit badge counselor for an area you're interested in – you don't have to be an expert, merely willing to help the boys teach themselves.
- Take the BSA's courses for New Leader Essentials, Youth Protection Training, Outdoor Skills, and Assistant Scoutmaster training.
- Give your Scout some room to make mistakes he/they are in an unsafe situation. Let his Patrol's Assistant Scoutmaster decide if more coaching is needed – and then let them do the coaching.
- Recognize that we strive for a boy-run troop. If you think that the Scouts aren't running things the way they should be, feel free to say something, but *say it to the Scoutmaster or ASM* unless it is an unsafe situation.

**3. Can my son be in the same patrol as his buddies?**

More than likely, but that's determined by the Scoutmaster on a case-by-case basis. Scouts often change patrols.

**4. Who will lead my son's patrol?** Each patrol is led by one of its members, the patrol leader (PL), who is elected for a 12 month term by his patrol-mates. The patrol leader appoints an assistant patrol leader (APL). The PL and APL are coached by the Senior Patrol Leader, older scouts, and their assigned Assistant Scoutmaster.

**5. Who runs the troop?** We strive to have the troop run as much as possible by the Patrol Leaders Council, which is

headed by the Senior Patrol Leader who is elected by the Scouts, which is discussed later in this handbook. The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters provide adult supervision. The Scoutmaster is appointed by the chartered organization. Assistant Scoutmasters are appointed by the Scoutmaster with the approval of the troop committee.

**6. What is the role of the troop committee?** The troop committee is much like a board of directors. The troop committee chair, who is selected by the committee and/or the Scoutmaster and approved by the chartered organization, serves as something like a non-executive chairman/woman of the board. All members of the troop committee must be registered with the Boy Scouts of America and submit to a background check. All parents are encouraged to attend troop committee meetings. You don't have to be a committee member to attend or participate in committee meetings, but you must be a member to have voting rights on issues before the committee.

**7. How much are dues?** Dues are \$1 a week. We strongly encourage parents to allow their boys to earn this for themselves through chores or extra assignments at home. This money typically goes toward advancement costs (badges, pins, etc) and certain Troop and Patrol functions.

**8. What should my Scout do when he has a schedule conflict?** He should advise his patrol leader of the schedule conflict so that the patrol leader can advise the PASM.

**9. How often does the troop go on campouts?** Typically one weekend each month during the school year and a week-long summer camp during the summer.

**10. What camping equipment will my son need?** This is a tricky issue. It really depends on the types of activities he wishes to participate in. For the typical Troop campout, see the List of Recommended Gear later in this book. If he wishes to pursue high adventure type outings such as backpacking or long term camping, the more camping gear he acquires, the more he will likely enjoy it. We encourage boys to wait at least a year before beginning to purchase large, high quality, or expensive items such as backpacks and backpacking tents. This helps ensure camping and other outdoor activities are for your Scout before making a large investment. A good practice is to try to borrow equipment before purchasing. This will allow you to see if he really wants to pursue that activity seriously and it will allow him to make an informed decision about the type equipment he prefers to use.

**11. Do I have to go on the campouts with my son?** No. In fact, unless you are a registered leader or committee member and have submitted to a background check by the Boy Scouts of America, you CANNOT go even if you wanted to.

**12. What do I do when my Scout needs help?** Quietly let his patrol's ASM or Troop Guide know. *Please* resist the natural parental instinct to "make it better" for your son unless he is in an unsafe situation. Scouting is designed to allow boys to learn by doing for themselves, and to provide them with a safe, recoverable place to foul up and learn from their mistakes.

**13. My Scout has special needs. Whom do I talk to?** Make sure that the Scoutmaster and his patrol's ASM are made aware of your son's special needs. Be assured that your son will not be the only one in the troop with special needs.

**14. Does my son have to go to summer camp?** No, but it's highly encouraged because they have fun, earn advancement and merit badges, and literally grow up at summer camp. In terms of advancement, a week of summer camp is worth a year of other troop activities.

**15. Can I go to summer camp, too?** Absolutely! But you must first be a registered leader or committee member and submit to a background check by the Boy Scouts of America, and, if you're over 45, complete a Class 3 physical.

**16. How will my son advance?** By completing the requirements for the applicable rank as spelled out in the official Scout Handbook, and then satisfactorily completing a Scoutmaster conference and a board of review, in that order. If you witness or suspect that someone is adding to or talking away from the requirements as they are printed in the handbook, or is treating your Scout unfairly in completing the requirements, contact the Scoutmaster immediately.

**17. How hard are the merit badges?** That depends on the merit badge and the age and experience of the Scout. Backpacking and Environmental Science are pretty challenging. The Basketry badge is pretty easy. You can find the requirements for merit badges online at <http://www.meritbadge.com>.

**18. What merit badges should my Scout work on?** Any and all he wishes to try. He is encouraged to work on the Eagle required badges first.

**19. Who keeps track of my son's advancement, merit badges, etc.?** When a Scout completes a requirement for rank advancement or a merit badge, it's **his** responsibility to make sure that his book (or merit-badge card) is signed off by the proper authority. See the Advancement section later in this book. Advancement records are kept electronically and all registered adult leaders have access to the database. When a Scout advances to the next rank or completes a merit badge, an Assistant Scoutmaster records that in the database. If a Scout completes a "partial" on a merit badge, that too gets recorded in our database. But to repeat, it is the Scout's responsibility to make sure this happens.

**20. How long does it take for a new Scout to become an Eagle Scout?** Each Scout advances at his own pace; most are between 15 and 17 years old when they reach Eagle. A

Scout *must* complete all Eagle requirements *before* his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. If a Scout participates regularly in the troop's activities and takes reasonable advantage of the advancement and merit badge opportunities that are offered, then he should have no trouble making Eagle by the 9th or 10th grade — if that's what he wants to do.

**21. How do I get trained as an adult leader?** First, you must be registered as an adult leader and submit to a background check by the Boy Scouts of America. Then contact the Scoutmaster or Troop Committee Chair for information about the course(s) you need for the position you're in and then check the troop website for a training schedule. Many courses are now available online at <http://olc.scouting.org/>.

**22. Where can I get uniform items and other Scouting items?** At the Scout Shop located at one of the local council offices. The closest one is on Hollywood Drive in *Memphis*, but our own Council shop and office is on Hollywood Drive in *Jackson*, TN. Check with the Scoutmaster as there is generally someone always going to one of the 2 shops and can usually make arrangements to pick up any items you need.

**23. Where do all those patches go?** The BSA's *Official Guide to Placement of Insignia* is available on the Web at <http://www.scouting.org/forms/34283.pdf>

**24. How do I keep my son interested?** BIG, important, and sometimes tricky question. This largely depends on your Scout. If he is involved in several other activities, he may lose interest simply because of overload. We try to encourage our Scouts to be active in their school, church, and local sports. Community involvement is a pillar of the Scouting experience. But we also try to stress the importance of balance and priorities in everything they do. God and family should always come first. Then we try to encourage the boys to make scouting their priority over other activities simply because of the limited time they are allowed in Scouting. Sports and other similar activities can be pursued long after high school, but a Scout has only until his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday to become an Eagle Scout.

Experience shows that the more involved a parent is in the adult leadership of the troop, the more likely the Scout is to remain in Scouting and achieve Eagle Scout. If you can't get involved, try to strike a careful balance between encouragement and enforcement. If you don't encourage him to succeed, he likely won't. But if you push him, you defeat the leadership development element of Scouting as well as "suck" all the fun out of it for him