HOW TO BECOME A BOY SCOUT

Here's all you need to do to become a Boy Scout:

- ✓ **MEET AGE REQUIREMENTS.**
  Be a boy who is 11 years old, or one who has completed the fifth grade or the Arrow of Light Award and is at least 10 years old, but is not yet 18 years old.
- ✓ **COMPLETE A BOY SCOUT APPLICATION AND HEALTH HISTORY SIGNED BY YOUR PARENT OR GUARDIAN.** (Page 5)
- ✓ **FIND A SCOUT TROOP NEAR YOUR HOME.** (Page 5)
- ✓ **REPEAT THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** (Page 6)
- ✓ **DEMONSTRATE THE SCOUT SIGN, SALUTE, AND HANDSHAKE.** (Page 7)
- ✓ **DEMONSTRATE TYING THE SQUARE KNOT** (a joining knot). (Page 8)
- ✓ **UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO LIVE BY THE SCOUT OATH OR PROMISE, LAW, MOTTO, AND SLOGAN, AND THE OUTDOOR CODE.** (Page 9)
- ✓ **DESCRIBE THE SCOUT BADGE.** (Page 10)
- ✓ **COMPLETE THE PAMPHLET EXERCISES.**
  With your parent or guardian, complete the exercises in the pamphlet *How to Protect Your Children From Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide.* (Inside front cover; page 11)
- ✓ **PARTICIPATE IN A SCOUTMASTER CONFERENCE.**
  Turn in your Boy Scout application and health history form signed by your parent or guardian, then participate in a Scoutmaster conference. (Page 11)

When you have done these things, the Scoutmaster will give you a certificate of membership, and you can proudly wear the badge and uniform that show you are a member of the Boy Scouts of America.

A graduating Webelos Scout who has earned the Arrow of Light Award has completed the Boy Scout joining requirements. With the approval of his Scoutmaster, he will receive the Boy Scout badge upon joining the troop.

FIND A SCOUT TROOP NEAR YOUR HOME

If you don't know of a troop in your area, look for the Boy Scouts of America in your telephone directory, or contact the national office at the following address and telephone number:

Boy Scout Division
Boy Scouts of America
1325 West Walnut Hill Lane
P.O. Box 152079
Irving, TX 75015-2079
972-580-2000

You can also use the Internet to find your Boy Scouts of America (BSA) local council. The Web site of the BSA national office follows:

http://www.scouting.org

If you live in a remote area where there is no troop, you can still take part in the Scouting program by becoming a Lone Scout. For more information on the Lone Scout program, contact the national office at the address listed above.

REPEAT THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pledge of Allegiance

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The Meaning of the Pledge of Allegiance

When you pledge allegiance to the flag, you promise loyalty and devotion to your nation:

I pledge allegiance . . . You promise to be true

. . . *to the flag* . . . to the emblem of your country

. . . *of the United States of America* . . . a nation made up of fifty states and several territories, each with certain rights of its own

. . . *and to the republic* . . . a country where the people elect representatives from among themselves to make laws for them

. . . *for which it stands,* . . . the flag represents the United States of America

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

. . . *one nation under God,* . . . a country whose people are free to believe in God

. . . *indivisible,* . . . the nation cannot be split into parts

. . . *with liberty and justice* . . . with freedom and fairness

. . . *for all.* . . . for every person in the country—you and every other American.

DEMONSTRATE THE SCOUT SIGN, SALUTE, AND HANDSHAKE

Scout Sign

The Scout sign shows you are a Scout. Give it each time you recite the Scout Oath and Law. When a Scout or Scouter raises the Scout sign, all Scouts should make the sign, too, and come to silent attention.

To give the Scout sign, cover the nail of the little finger of your right hand with your right thumb, then raise your right arm bent in a 90-degree angle, and hold the three middle fingers of your hand upward. Those fingers stand for the three parts of the Scout Oath. Your thumb and little finger touch to represent the bond that unites Scouts throughout the world.

Scout Salute

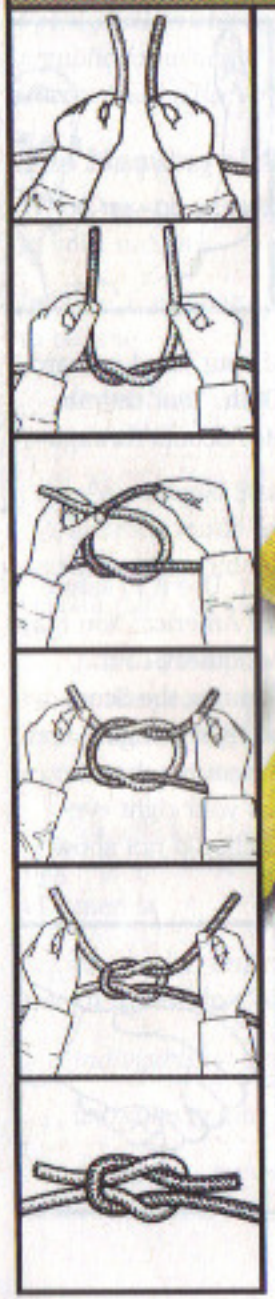
The Scout salute shows respect. Use it to salute the flag of the United States of America. You may also salute a Scout leader or another Scout.

Give the Scout salute by forming the Scout sign with your right hand and then bringing that hand upward until your forefinger touches the brim of your hat or the arch of your right eyebrow. The palm of your hand should not show.

Scout Handshake

The Scout handshake is made with the hand nearest the heart and is offered as a token of friendship. Extend your left hand to another Scout and firmly grasp his left hand. **The fingers do not interlock.**

SQUARE KNOT



DEMONSTRATE TYING THE SQUARE KNOT

The square knot is also known as a joining knot because it can join together two ropes and because it is the first knot Scouts learn when they join the BSA. It has many uses—from securing bundles, packages, and the sails of ships to tying the ends of bandages.

To tie a square knot, hold one rope end in each hand. Pass the right end over and under the rope in your left hand and pull it snug. Next, pass the rope now in your left hand over and under the one now in your right, and pull it snug. Remember, **right over left, left over right.**

UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO LIVE BY THE SCOUT OATH OR PROMISE, LAW, MOTTO, AND SLOGAN, AND THE OUTDOOR CODE

Scout Oath or Promise

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

Scout Law

A Scout is trustworthy, loyal,
helpful, friendly, courteous, kind,
obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave,
clean, and reverent.

Scout Motto

Be Prepared.

Scout Slogan

Do a Good Turn Daily.

(For further explanation of the Scout Oath or Promise, Law, motto, and slogan, see chapter 3, "Tenderfoot Scout," pages 45–55 T.)

Outdoor Code

As an American, I will do my best to
Be clean in my outdoor manners,
Be careful with fire,
Be considerate in the outdoors, and
Be conservation-minded.

(For more on the Outdoor Code, see chapter 9, "Camping," page 219 A.)

SCOUT MOTTO

BE PREPARED.

SCOUT SLOGAN

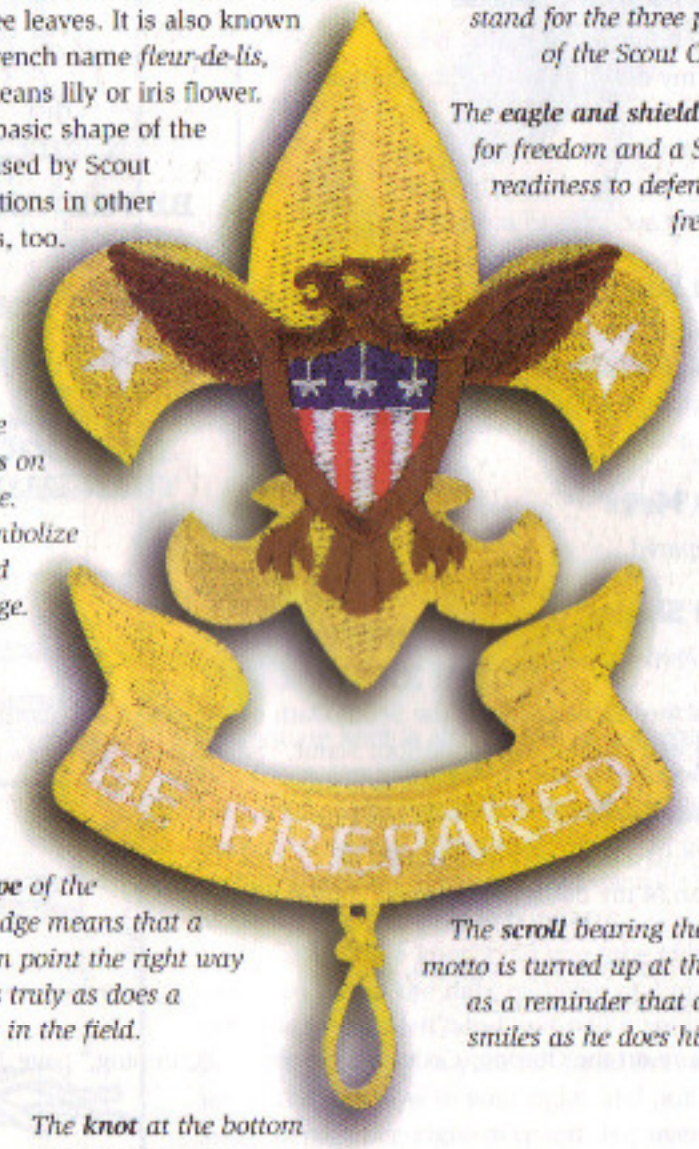
DO A GOOD TURN DAILY.

DESCRIBE THE SCOUT BADGE

The badge is shaped like the north point on an old compass. The design resembles an arrowhead or a *trefoil*—a flower with three leaves. It is also known by the French name *fleur-de-lis*, which means lily or iris flower. It is the basic shape of the badges used by Scout organizations in other countries, too.

*The **three points** of the trefoil stand for the three parts of the Scout Oath.*

*The **eagle and shield** stand for freedom and a Scout's readiness to defend that freedom.*



*There are **two stars** on the badge. They symbolize truth and knowledge.*

*The **shape** of the Scout badge means that a Scout can point the right way in life as truly as does a compass in the field.*

*The **scroll** bearing the Scout motto is turned up at the ends as a reminder that a Scout smiles as he does his duty.*

*The **knot** at the bottom of the scroll represents the Scout slogan, Do a Good Turn Daily.*

COMPLETE THE PAMPHLET EXERCISES

With your parent or guardian, complete the exercises in the pamphlet *How to Protect Your Children From Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide.*

The pamphlet found inside the cover of this handbook is part of the BSA's commitment to ensuring the safety of young people wherever they might be. It explains ways that adults can help protect children, and so should be shared by you with your parent or guardian.

PARTICIPATE IN A SCOUTMASTER CONFERENCE

After you finish the joining requirements, your Scoutmaster will want to have a conference with you. He or she will also sit down and talk with you after you finish the requirements for each Scout rank. These Scoutmaster conferences are opportunities for you to review how you are doing and to look ahead with your Scoutmaster toward what happens next in your life as a Scout. You can ask questions, share what you like about being a Scout, and together figure out ways it can be even better.

Friendly visits with your troop leader help open the way for your success as a Scout.