

A Scouting Glossary

As in any organization, acronyms and unfamiliar terms are often used that can be confusing. Does your son return from a Scouting activity and seem to be speaking a foreign language? Do you note some strange words on a flyer or calendar? This source is an effort to help define some of the more frequently used terms. If someone uses a term you are not familiar with simply ask them to explain it (we too all had to learn it somewhere), or sneak a glance at this glossary if your bashful about asking.

Nothing in this glossary should be considered policy or method of operation. It is intended only as a short description of some of the more common terms used in Scouting. Official BSA or Troop policy should be consulted if there are any questions.

A

Advancement: The process by which a Boy Scout meets certain requirements and earns recognition.

Advancement Chairperson: Records advancements and purchases badges for Troop.

Assistant Patrol Leader (APL): Help plan patrol meetings and activities. Assist Patrol Leader as needed.

Annual Planning Meeting: The Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) meets to plan the next year's activities with the guidance of the Scoutmaster (SM). This plan is then presented to the Troop Committee for approval to make sure the plan meets Boy Scouts of America (BSA) guidelines and that necessary resources can be provided. This normally occurs in the late summer to plan the next school year's activities.

Arrow of Light Award: Highest rank in Cub Scouting. The only Cub Scout badge that may be worn on the Boy Scout uniform.

Assistant Scoutmaster (ASM): Attends Troop meetings and outings to assist in leading and teaching the Scouts.

Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL): Assists the Senior Patrol Leader and acts as SPL in his absence. Second highest rank in the Troop.

Axe Yard: An area that is roped off in which an axe, hatch or other chopping tool is used.

B

Baden-Powell (B-P): Lord Baden-Powell was the founder of the Scouting movement. The Baden-Powell training program is designed to get new Scouts the basic Scout skills and help them to advance to First Class. This can be achieved within the first year if the Scout is active.

Be Prepared: The motto of Boy Scouting.

Blue Card: In order to work with a Merit Badge Counselor the Scout must first obtain a Blue Card from the Scoutmaster (SM). Blue Cards are the record of Merit Badge progress and are turned in to receive the Merit Badge after all the requirements have been met and the counselor has signed off the card. The Scout should keep his copy of the blue card until after he has reached the Rank of Eagle. The plastic baseball trading card holders work well for storing Blue Cards.

Board of Review (BOR): When a Scout has completed all the requirements for a rank, he appears before a board of review composed of members of the Troop Committee. The purpose of the review is not an examination. Rather it is to determine the Scout's attitude and acceptance of Scouting's ideals; to ensure that the requirements have been met for advancement, to discuss the Scout's experiences in the Troop and the Troop's program, and to encourage him to keep working towards advancement. A Board of Review may also be held to counsel a Scout about his lack of progress toward advancement.

Boy Scout Ranks: (in order of increasing rank) Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle

Boys Life Magazine: The magazine for all boys, published by the Boy Scouts of America.

Bronze Palm. An Eagle Scout may receive this recognition by earning five additional merit badges and completing certain other requirements.

Brotherhood membership. The second and final induction phase of membership in the Order of the Arrow.

BSA: Initials that stand for the Boy Scouts of America

BSA Lifeguard: A 3 year certification awarded to Scouts or Scouters who meet prescribed requirements in aquatic skills.

Buddy System: Two or more Scouts paired together when doing any merit badge work, outdoor activity or other strenuous programs.

Bugler: An appointed youth position in a Boy Scout Troop.

C

Camporee. A district or council Troop activity to demonstrate the techniques of living in camp.

Campsite. A Troop or patrol outdoor home for an overnight or long-term camp.

Chaplain Aid: Assist Troop chaplain in meeting religious needs of the Troop. Encourage saying grace at meals. Tell Troop about religious emblem program for their faith.

Chartered Organization: The organization that is officially chartered by the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) to carry out the Scouting program. The main liaison between the charter organization and the Troop is the Chartered Organization Representative (COR). A Chartered Organization could be a church, school, PTA/PTO, civic club or a business.

Charter Organization Representative (COR): Responsible for charter renewal which includes Troop and Council registration renewal of Scouts and adults including collection of dues. Responsible for maintaining positive relations through liaison between Troop Committee and Chartered Organization.

Charter renewal. An annual meeting attended by the chartered organization representative, head of the chartered organization, Troop leaders, and unit commissioner for the purpose of completing the charter application and making plans for the charter presentation.

Chief Scout Executive (CSE). The top-ranking professional Scouter of the Boy Scouts of America.

Class "A" Uniform: Formal uniform of BSA with shirt, pants, belt, socks, neckerchief, and slide.

Class "B" Uniform: Troop t-shirt and/ or sweatshirt and Scout pants.

Class "C" Uniform: Troop t-shirt and jeans

Commissioner: Adult volunteers working at district or council level. Unit commissioners are assigned to units and should be a friendly resource to the unit leaders.

Committee Chairman: The "go between" for the Troop and the Council, and chairs the parent committee meetings.

COPE: Challenging Outdoor Personal Experience. Boy Scout activity involving heights, trust and team building.

Council: Provides year round training, service and support to each Troop; training to support the chartered organization; guidance and methods for Troop committees seeking quality leaders; camping facilities, a service center, a professional staff to assist each Scout in every possible way; general liability insurance to cover the chartered organization; respect for the aims and objectives of each chartered organization, and the promise or Scouting resources to help the organization meet those objectives.

Council service center. The business center for the local administration of Scouting.

Court of Honor: A public ceremony and a chance for the Scouts to be publicly recognized and receive their achievements.

Cracker Barrel: A Scout term for a social gathering with refreshments after a meeting or activity. Often an evening activity at camp before taps.

D

Den Chief: Works with Cub Scouts to assist them in their advancement and represent the spirit of Scouting.

District: Each council is divided into several geographic areas called districts. Each district has a district committee composed of volunteer Scouters. Their duty is to work through chartered organizations to ensure success of Troops. There are several district committees devoted to Training, Advancement, Recognition, Camping, Activities/civic service, Finance and Membership/relations.

District Award of Merit: Recognition for Scouters who give noteworthy service to youth at the district level.

District Committee: A group of key volunteer Scouters who, through the chartered organization, work to ensure the success of the units.

District Committee Chairman: The executive officer of the district committee.

District Executive: A professional Scouter who works under the direction of the council Scout executive to support the units and act as an adviser to the volunteer leaders in the district.

Dutch Oven: A large cast iron covered pot used to bake and cook in.

Duty Roster: An assignment chart used by patrols on campouts used to schedule such items as: cooking, clean-up, fire building and water gathering.

E

Eagle Scout: The highest rank for Scouts.

Event Director: Organizes activities, makes reservations, handles permission slips, organizes drivers, and collects fees.

F

Fast Start: This video available on the BSA website is important for all parents and adult volunteers to watch - it provides an introduction to the Scouting Program. The Boy Scout Fast Start covers three topics: The Troop Organization, The Troop Meeting, and The Outdoor Program.

Fifty-Miler Award: A recognition given to Scouts who have taken part in a wilderness trip of at least 50 consecutive miles over at least five consecutive days, and fulfill requirements for group service projects on the trip.

Firem'n Chit: Shows a Scout has demonstrated knowledge of safety rules, in building, maintaining, and putting out camp and cooking fires.

First Class rank: The rank above Second Class and below Star in Boy Scout advancement.

Friends of Scouting: An annual campaign to raise money for the Council operations.

Fund Raising Chairperson: Organizes fund raisers for the Troop.

G

God and Country program series: A series of religious emblems presented to Scouts of the Protestant faiths.

Gold Palm: An Eagle Scout who holds the Bronze Palm may receive this recognition by earning five additional merit badges and completing certain other requirements.

Good Turn: "Do a Good Turn Daily" is the Scout slogan. A good turn is something you do without being asked or expected to do it and for which you expect no reward.

Grubmaster: The Scout responsible for developing the food shopping list and securing the food needed by his patrol for an outing/campout. The Grubmaster isn't necessarily the Cook for the meals but may participate in the food preparation.

Guide to Safe Scouting: This booklet is the Bible when it comes to safety related issues in Scouting. Those items in BOLD print are rules that MUST be followed. Everything else in the booklet are recommendations that should be followed. Troop leaders frequently consult this to see if planned activities are being done safely and within prescribed BSA policy.

H

Heroism Award: A lifesaving award presented to a registered youth member or adult leader who has demonstrated heroism and skill in saving or attempting to save life at minimum risk to self.

High Adventure: Refers to National Council, local council, or Troop high-adventure activities or programs for older Scouts.

High Adventure Base: One of three national activity areas designed to provide unique and challenging outdoor experiences. Planned and designed to meet the needs and desires of older Scouts. These facilities are Philmont Scout Ranch (New Mexico), Northern Tier National High Adventure Base (Minnesota & Canada), and Sea Base (Florida).

Historian: Gather pictures and facts about past activities and keep them in scrapbooks, wall displays, or information files. Take care of Troop keepsakes and trophies.

Historic Trails Award: An award that may be earned by members of a Troop for hiking a trail listed in Nationally Approved Historic Trails and completing a project related to the trail.

Honor Medal: A lifesaving award presented to Scouts and Scouters who have shown heroism, resourcefulness, and skill in saving or attempting to save life at great risk of their own. May be presented with crossed palms in cases of exceptional skill or resourcefulness and extreme risk to self. Presented by the National Court of Honor.

Hornaday Awards: William T. Hornaday Awards are given to Scouts, units, and Scouters for distinguished service in conservation.

I

Instructor: Teaches basic Scouting skills in Troop and patrols. Works with the Training Chairman.

J

Jamboree: Scout meeting or camp out on a grand scale. There are national and international jamborees.

Jamboree On The Air (JOTA): Scouting and ham radio join forces to make many international contacts through the "air" waves. Traditionally the 3rd weekend in October.

Junior Asst. Scoutmaster (JASM): A youth between 16 and 18 who has already held major leadership positions within the Troop. Appointed by the Scoutmaster to help in guiding the Troop and youth leaders. In Troop 103 this position requires the individual be an Eagle Scout. See Junior Leader Job Descriptions for more details of duties.

Junior Leader Training (JLT): This is the first major training session for new junior leaders and Scouts. Session is based on the BSA Scoutmaster Junior Leader Training Kit, expanded to cover additional topics. Actual games and exercises used may be varied from year to year for variety. Provides coverage of Troop organization and operations, the Patrol Method, Troop leadership positions and duties, basic leadership principles, techniques and methods, basic problem solving and conflict resolution techniques, team building experience, additional Troop-specific information.

K

Klondike Derby: A winter/snow oriented camporee. Overnight camping experience in the snow with team building games and activities.

Knots: Worn by adults to signify training or awards received.

L

Leadership: To advance in the more senior ranks a Scout must hold a leadership position for a set period of time. The rank requirements in the Boy Scout Handbook (as revised) list the leadership positions that qualify.

Leave No Trace (LNT): A commonsense set of guidelines that allows Scouts to camp, hike, and take part in related outdoor activities in ways that are environmentally sound and considerate to others using the same areas. A Leave No Trace Awareness Award is available to Scouts who fulfill certain requirements.

Librarian: Takes care of Troop library which includes merit badge books, pamphlets, and other books. Maintains a record for checkout.

Life Scout Rank: The rank above Star and below Eagle Scout in Boy Scout advancement.

Lodge: A local council Order of the Arrow group chartered annually by the National Council.

Long-Term Camping: A camping experience consisting of five or more consecutive days and nights in the outdoors.

M

Medal of Merit. An award presented to Scouts who put into practice the skills and ideals of Scouting through some great act of service; need not involve a rescue or risk to self.

Merit badge. A recognition given to a Scout for completing the requirements for the badge.

Merit badge counselor. A registered adult volunteer who is expert in a merit badge field, has the ability to work effectively with Scouts, and certifies that requirements are met.

Mile Swim, BSA. A recognition given to Scouts to encourage their development of physical fitness and stamina through swimming.

Merit Badge Sash: As Scouts earn Merit Badges they are sewn on a Merit Badge Sash (available at the Scout Shop). The Merit Badge Sash is normally worn only for formal occasions such as a Court-of-Honor.

N

National Camping Award: Recognition awarded to a Boy Scout Troop or Varsity Scout team for completing a certain number of days and nights of camping on either an annual or a cumulative basis. The award also recognizes cumulative achievement in number of campouts by individual Scouts and Scouters.

National Council: The corporate membership chartered by the United States Congress to operate the program of the Boy Scouts of America; made up of all elected members of the National Executive Board, members of regional executive committees, elected local council representatives, elected members at large, and elected (nonvoting) honorary members.

National Eagle Scout Association (NESA): Open to membership to any youth or adult who attained the rank of Eagle Scout.

New Leader Essentials (NLE): An introductory training session that highlights the values, aims, history, funding, and methods of Scouting.

Northern Tier National High Adventure Base: This immense, year round facility consists of the Charles L. Sommers Canoe Base near Ely, MN, the Bissett Base in Manitoba, Canada, and the Atikokan Canoe Base in Ontario. Each offers Explorers and older Scouts some of the worlds best canoeing, camping, and adventure.

O

Order of the Arrow (OA): Scouting's National Honor Society. It sets out to recognize those Scouts and Scouters who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives, to develop and maintain camping traditions and spirit, to promote Scout camping, and to crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into a life of purpose of cheerful service to others.

OA Ordeal: The initiation ceremony experience for new OA members generally involving personal introspection, service to improve camp or trail and ceremonies based on Indian legend or lore.

OA Representative: Encourages older Scout participation in high adventure programs and is a link between Troop and OA chapter. Aids in promoting and organizing OA events and membership.

Orienteering: A cross-country race to reach a destination and certain checkpoints along the way with the use of a map and compass.

P

Palms, Eagle: After a Scout reaches the rank of Eagle, they can earn a Palm for every 5 additional Merit Badges they complete. You may wear only the proper combination of Palms for the number of merit badges you earned beyond the 21 required for the rank of Eagle. The Bronze Palm represents five merit badges, the Gold Palm 10, and the Silver Palm 15. For example a Scout with 20 additional Merit Badges would wear a Silver and a Bronze Palm.

Patrol: A group of 6 - 10 Scouts, with similar interests that form a team and work together during Troop meetings, campouts and other Scouting events.

Patrol Leader (PL): The Scout responsible for conducting patrol activities and delegating duties to patrol members. The Patrol Leader also attends the PLC.

Paul Bunyan Woodsman: A recognition given to a Scout who safely demonstrates skill with a long-handled ax.

Pedro: The long-eared, four-footed mailburro of the “Hitchin’ Rack” column in *Boys’ Life* magazine.

Permission Slip: In order to go on any outing the Scout must have a Permission Slip signed by his parent. The Permission Slip also provides details about uniform, departure time, food, etc. Permission Slips are posted on the Troop web site at least one week prior to the due date. It is the Scouts responsibility to make sure they have the appropriate Permission Slip signed and turned in by 7:15 p.m. on the due date noted on the Permission Slip.

Personal Floatation Device (PFD): otherwise known as a life vest. Those used in Scouting must be U.S. Coast Guard approved.

Philmont Scout Ranch: A 137,000-acre national high adventure base and training center located at Cimarron, New Mexico. Philmont offers older Scouts and Explorers the experience of a lifetime in activities that include rock climbing, archaeological excavation, black powder riflery, fishing, panning for gold, and horseback adventures.

Patrol Leaders Council (PLC): The Patrol Leaders Council is made up of the Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leaders, Troop Guides, OA Representative and others invited by the SPL. The PLC meets once a month (dates are listed on the Troop Schedule; and posted on the Troop Website). They are conducted by the SPL. The purpose of the PLC is to discuss and plan Troop activities for the following month and annual planning.

Q

Quality Unit Award: Recognition given each charter year to Troops that commit to and meet specified national standards pertaining to leader training, service, advancement, camping, and membership growth.

Quartermaster (QM): Keeps inventory of equipment and makes requests to committee of equipment needed.

R

Re-charter: The annual process of re-registering the Troop, Scouts and Scouters. Each unit designates leaders to collect the information and present updated paperwork to the council.

Rank: There are six ranks for Boy Scouts: Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle Scout.

Registration: The payment of an annual registration fee; one of the requirements for membership in the Boy Scouts of America.

Roundtable: Monthly meeting for leaders to exchange ideas, fellowship, and, a few announcements that is run by the district.

S

Safe Swim Defense: An eight step plan for conducting swimming activities in a safe manner. Can be taken on-line.

Safety Afloat: Guidelines for safe Troop activities utilizing water craft. Can be taken on-line.

Scout: Any registered youth.

Scouter: Any registered adult leader.

Scouting for Food: Every year, Scouts collect food for the fight against hunger. The food is turned over to local food banks for distribution to needy families. Scouting for Food is a national “Good Turn” of the Boy Scouts of America.

Scouting Magazine: The official magazine for all Scouters. It helps interpret the program, stimulate action, and strengthen a desire to serve.

Scouting Movement: An idea started by Lord Baden-Powell, based on the conviction that boys can live up to a code of conduct and can develop themselves physically, mentally, and spiritually through a program of activities and advancement challenges in association with other boys under the leadership of adults.

Scoutmaster (SM): Adult leader who trains and guides the youth leaders in carrying out the Scouting program. One or more Assistant Scoutmasters (ASM) help the Scoutmaster and are often assigned specific roles and duties.

Scoutmaster Conference: A Scout's informal discussion with the Scoutmaster about the standards that have been met. When a Scout has completed all the requirements for a new rank he must call the Scoutmaster to make an appointment for a Scoutmaster Conference. He should bring your *Boy Scout Handbook* to the conference. At the conference, the Scout and the Scoutmaster will talk about the Scout's work, growth in Scouting ideals, and goals for the future.

Scoutmaster's Minute. A part of the closing ceremony of a Troop meeting or campfire in which the Scoutmaster uses a brief story to inspire Scout-like conduct.

Scribe: Record and distribute minutes of PLC meetings. Work with Troop committee members responsible for finance, records, and advancement to provide necessary records.

Seabase: A high adventure Scout camp located in the Florida Keys.

Second Class Rank: The rank above Tenderfoot in Boy Scout advancement.

Secretary: Handles committee minutes and is a member of the Troop Committee.

Senior Patrol Leader(SPL): The SPL is responsible to the Scoutmaster for the operation of all activities of the Troop involving the Scouts. He appoints, with the Scoutmaster's concurrence, his Assistants and Staff-- Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders (ASPL), Scribe, Quartermasters, Historian, Librarian, Bugler, and Troop Guides. He is the leader of the Patrol leaders Council.

Silver Beaver Award: A recognition given by the National Court of Honor for distinguished service to youth within the council.

Silver Palm: An Eagle Scout who holds the Gold Palm may receive this recognition by earning five additional merit badges and completing certain other requirements.

Snorkeling, BSA: A recognition given to Scouts to encourage the development of aquatics skills that promote fitness and recreation.

Star Rank: The rank above First Class and below Life in Boy Scout advancement.

Swim Test (BSA Swimmer Test): Used to determine if the individual is a swimmer, beginner, or non-swimmer. Jump feet first into water over your head in depth, swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy, resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be swum continuously and include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating.

T

Taps: Taps is a famous musical piece, sounded by the U.S. military during flag ceremonies and funerals, generally on bugle or trumpet. The tune is also sometimes known as "Butterfield's Lullaby", or by the lyrics of its second verse, "Day is Done". At Scout Camp it refers to the time all campers are called for Lights Out, or bedtime.

Tenderfoot rank: The first rank in the Boy Scout advancement program.

Totin' Chip: Demonstrates a Scout knows how to handle wood tools.

Tour Permit: A document that must be filed with the council office before any official Scouting activity can take place. Special permits are required for travel out-of-state, over 500 miles, or for flying activities.

Treasurer: Handles finances and is a member of the Troop Committee.

Troop: The unit that conducts Boy Scouting for the chartered organization.

Troop Account: Credit in a Scouts account earned from Troop fundraising events, to be used towards Troop events or uniform/equipment needs.

Troop Committee: The committee appointed by the chartered organization to administer the affairs of the Troop.

Troop Guide: A senior Scout who is assigned to work with new Scouts. He helps them feel comfortable and earn their First Class rank in their first year.

TroopMaster: A software program used to track Scout advancement. The Scout Handbooks are used to update this database. Reports from this software are used to order awards and other patches from the council office. It is important that a Scout make sure his advancement progress is recorded in the database.

Two Deep: Two Deep Leadership is a Boy Scout Policy. A minimum of two adults must always be present with any youth. One of these adults must be 21 years old. This is part of the BSA Youth Protection Guidelines.

U

Uniform: Distinctive clothing worn by Scouts and Scouters.

Unit: Term used to designate any one of the following: patrol, Troop, squad, or team.

University of Scouting: All-day learning experience for adult leaders covering a wide variety of subjects with some hands-on experiences.

V

Venture Patrol: An optional older-boy patrol (ages 13 through 17) within a Scout Troop.

Venturing: A stand-alone program of the BSA for young men and women ages 14 through 20 who have completed the eighth grade and who subscribe to the Venturing Oath and Code.

Venturing Crew: The unit that conducts Venturing for the chartered organization; its members are called Venturers.

Vigil Honor: A recognition for distinguished service in the Order of the Arrow.

Volunteer: A registered individual who donates service, time, and/or funds to support the program of the Boy Scouts of America.

W

Webelos Den Chief: An older Scout who has been appointed to help direct the activities of a Webelos den.

Wilderness Use Policy: An official plan that outlines the size limit, skill level, and conduct of any Scouting group going into backcountry or wilderness areas.

Wood Badge: Advanced Training for Boy Scout adult leaders. Any adult who has taken Basic Leader Training can attend this advanced training course to expand his/her knowledge of the Scouting program and be of more help to the Troop.

World Conservation Award: An award emphasizing the importance of our natural resources and our interdependence with other countries in fulfilling our mutual needs.

X – There currently are no terms that begin with X in Scouting.

Y

Yours In Scouting (YIS): Often used as a closing in an E-mail similar to how "Sincerely yours" might be used in a letter.

Youth Protection: Training courses about child abuse. Training is offered for different age groups of Scouts and for adults. All adults on every Scout outing must be Youth Protection Trained. If an adult is not able to take the adult training in person, it is also available on-line at the council website.

Z – There currently are no terms that begin with Z in Scouting.