

Webelos to Boy Scout Orientation Script

National
Capital
Area
Council



The following is a potential script that can be used with the Webelos to Boy Scouts Powerpoint presentation. It is provided to give an idea of what can be said about each screen presented. Speakers are encouraged to include their own insights and experiences.

The presentation is divided into four main sections:

- Troop Organization
- How to visit a troop
- Advancements
- Camping and Equipment

Within each section are a series of screens. While speaking the presenters can press the advance key (click) on the computer to make text and/or graphics appear on the screen or to advance to the next screen. The final (all text graphics visible) display for each screen is shown on the left side of the script. The appropriate places to press the advance key are shown as “**(click)**” in the right side of the script.

The script is setup for three people, an adult leader and two Scouts. The leader does the introduction and the sections on how to visit and camping and equipment. Scouts present the troop organization and advancement sections. The presentation, however, can be done by only one leader or one leader and a Scout.

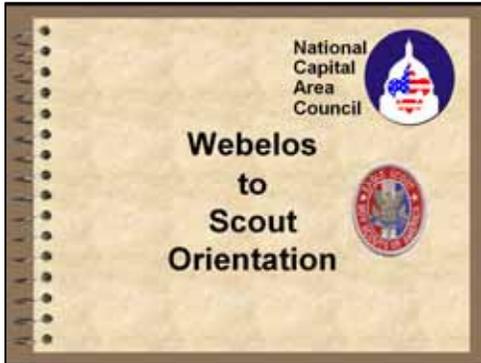
Overall Presentation Time: 1 hr

Equipment: Computer with presentation loaded
 Projector
 Screen
 Power cords
 Backpack
 Maglite
 Mess kit
 Scout Handbook

Handouts: Presentation notes
 List of troops in district
 AOL requirements
 Boy Scout glossary

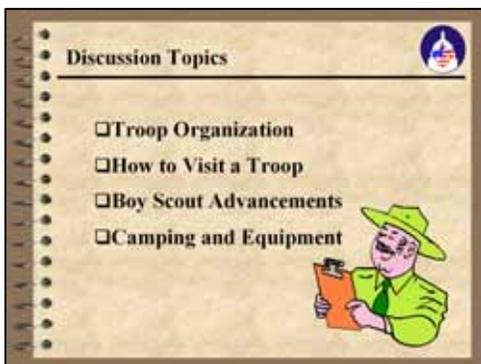
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(start presentation – shows Goose Creek logo on top)



(click) Hello everyone, welcome to our Webelos to Boy Scout orientation. My name is _____ and I am (position). Helping me tonight in this presentation are (name and positions of Scouts assisting). What we will be talking about tonight what you are going to be going through the next few months as you start to look for a Boy Scout troop to join. There are a lot of differences between the Cub Scout program and the Boy Scout program and we thought that this orientation would help you learn about them before you are actually in a troop. I've often heard Scouts and parents say "I wish someone had told me that sooner." Well, this is it, sooner. This orientation will take about an hour and 15 minutes and if you have questions during it just raise your hand.

Now in order to save the parents from trying to write down all this information in the dark, we have a handout with all the information that we will be going over tonight.



(click) We've broken down this orientation into four parts:

(click) We'll go over how a troop is set up and who the leaders are.

(click) We will go over how to contact a troop and what some of the things you might want to look for when visiting.

(click) We will go over how the Boy Scouts do their advancement program and what you can expect to do the first year you are in a troop.

(click) and finally we will talk about what type of camping you can expect to do your first year and what type of camping gear you will need.



(click) Our first discussion topic is troop organization. At this point I'd like to ask one of my Scout assistants to come up here and take over.

(Scout) Hello. My name is _____ and I am a (rank) Scout of Troop (troop number). I've been asked to discuss how a Boy Scout troop is set up and how it operates.

(click) Boy Scout troops are organized according to the patrol method.

(click) Now what is a patrol?

(click) A patrol is a group of Scouts, usually 6 to 8 boys who do things together, very much like your Webelos den.

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(click) One of the first things a patrol does is to elect one member of the patrol to be the patrol leader. This Scout is not the boss of the patrol, but he is responsible for see that the patrol works together and gets things done. He is also the patrol's representative to the rest of the troop.

(click) Patrols then pick a name for the patrol such as the eagles, dragons, or antelopes and they all wear that patrol patch on their right sleeves. They also make a patrol flag that they bring with them to meetings and campouts.

(click) On campouts the patrol works together as a unit to set up their tents. They cook, eat, and do things together as a group. They hold separate meetings to prepare for campouts and other events.

(click) A number of troops have what are called "New Scout" patrols for boys who have just crossed over. These are special patrols consisting of all new Scouts with one older Scout as their guide. They take turns in the leadership positions of the patrol and after six months, when the scouts have learned the basic, they are reassigned to regular patrols.



(click) A troop is a collection of patrols. What the patrols do every about every six months is to elect one of the Scouts to be the leader of the entire troop.

(click) This Scout is called the Senior Patrol Leader, or SPL for short, and he wears a special patch on his left sleeve. This is the Scout in charge of running the troop meetings and campouts.



(click) Together with the patrol leaders the SPL make up the Patrol Leader Council. This is the governing body of the troop. Together with the Scoutmaster they plan out the yearly calendar and submit it to the troop committee for approval, decide what they are going to do on camping trips and service projects, and determine what patrols will do what at troop meetings.

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(click) Just like your Cub Scout pack has an adult cubmaster, each Boy Scout troop has an adult Scoutmaster. Unlike your cubmaster, however, he is not in charge of running the troop meetings or events. He is responsible for:

(click) Signing off your advancement requirements,

(click) Training the Senior Patrol Leader and patrol leaders on how to be good leaders,

(click) Holding a Scoutmaster conference with each Scout who is ready for advancement,

(click) And he is in charge of the various assistant Scoutmasters who help the patrols and other tasks such as meeting visiting Webelos

(click) There are several meetings that Scouts attend.



(click) First is the troop meeting. Now your Cub Scout pack meets once a month and probably doesn't hold meetings during the summer, correct? Well in Boy Scouts the troop meets once a week, all through the year. We may occasionally skip a week due to vacations or just coming back from camping together for a week at summer camp, but basically Boy Scouting is a year round program. It is at the troop meetings that we plan for campouts and work on our advancements.

(click) We hold patrol meetings several times a month. Sometimes we do it during a troop meeting but we also meet outside to plan what we will do as a patrol on the next campout or what we are doing for a service project.

(click) Usually we do an outing, such as a campout, every month, but sometimes during the winter our outing for the month may be a ski trip.

(click) We also do several service projects during the year and in fact, service to the community is one of the advancement requirements when you get to be an older Scout.

At this time I'd like to return the program to Mr. _____.

(adult leader) Thank you _____. I just want to quickly summarize what we've just covered. First, the basic unit in Boy Scouts is the patrol and the boys elect their own patrol leaders. These are not Scouts appointed by the Scoutmaster, the boys select their own leaders. Second, it is these boy leaders who run the troop. They have the advice and guidance of the Scoutmaster but he and his assistants do

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not run it. The only time the Scoutmaster should get up in front of the troop is for the traditional “Scoutmaster minute,” a type of inspirational message, that occurs just before the closing of the meeting



(click) And now to move along to our next topic, how to visit a troop.

(click) The first thing you need to find out is who to contact.

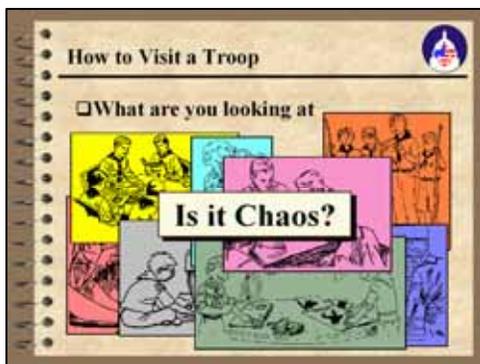
(click) Before visiting a troop you should call either the Scoutmaster or the troop’s Webelos coordinator. This is usually an assistant Scoutmaster whose primary job is to contact packs and work with visiting Webelos. Now as most of you don’t know who the Scoutmasters in your area are you may need some help finding them.

(click) Our district has two very important sources of information about the troops in the area. First we maintain a web site and in it is a list of all the troops, where and when they meet, who charters them, and how to contact them. A copy of that web page is one of the handouts we’ve given out tonight.

The second source of information is your unit commissioner. Now you Scouts may not know who this person is but hopefully your cubmaster, pack committee chairman, and den leaders do. This is an adult leader from the district assigned to your pack to provide information. He should know, or know how to get, the information about the Boy Scout troops in your area.

(click) Our next point is when to visit a troop.

(click) Most troops hold a special meeting during the year called an “open house.” This is a meeting specifically designed for visiting Webelos where the troop puts on displays of what they do and tell you a lot about themselves. These are great programs but they do have two shortcomings. First, they don’t always show you what the troop is like during the other times of the year when they meet. Also, some troops don’t hold their open houses until February and you really need to start visiting troops before then. You want to start visiting troops in the fall so that when you find some that look interesting you can come back and visit them a second or third time.



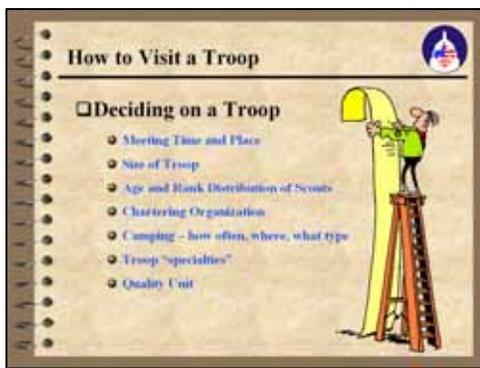
(click) Now when you visit a troop you have to remember that it is run very differently from a Cub Scout pack. At a pack meeting you have an adult, the cubmaster, who plans it and runs it. Troop meetings are planned and run by the Scouts, and to you adults, a boys definition of “organized” is very different from an adults.

(click) Also at troop meetings you usually won’t see everyone together listening to someone talk up front, like you’re doing now. You see

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lots of little groups doing things and moving about. You may see patrols having a meeting or planning for a campout, older Scouts working on merit badges while new Scouts work on their advancement requirements. The Scoutmaster may be over in the corner doing a Scoutmaster conference.

(click) Overall, your first impression may be that the troop is totally disorganized. But is it? A Boy Scout meeting runs by a process that we call “organized chaos,” and you may have to visit several times before you can see the difference. But as you watch and notice that everyone is doing something and nobody is idle, that the little groups seem to be accomplishing something, that everyone seems happy, and that suddenly everyone is together again for the closing of the meeting, that’s when your seeing what a troop meeting is all about.



(click) There are many points that you might want to consider when looking at a troop. The thing to remember is that each troop is different, that they have their own personality, and what might be a good troop for your friend or fellow den member may not be the troop for you. For example, there were six boys in my son’s Webelos den. Two had decided on a particular troop to go to and the other four followed along. One year later they are all still in Scouts but the four that followed along were now in different troops. They had found that the troop that they had joined was not right for them, even though their friends had joined it

(click) Meeting Time and Place - When looking at troops don’t limit yourself to those in the same town or closest. Unlike Cub Scout packs that are often based around an elementary school, troops usually have members that come from a very wide area. Though you may not want to pick a troop clear across the county (though some Scouts do), don’t be afraid of an extra 15 or 20 minute drive if you find a troop that really meets your goals. The only real consideration for this factor is what day of the week the troop meets. If the troop meets on a day you know you will have conflicts with, look for another troop.

(click) Size of the Troop – With more Scouts and more adult support, large troops often have a varied list of activities. On the other hand, large troops often have more competition for leadership positions and new Scouts can sometimes feel overlooked or lost. Small troops will often have a closer bonding of Scouts but may sometimes have trouble getting some activities going because fewer adult leaders are there to provide assistance. Try to decide what size troop fits your needs best and when looking at troops find out what size they plan to grow to. It is not uncommon to decide that you want to be in a small troop, find one of about 20 Scouts that you like to join, and then discover that 30 other Scouts have decided to do the same.

(click) Age/Rank Distribution of Scouts – When visiting a troop look to see how many older Scouts are present. These older Scouts help to

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provide more experienced boy leadership to the troop. Try to find out what “challenges” the troop offers the older Scouts to keep them interested in Scouting. This is important because soon you’re going to be one of those older Scouts and will want to do more than just your basic camping. See how many Eagle Scouts are in the troop and find out if they have an active merit badge program.

(click) Chartering Organization – The chartering organization is the group that “owns” the troop you are visiting. Try to find out what they do to support the troop (leadership, funding, events). Some chartering organizations may help by emphasizing certain programs, for example, a church may help its Scouts earn the Religious Emblem.

(click) Camping – All troops camp. Try to find out how often they go out, whether they just camp locally or travel a bit, and what types of camping they do. Some may do special yearly events such as a beach campout or a canoeing expedition. If they do a lot of hiking you may want to plan on getting better boots than you normally would. Find out what the costs of a camping trip are and how do they work out the transportation issues. Ask about what summer camps they go to and when and where they are planning to go to this year. Also ask what fund raisers the Scouts do to earn money for camping.

(click) Troop “specialties” – Many troops over time develop programs on one or more types of activities that they may do more often, or with more proficiency, than other troops. These could be such things as hiking, canoeing, rock climbing, or spelunking (caving). If you find a troop whose “specialty” matches your own interests you may want to look more seriously into joining them.

(click) Quality Unit – There are a number of requirements (advancements, adult leader training, on time rechartering) a troop must meet in order to earn their Quality Unit patch. If you don’t see the Scouts in the troop you’re visiting wearing the Quality Unit patch for this year try to find out why and what steps they have done to make sure that they get it next year

(click) Now how many here know when you can actually join a troop?

(check responses from audience)

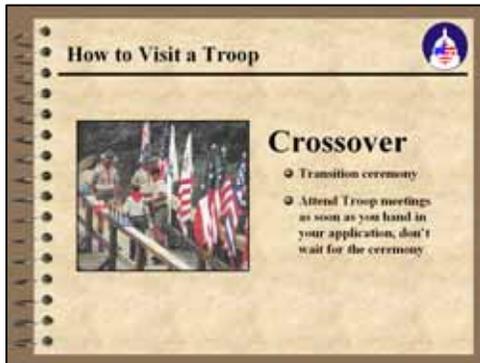
(click) Very good. You can officially join a troop when you’ve completed the fifth grade, are 11 years old, or you have earned the Arrow of Light in Cub Scouts.

(click) Now there is one requirement in earning the Arrow of Light that has caused a bit of confusion. That’s requirement number six which has you filling in a Boy Scout application and turning it in to the Scoutmaster. This does not mean that you are turning in the application to join the Scout troop. The objective of this requirement is to have a Scoutmaster conference and by turning in the application, having the Scoutmaster sign it and return it, and bringing it back to



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your Webelos leader show you have met the requirement. If later you decide to actually join that troop then you already have the application filled in, if you decide to join another troop just fill out another application. You will find that along with the handout for this presentation there is a sheet covering this Arrow of Light requirement.



(click) Now you've gotten your Arrow of Light and have handed in your application to the troop you want to join. There is still one more thing that you can do as a Cub Scout, and that's the crossover ceremony.

(click) This is a transition ceremony where you are officially recognized as moving up to Boy Scouting from Cub Scouting. This ceremony can be done at a pack meeting, at a troop meeting, or at a special bridging ceremony.

(click) The main thing to know about this ceremony is that you don't wait for to occur before going with the troop. Once you have handed in your application to the troop you are a part of it and should start going to the meetings and getting ready for your first campout.



(click) Our next discussion topic is advancements. At this point I'd like to ask another one of my Scout assistants to come up here and take over.

(Scout) Hello. My name is _____ and I am a **(rank)** Scout of Troop **(troop number)**. I've been asked to go over what you're first year in scouting will be like for advancements

(click) The first rank that all Scouts earn is the Scout rank, also called the Joining Requirement. Now does everyone remember the first rank you earned in Cub Scouts? (*wait for response saying "Bobcat"*). That's right, the Bobcat Badge. Well the Boy Scouts have a similar rank that has to be earned and you'll find that many of the things that you learned in getting your Arrow of Light are the same requirements as getting your Scout badge. These are:

(click) Knowing the Pledge of Allegiance.

(click) Knowing the Scout sign, salute and handshake.

(click) Being able to tie a square knot.

(click) Understand and agree to live by the Scout Oath, Law, Motto, and Slogan and the Outdoor Code.

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(click) Describe the Scout Badge. Now most of what I said so far should sound familiar to you. These are the same requirements you need to pass for the Arrow of Light.

(click) Two additional requirements are to do the pamphlet exercises at the front of the Scout Handbook with your parent or guardian, and

(click) Participate in a Scoutmaster's conference. Now the Scoutmaster conference is something special in Boy Scouts that you haven't had as a Cub Scout and I'll talk more about it in a few minutes.



(click) The first year Scout program, with the ranks of Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class is designed to teach new scouts the skills you need in order to go camping safely.

(click) Though it is called the first year program there is no time limit on when the advancements must be completed. Some Scouts can do all of the requirements in less than a year, some will take longer. Unlike Cub Scouts there is no age determined advancements. All Scouts go through the same advancement program no matter how old they are or when they join.

(click) As you complete each requirement, you ask your Scoutmaster or someone designated by your Scoutmaster to initial his or her approval on your requirements page.

(click) You may pass any of the requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class at any time. For example, if you fulfill a First Class requirement before you are a Second Class Scout, you may check off the First Class requirement as completed. You may not receive a rank, however, until you have received the one before it.

(click) As you pass each rank you will receive a card. It is very important that you put this card in a safe place. When you go for your eagle rank you will need to prove to the examining board that you have passed each rank and this card is the proof.



(click) The most important piece of equipment you will have in Scouting is your Scout Handbook. All of the requirements for all the ranks are in it, it has all the information you need about the requirements for everything up to first class, and it is where your Scoutmaster will be signing off the requirements. During your first year in Scouting you should have this book with you at all times, even on campouts. I also suggest that you put your name along the side of the book so that you can spot yours in a pile of books.

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(click) One of the things different in Boy Scout requirements that you didn't have in Cub Scouting is the Scoutmaster Conference. A Scoutmaster conference is required for every rank.

(click) During this conference the Scoutmaster will check to see that you have passed all of the requirements and that you still remember the things that you have learned. The Scoutmaster can ask you about any requirement for any rank or merit badge that you have earned so far.

(click) After the Scoutmaster has checked the requirements the two of you will set up your goals and timeline for getting to the next rank.

(click) This is also your personnel time with the Scoutmaster to talk to him about the troop. You can tell him what things you like and what things that you would like to see change.

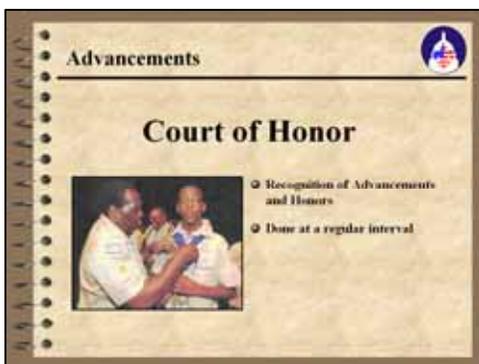


(click) Another requirement in Boy Scouts is that for each rank (except the Scout Badge) is that you go before a Board of Review. This board is made up of members of the troop committee and does not include the Scoutmaster or any of his assistants.

(click) The purpose of the Board of Review is not really to go over the requirements again (though they will ask you about them) but to check on the quality of your troop experience and to see how well the boy leaders are teaching you and on how Scoutmaster is guiding the troop.

(click) The Board will also be checking on your Scout spirit. This can include such things as how well you present yourselves to them and how you are living the idea of Scouting.

Once you have passed the Board of Review you have earned the rank you were working on.

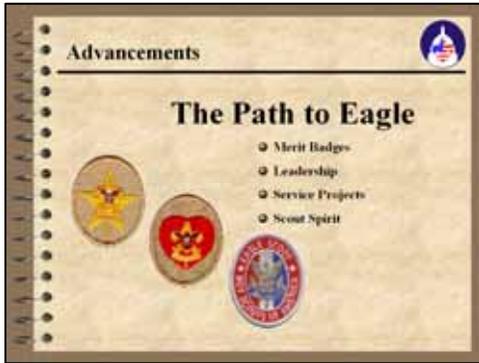


(click) But like all things in Scouting we like to do everything with the appropriate ceremony and in Boy Scouts that ceremony is the Court of Honor.

(click) The Court of Honor is a meeting where parents, friends, and guests are invited and the troop formally recognizes the advancements that each Scout has done and what special honors he may have earned.

(click) Troops usually hold about four Courts of Honor a year, one for each season. In addition they hold special Eagle Court of Honors for those Scouts reaching the rank of Eagle.

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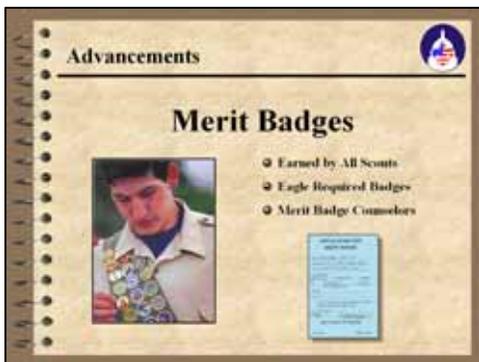
(click) Once you have earned the rank of First Class you are ready for the path to Eagle, which consists of the ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle. Up to now the requirements for advancement have been learning the basic skill of scouting. Now you will be learning some of the tougher skills and you will also have a chance to explore some of the subjects that interest you. There are four basic requirements for advancement at this level. They are:

(click) Merit badges. Each rank requires a certain number of merit badges to be earned.

(click) Leadership. Now that you are an experienced scout you need to start demonstrating leadership in the troop by holding certain positions.

(click) Service projects. The requirements for Star and Life call for you to give at least six hours of service to others. For Eagle you must actual plan, develop, and provide leadership in a service project of your own.

(click) And finally Scout spirit. This is done by showing that the Scout Oath and the twelve points of the Scout Law are the guidelines by which you direct your actions in your family, community, church, school, and nation.



(click) And now just a quick word about merit badges. There are more than 100 merit badges to choose from. Some encourage you to increase your skill in subjects you already like while others challenge you to learn about new areas.

(click) Though merit badges are required for advancement in the ranks above First Class they can be earned by any Scout in any rank. You will probably earn two or three at your first summer camp before you even get your Tenderfoot badge.

(click) There are certain merit badges that are marked as “Eagle Required.” For each of the ranks above First Class you must earn a certain number of these and for Eagle you must earn one in each of the required groups. Eagle required merit badges have a silver border around them.

(click) Merit badges are earned from merit badge counselors who are adults with special knowledge about the merit badge subject. They may or may not be a member of your troop.

(click) When you are ready to earn a merit badge you first go to your Scoutmaster for permission. He will give you a “blue card” which is your merit badge application. Then you and a buddy, who can be

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another scout, a friend, or another adult, visit the merit badge counselor who goes over with you the requirement and how to earn them. As you pass the requirements the merit badge counselor will sign them off in the blue card. When you are done you turn the blue card back in to the Scoutmaster. When you receive the merit badge you will get the badge, the merit badge card, and the blue card back. Of the three the blue card is the most important. This is the proof that you will need to show that you earned the badge when you up facing your Eagle Board of Review.

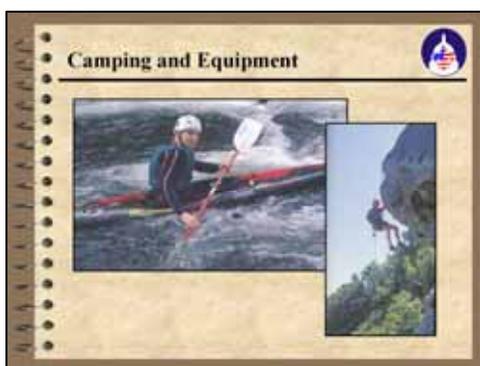


(click) Finally I'd like to mention two other awards that seem to be especially important to new Scouts.

(click) The first is the Totin' Chip. This is earned when you show you know how to properly use, handle, and care for wood tools such as a knife, ax, and saw. Until you have earned this you may not carry a pocketknife. For those who have earned the Whittling Chip in Cub Scouts the answer is no, that does not give you the right to carry a pocketknife.

(click) Along with the badge comes the card and you are expected to carry this around with you to show that you have earned the right to use wood tools. Every time you are found misusing wood tools or using them unsafely a corner of the card will be cut off. When the fourth corner is cut you've lost your Totin' Chip and have to earn it all over again.

(click) The second award is the Fireman's Chit. This is earned when you show you know how to properly build, control, and put out a camp fire. Until you have earned this you may not carry matches.

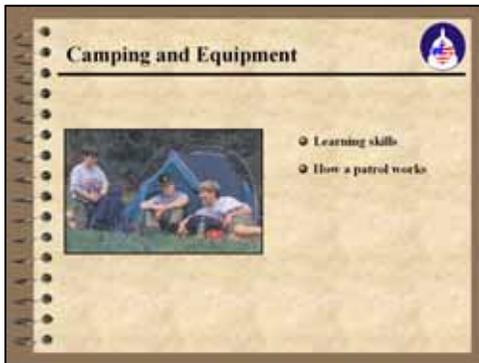


(click) At this time I'd like to return the program to Mr. _____ who will end the orientation by talking about camping and equipment.

(adult leader) Thank you _____.

Now how many Scouts here expect to be doing things like kayaking or rock climbing as soon as you join Boy Scouts. *(wait for show of hands)*. Well I'm sorry to disappoint you but the Scouts you see here have already learned the basic skills that you will be learning your first year and have already learned other important skills and have probably earned their swimming, first aid, and safety merit badges.

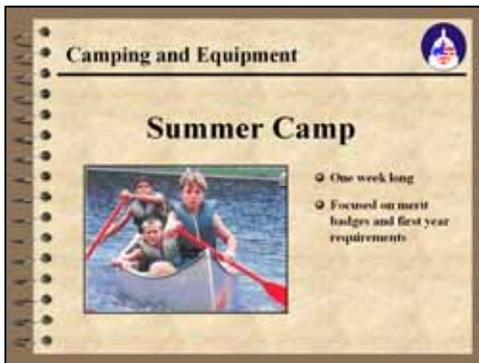
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(click) Your first year camping experience is going to be a bit more tame. Often it will be a matter of the cars pulling into a parking lot, having the gear unloaded, and the campsite set up right there. At this time you are going to be learning two important sets of skills.

(click) First you are going to learn your camping skills, how to properly pack, set up a tent, cook a meal, and even more importantly, how to clean up.

(click) Second, and just as important, you are going to learn how to be a member of a patrol. You are no longer out there by yourself, you are part of a patrol. You will be learning what the different jobs in the patrol are, how to work together as a group, how to learn from the patrol leader, and how to be a leader yourself.



(click) Now has anyone wondered why we try to get Webelos to change over to Boy Scouts around March and April? *(Note: the first graphic in this set is a winter scene. When the Scouts call your attention to it you can say that the thermostat in the computer is acting up again. Tapping the computer [pressing the click] will change the scene to the canoe picture)* One of the reasons we do crossover at that time is summer camp. By joining a troop then you can find out where they are going, earn the money, and by the time it comes around you will have been camping with them several times and feel more comfortable with them. You will also have picked up some of the basic skills needed for a long campout.

(click) Summer camp is usually a week long campout at a special Scout camp such as Goshen.

(click) Most of your time at camp will be focused on earning merit badges and for first year Scouts, learning some more of the skills you need for First Class.



(click) Okay, let's take a look at some of the equipment that you'll need to go camping. There is quite a bit of it but that does not mean that you have to go out and immediately buy a lot of expensive gear. When looking for camping equipment keep in mind two things: First, new Scouts start off small and grow rapidly (a sleeping bag that fits today will be too small tomorrow) and second, new Scouts usually do not do major hiking or extreme weather camping their first year.

(click) Most troops have their own tents, tarps, axes, saws, and cooking gear that are supplied to the patrols. Patrols will supplement this with purchases of their own for such things as pot holders, paper towels, etc. Parents, however, usually have to supply their own tent if they join the troop on a campout.

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(click) Backpacks are usually not an item that you have to buy immediately when you join a troop. Since the distance most first year Scouts have to travel is from the back of the car to the tent, a duffle bag is often sufficient. Also, since you should only pack about 25% of your body weight in a pack a pack that all right for an adult or older Scout is usually a bit big for a new scout. *(At this point I often get one of the smaller scouts in the audience to come up and bring my pack up with them).* As you can see this pack is not the right size for this Scout, but it will fit him in about two more years. If possible try to borrow a backpack for the first year or two until the you get a bit bigger. Also, for new Scouts an external frame pack is probably better than an internal one. For those who don't know what these are an external frame pack has the metal frame on the outside and visible. The Scout sitting on the wall has an external frame pack. Internal frame packs have the frames inside the pack giving it their shape. The Scout on the right has a red internal frame pack. External frame packs are a little bit less expensive and allow Scouts to attach more things to the outside. Also until you learn to properly pack the frame helps keep sharp objects from digging into your back.

(click) A sleeping bag is a definite must for camping. You don't, however, have to go out and buy something that's good for 40° below. A 25° sleeping bag is more than adequate for the type of camping a new Scout will do in the first two years (including winter camping), especially since this will probably also be the bag you bring to summer camp. Even when the temperature goes down to zero you will be sleeping inside tents with other Scouts, dressed, and with a bag liner or blanket inside the bag.

Sleeping bags filled with down are to be avoided. Though they are the "warmest and lightest" they lose almost all of their insulating ability when they get wet (a common occurrence for new Scouts) and cannot be dried out on a camping trip. The new synthetics are almost as good as down, retain most of their insulating capability when wet, and can be dried on a camping trip. Mummy bags are good because they heat up faster, are lighter and easier, and usually come with a hood to keep the head warm. They can sometimes be uncomfortably for new Scouts, however, because they feel constrictive.

(click) Boots are an essential for camping. Sneakers do not provide any ankle support and quickly get wet with a little rain. Boots should go above the ankle and should have a gusseted tongue (the tongue has extra material to the sides that attach to the boot) so that water and dirt are kept out. They also need to be waterproofed. Again remember that when buying boots that you'll probably outgrow them in six months and need another pair so it doesn't pay to buy really expensive ones.

Webelos to Scout Orientation

(click) Probably the preferred flashlight for a Scout is the MagLite, with a belt holder. They are small, easily carried, always with you, and even have a spare bulb inside. You can also buy a headband for them so that you can use them hand free. Headbands with attached lights are also good. The rule here is that if it takes a D cell, its too big. Also remember that having spare batteries is often as important as having the flashlight.

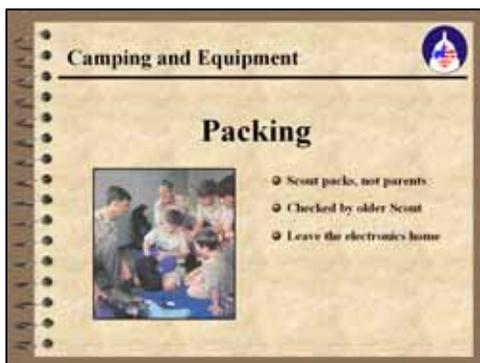
(click) Most people when they think of mess kits think of the metal army mess kits where everything fits inside another. Don't buy them, they are made of metal which easily lets hot food get cold and are easily bent out of shape. *(At this point I usually pull such a mess kit out of my pack and explain that the only reason it still fits together is that I have never opened it and that the second I do I probably won't be able to put it back together).* What you want is a good study plastic plate and bowl that will not break when dropped or stuffed into a pack on the way home. Utensils can be any old mismatched set of knife, fork, and spoon that you won't worry about if it doesn't come home. For drinks use a good plastic mug. Don't buy collapsible cups, they hold about as much water as the Dixie cups you use when brushing your teeth and are no good for hot drinks (they'll collapse on you).

(click) Raingear is something of a must on all camping trips, even if the weather forecast is for clear blue skies. First year Scouts usually wear a poncho. It's easy to pack and quick to put on. It's not the best in weather protection, however, especially in severe weather and many Scouts eventually switch over to a rainsuit. While this offers more protection those that buy plastic or rubberized rainsuits eventually realize that they are sweating inside as much as it is raining outside. If you do go the rainsuit route buy a nylon or Gore-tex rainsuit that lets the body breath. A good rain jacket can also serve as a regular jacket when it is cooler meaning one less thing to pack.

(click) Water bottles are an essential. Whether you get a canteen or a plastic water bottle make sure that it either has a strap or a holder so that you can carry it around.

(click) Now just a few final comments about packing.

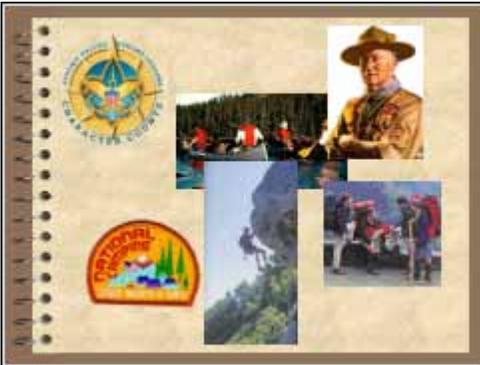
(click) The first rule about packing is to never let someone else pack for you, even your parents. They may assist you but you are the person who needs to put everything in the pack. This is because you are the one going camping and in the middle of the night when your flashlight dies and you need your spare batteries, you are the one who needs to know in what pocket of the backpack they are in. Its not fun rummaging around your pack, in a dark tent, trying to find something that you "think" Mom or Dad put in the pack.



Webelos to Scout Orientation

(click) On your first campout your pack should be checked by one of the older scouts to make sure that you have everything and it's in a "good" place. You don't want your poncho at the bottom of your pack when you run into a sudden rainstorm. In fact, the Boy Scouts think that getting your pack inspected is so important that we've even made it a Tenderfoot requirement.

(click) Finally, no Gameboys, CD players, or radios on camping trips. If it takes a battery, and it is not your flashlight, leave it home. We'll have more than enough to keep you busy on a campout and a ready source of reading material (*hold up Scout Handbook*).



(click) This brings us to the end of our orientation. At this point I'd like to invite any troop that would like to do a short presentation about their program to come forward.