



Making Scouting Unforgettably FUN

***Increasing a Troop's
Membership and Retention***

Three Areas of Concentration



Two Types of Fun



Troop Leader Resources



Two Program Approaches

Two Types of Fun



ACTIVE (Participation) FUN



PASSIVE (Spectator) FUN

ACTIVE FUN

(Participation Fun)





ACTIVE FUN: Scouts are participating and engaged. They are actively involved with the task, challenge, game, or the current experience.

Scout Skill Challenge



A Fun Activity that Reinforces the Acquisition of the Skill, Illustrates how it's Used, and Provides an Opportunity to Rely Upon the Skill to Complete the Task!

Team Building Opportunity



When Scouts engage in an activity that requires them to work together in order to satisfy an objective, team building comes into play. Scouts will need to use teamwork, pool their resources, and share leadership

Interpatrol Game



Small Space Interpatrol Game



Large Area Interpatrol Game

Healthy competition between patrols can have a positive outcome when presented in the right spirit. Though these games are fun to play when pitting patrol against patrol, they can also be enjoyed when played by a single patrol-sized group.

Troopwide Game



Small Space Troopwide Game



Large Area Troopwide Game

Troop games give Scouts an opportunity to team up with the members of other patrols for some friendly play. In addition to nurturing camaraderie and Scout spirit, their purpose is simply to make fun happen.

Outings



PASSIVE FUN

(Spectator Fun)





PASSIVE FUN: Scouts are having a good time as the *spectators* of an “event” that attracts and maintains their attention. In other words, Scouts are using their senses to enjoy an entertaining spectacle.



Scouts are always happy to focus their attention on something amusing, interesting, or impressively presented.

Planning! Preparation! Presentation!



Well-prepared and enthusiastically-presented instructional periods add to a troop meeting's overall impact and fun!

Planning! Preparation! Presentation!



Opening Ceremony



SPL Announcements



Leader's Minute



Closing Ceremony

Troop Leader Resources



troopleader.scouting.org

Troop Leader Resources



The banner features a photograph of several Scouts BSA members in uniform. A young woman in the center is smiling and making a hand gesture. The background is a solid blue gradient. At the top, a brown navigation bar contains several menu items. A yellow triangle points to the 'TROOP PLANNING' link. The Scouts BSA logo is centered below the photo.

GENERAL TROOP INFO TROOP PLANNING PROGRAM FEATURES CEREMONIES ADVANCEMENT SKILLS ACTIVITIES, GAMES & CHALLENGES NEW TROOPS UPDATES & BLOG



Troop Leader Resource Hub

Your destination for Scouts BSA troop info and planning resources

troopleader.scouting.org



Troop Planning

Find details and resources on planning troop meetings and activities.

[Learn More](#)

Planning! Preparation! Presentation!

The website's section on Troop Planning breaks down each segment of an effective troop meeting agenda. As part of the Patrol Leaders' Council's monthly meeting, approaching each segment from an entertainment perspective goes a long way to ensuring meetings and outings will be fun with positive outcomes.



	Meeting Plan: _____		
	Week __ Date _____		
ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening __ minutes before meeting			_____
Opening Ceremony __ minutes	Flag presentation Oath and Law Uniform inspection		_____
Group Instruction __ minutes	• • • •		_____
Skills Instruction __ minutes 	• • • •		_____
	• • • •		
	• • • •		
Breakout Groups __ minutes (Patrol Meetings)			_____
Game (or Challenge) __ minutes			_____
Closing __ minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		_____
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting __ minutes	Leadership team review plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

Planning! Preparation! Presentation!

The Troop Meeting Planning Form provides an excellent framework for the weekly meeting's agenda. An impressively organized and well-paced troop meeting, planned from an entertainment perspective and presented with enthusiasm, makes the meeting more fun for everyone.

Assigning the preparation and presentation of various parts of the agenda to individual patrols or troop leaders adds variety and can contribute nicely to making fun happen.

Access the informational video by searching for the following name:
“Scouting America: Troop Meeting Agenda (Composite)”

Troop Leader Resources

A banner for the Troop Leader Resource Hub. At the top is a dark brown header bar. Below it is a light gray navigation bar with the following links: GENERAL TROOP INFO, TROOP PLANNING, PROGRAM FEATURES, CEREMONIES, ADVANCEMENT SKILLS, ACTIVITIES, GAMES & CHALLENGES, NEW TROOPS, and UPDATES & BLOG. The 'PROGRAM FEATURES' link is highlighted with a yellow downward-pointing triangle. Below the navigation bar is a large image of several Scouts in uniform. In the center of the image, a yellow upward-pointing triangle is positioned over the 'PROGRAM FEATURES' link, and a yellow fleur-de-lis logo is positioned over the Scouts. Below the image is a dark blue section with the text 'Troop Leader Resource Hub' in white, followed by the tagline 'Your destination for Scouts BSA troop info and planning resources' in a smaller white font.

GENERAL TROOP INFO TROOP PLANNING PROGRAM FEATURES CEREMONIES ADVANCEMENT SKILLS ACTIVITIES, GAMES & CHALLENGES NEW TROOPS UPDATES & BLOG



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troopleader.scouting.org



Program Features

Program Features consists of 48 themed modules to help make program planning easier for troop leaders. Explore the mix of topics here.

[Learn More](#)

Planning! Preparation! Presentation!

Each program feature is chock full of comprehensive planning material and lots of information.



PROGRAM FEATURES

*Access the informational video by searching for the following name:
"Scouting America: Program Features Introduction Video"*

Planning! Preparation! Presentation!

Outdoor Program Features

- [Archery](#)
- [Backpacking](#)
- [Camping](#)
- [Caving](#)
- [Climbing and Rappelling](#)
- [Cooking](#)
- [COPE](#)
- [Cycling](#)
- [Fishing](#)
- [Geocaching](#)
- [Hiking](#)
- [Nature and Environment](#)
- [Orienteering](#)
- [Outdoor Ethics](#)
- [Paddle Sports](#)
- [Pioneering](#)
- [Scuba Diving](#)
- [Shotgun Shooting](#)
- [Sustainability](#)
- [Swimming](#)
- [Wilderness Survival](#)
- [Wildlife Management](#)
- [Winter Camping](#)

Health and Safety Program Features

- [Emergency Preparedness](#)
- [First Aid](#)
- [Games](#)
- [Safety](#)
- [Special Needs Awareness](#)

Citizenship and Personal Development Program Features

- [Citizenship](#)
- [Communication](#)
- [Duty to God](#)
- [Ethics](#)
- [Financial Management](#)
- [Mentoring](#)
- [Project Planning](#)

STEM Program Features

- [Engineering](#)
- [Mathematics](#)
- [Science](#)
- [Technology](#)

Sports Program Features

- [Fitness and Nutrition](#)
- [Rifle Shooting](#)
- [Skateboarding](#)
- [Soccer](#)
- [Snowboarding and Skiing](#)

Arts and Hobbies Program Features

- [Living History](#)
- [Multimedia](#)
- [Music](#)
- [Spectator Sports](#)

The blue text for each feature links to detailed troop meeting plans, plans for a related outing, and extensive information.

Troop Leader Resources



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Ceremonies

Find helpful resources on what ceremonies are and why they are used.

[Learn More](#)

Planning! Preparation! Presentation!

During a Scout meeting, court of honor, campfire program, or special gathering, a well-presented ceremony will add meaning and enhance the experience.

Ceremonies serve Scouting in a variety of ways. A simple or elaborate ceremony can:

- communicate something significant is taking place!
- accentuate an event or accomplishment!
- entertain!
- provide inspiration!

Simply put, a well-presented ceremony will always contribute to making Scouting events more fun.

Ceremonies Index

Ceremonies: What and Why?

Planning

Preparation
Staging
Group Dynamics

During a Troop Meeting

OPENING CEREMONIES

Standard Flag Ceremony
Pledge of Allegiance w/Meanings
Pledge of Allegiance – Two Lines
Pledge of Allegiance – Spotlight
Scout Oath – 3 Candle Opening 1
Scout Oath – 3 Candle Opening 2
Scout Law – Single Points
Scout Law – Newest & Oldest Scout
Scout Law – Twelve Scouts
Outdoor Code – Unison
Outdoor Code – 4 Candle Opening
Outdoor Code w/Explanations

CLOSING CEREMONIES

Retiring the Colors
Scout Law and Prayer
Counting Off w/Law or Oath
Class A Clap
Scout Benediction
Scout Benediction w/Gestures
Troop Circle – Scout Benediction
Troop Circle – Repetition
Counting Off – Scout Benediction
Taps

INVESTITURE CEREMONIES

RECOGNITION CEREMONIES

- Sample Presentation
- Providing Additional Information
- Visual Aids

INSTALLATION CEREMONIES

- Senior Patrol Leader Installation
- Patrol Leader Installation

NEW MEMBER JOINING CEREMONIES

- Joining Ceremony 1
- Joining Ceremony 2

Eagle Courts of Honor

Sample Agenda

Eagle Charges

SCRIPTED CEREMONIES

- Trail of the Eagle
- Voice of the Eagle
- Eagle Scout Obligations
- Eagle Pledge Script
- Challenge Ceremony
- The Four Winds
- History of the Eagle and Man

Campfire Ceremonies

TROOP CAMPFIRE GUIDELINES

LIGHTING THE FIRE

- Torch Lighting
- Magic Fire Lighting
- Flaming Arrow
- Enhancing the Lighting of the Fire
- Gifts from the Scout Oath

OPENINGS

- Poetic Opening 1
- Poetic Opening 2
- Poetic Opening 3
- Words to Set the Mood 1
- Words to Set the Mood 2
- Opening Applause

CLOSINGS

- Thorns and Roses
- Closing Wish
- Troop Circle – Scout Benediction
- Taps
- Scout Vespers

AOL Crossover

The Bridge

What's Presented

Outdoor Ceremonies

Simple Bridge Crossing Ceremony

Simple Pack Meeting Crossover

Rudyard Kipling Crossover

Troop Leader Resources

[GENERAL TROOP INFO](#) [TROOP PLANNING](#) [PROGRAM FEATURES](#) [CEREMONIES](#) [ADVANCEMENT SKILLS](#) [ACTIVITIES, GAMES & CHALLENGES](#) [NEW TROOPS](#) [UPDATES & BLOG](#)





Troop Leader Resource Hub

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troopleader.scouting.org



Advancement Skills

These resources will assist those who want to become more confident in their ability to present campcraft and pioneering skills.

[Learn More](#)

The videos in this section of the website serve to Explain and Demonstrate specific outdoor skills. They can readily contribute to preparing both adult and youth leaders to present these skills with more confidence and enthusiasm, adding to the overall impact and fun of a troop meeting or outing!

Access a convenient, categorized link index containing all the How-To Campcraft Videos: scoutingactivities.com/how-to-campcraft-videos/

How-To Campcraft Videos



GENERAL CAMPCRAFT

Basic Knots



Woods Tools



Fire Building



Tarps and Dining Flies



Navigation and Measurements



PIONEERING SKILLS

Lashings



Pioneering Knots



General Pioneering Skills



Troop Leader Resources



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Planning! Preparation! Presentation!



Activities, Games, & Challenges

As Scout leaders, an important objective is to ensure Scout meetings are fun with positive outcomes. Explore this compilation of Scouting activities which can be incorporated into troop meetings to help satisfy that objective.

[Learn More](#)



This section of the website provides a large and readily accessible library of activities that strongly correlate to planning, preparing, and presenting the activity segment of the troop meeting agenda that contributes most to making meetings fun with positive outcomes.



SCOUT SKILL CHALLENGES

KNOT TYING SKILL ACTIVITIES

50-Foot Rescue Relay (wide, in or out)
Bowline Draw (small, in or out)
Bowline Sheet Bend Draw (small, in or out)
Cannibal Rescue (wide, in or out)
Eight Knot Contest (wide, in or out)
Horizontal Half Hitching Race (small, in or out)
Hot Isotope Transport (wide, out)
Knot Hoop Relay (small, in or out)
Knot Master Tug of War (wide, in or out)
Knot Trail (Knot Kim's Game) (small, in or out)
Knot-Tying Relay (wide, in or out)
Lassoing the Steer (wide, in or out)
Log Hauling (wide, out)
One-Handed Knot Tying (small, in or out)
Pony Express Race (wide, in or out)
Remote Clove Hitch (wide, out)
Rescue Relay (small, in or out)
Rope Tackle Tug of War (large, in or out)
Rope-Toss-Log-Lift Challenge (Log-Lift Relay) (wide, in or out)
Simple Square Knot Relay Race (small, in or out)
Square Knot Visual Challenge (small, in or out)
Taut Line Hitch Race I (large, out)
Taut Line Hitch Race III (large, in)

LASHING SKILL ACTIVITIES

A-Frame Transport Race (wide, in or out)
Catch the Snapper (small, in or out)
Crossing the Alligator Pit (wide, in or out)
Everyone on the Tripod (wide, in or out)
Flagpole Race (wide, out)
Get'Im Up (small, in or out)
Joining Staves (wide, in or out)
Ladder Building (wide, in or out)
Lift Seat Procession (wide, in or out)
Reactor Transporter (wide, in or out)
Roman Chariot Race (wide, in or out)
Scout Stave Launcher (wide, in or out)
Self Standing Flagpole (small, in or out)
Snake Race (wide, in or out)

GENERAL OUTDOOR SKILL ACTIVITIES

Bow Saw Relay (small, in or out)
Dining Fly Race (wide, out)
Flint and Steel (small, out)
Fuzz Stick Relay (small, in or out)
Lifeline Relay (wide, in or out)
Sloppy Camp (small, out)
Split the Match Relay (small, in or out)
String Burning Race (wide, out)
Supreme A-Frame Tarp Pitch (wide, out)
Supreme String Burning Race (wide, out)
Tent Mess Relay (wide, in or out)
Tent Pitching Race (wide, out)
Tent Striking Race (wide, out)
Trail Signs Relay (small, in)
Water Boiling Race (wide, out)
Wood Splitting Relay (small, in or out)

COMPASS SKILL ACTIVITIES

Blindfolded Compass Walk (wide, in or out)
Compass Challenge Activity (wide, out)
Compass Facing (small, in or out)
Compass Points (wide, in or out)
Direction Facing (wide, in or out)
Flying Blind Relay (wide, in or out)
Three-Leg Compass Walk (wide, out)

FIRST AID SKILL ACTIVITIES

Bandage Relay (small, in or out)
First Aid Baseball (small, in or out)
First Aid Carry Relay (wide, in or out)
First Aid Scenarios (small, in or out)
Ice Accident (wide, in or out)
Kim's Game: First Aid (small, in or out)
Stretcher Relay (wide, in or out)

TEAM BUILDING

All Aboard (small, in or out)
Amoeba Walk (wide, in or out)
Atomic Pile (small, out)
Blind Square (wide, in or out)
Blind Tent Pitch (wide, out)
Blind Train (wide, in or out)
Coal Mine Maze (wide, in or out)
Handicap Obstacle Course (wide, in or out)
Helium Stick (small, in or out)
Hi-Lo (small, in or out)
Hot Isotope Transport (wide, out)
Island Hopping (wide, in or out)
Lizzie Gator (wide, out)
Moon Ball (wide, in or out)
Night Crossing (wide, in or out)
Nitro Transport (wide, out)
Sky High (small, in)
Zulu Toss (small, in or out)

PATROL GAMES

PATROL GAMES – LARGE AREA

Balloon Bounce (wide, in or out)
Bucket Brigade (wide, out)
Christmas Card Game (wide, in)
Fire Bucket Relay (wide, out)
Hit the Can (wide, in or out)
Hula Hoop Horseshoes (wide, in or out)
Hunt the Candy (wide, in)
Log Rolling Relay (wide, out)
Nitro Transport (wide, out)
Obstacle Race (wide, in or out)
Pocket Rope Competition (wide, in or out)
Shoe Hunt (wide, in or out)
Spies in the Woods (wide, out)
Standing Jump Relay (wide, in or out)
Tire Roll Relay (wide, in or out)
Wheelbarrow Relay (wide, in or out)

PATROL GAMES – SMALL SPACE

Blindfold Battery Exchange (small, in)
Blindfolded Discoveries (small, in)
Blow Ball (small, in)
Can It! (small, in or out)
Four Square (small, in or out)
Hunker Down (small, in or out)
Hunter, Gun, or Rabbit (small, in or out)
Identifying Sounds (small, in)
Kim's Game (small, in or out)
Kim's Game Up and Down (small, in or out)
Life's Little Lists (small, in)
Map Symbol Kim's Game (small, in)
Nail Driving Relay (small, in or out)
Name That Fish (small, in)
Over-Under Relay (small, in or out)
Pass the Can (small, in or out)
Sky High (small, in)
Stepping Stones (small, in or out)
Trail Signs (small, in)
Wall Street (small, in)
What Happened? (small, out)

TROOP GAMES

TROOP GAMES – LARGE AREA

Antelope Race (wide, in or out)
Blindfolded Soccer (wide, out)
Blindfolded Steal the Bacon (wide, in or out)
Capture the Flag (wide, in or out)
Catch Ten (wide, in or out)
Crack the DEW Line (wide, in or out)
Crowded Circle (wide, in or out)
Crows and Cranes (wide, in or out)
Deer Stalking (wide, out)
Flying Disc Soccer (wide, out)
Jump the Shot (wide, in or out)
Paper-Wad Tennis (wide, in or out)
Ring Ball (wide, in or out)
Shoot the Gap (wide, in or out)
Silent Signals (small, in or out)
Skedaddle (wide, in or out)
Stand By Sixes (wide, in or out)
Standing Staves (small, in or out)
Stratego (wide, out)
Steal the Bacon (wide, in or out)
Troopolo (wide, out)
True or False Steal the Bacon (wide, in or out)
Tug of War (wide, in or out)
Tug of War Steal the Bacon (wide, in or out)
Where's the Whistle? (wide, in or out)

TROOP GAMES – SMALL SPACE

Blindman's Bluff (small, in or out)
Buzz, Bing, Bang (small, in or out)
Captain on Deck (small, in or out)
Hawaiian Handclap Circle (small, in)
Hawaiian Handclap Line (small, in)
Hot or Cold (small, in)
Name That Merit Badge (small, in)
O'Grady (small, in or out)
Prisoner's Escape (small, in or out)
Subway (small, in)
Thimble Finding (small, in)
Time Bomb (small, in or out)

GATHERING PERIOD ACTIVITIES

Find Your Pace (wide, out)
Four Square (small, in or out)
Guess that Height (wide, out)
Guess that Width (wide, out)
Hit the Bucket (wide, in or out)
Hitching Challenge (Race) (small, in or out)
Hula Hoop Horseshoes (wide, in or out)
Hunker Down (small, in or out)
Moon Ball (wide, in or out)
Name That Merit Badge (small, in)
Name That Plant (small, in or out)
Prisoner's Escape (small, in or out)
Puzzling (small, in)
Ring Ball (wide, in or out)
Rope Toss (wide, in or out)
Signaling (wide, in or out)
Square Lashing Challenge (Race) (small, in or out)
Three-Leg Compass Walk (wide, out)



Planning! Preparation! Presentation!

Before an activity can be presented, some fundamental conditions must be addressed:

- **PREPARATION** – Are all the required materials laid out and the playing area set up?
- **AVAILABLE SPACE** – Is there a large enough open area to carry out the challenge or game?
- **READINESS** – Do the Scouts have the necessary skills to complete the challenge successfully?
- **TIME** – Is there enough time to finish the activity?
- **DELIVERY** – Do the Scouts understand the activity’s rules and objectives?
- **PRESENTATION** – Are the junior leaders conducting the activity primed and ready to deliver a successful presentation so that everything goes smoothly?

When these conditions are met, not only will the Scouts benefit more from the experience, but they’ll have a whole lot more fun, too.



Meeting Plan: _____		Week __ Date _____	
ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening __ minutes before meeting	←		
Opening Ceremony __ minutes	Flag presentation Oath and Law Uniform inspection		
Group Instruction __ minutes	• • •		
Skills Instruction __ minutes	• • •		
	• • •		
	• • •		
Breakout Groups __ minutes			
Game __ minutes	←		
Closing __ minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting __ minutes	Leadership team review plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

Two Program Approaches



Sequential Programming



Comprehensive Programming

Sequential Programming



An activity-based, sequential approach to program planning is one where gaining specific skills, and then putting them into action, pave the way towards a larger experience that is memorable and rewarding.

It is noteworthy that throughout the sequence, in addition to adding fun to the agenda, each activity reinforces the acquired

skills, illustrates how they are used, and provides an opportunity to rely upon the skills to complete a task.

What follows depicts a sample sequence of skills and activities in seven steps. The project the Scouts build and enjoy as the seventh step incorporates all the skills that were presented, *and put into action*, during the preceding steps of the sequence.

Planning! Preparation! Presentation!

Square Lashing



- 1 -

Skill Instruction

Ladder Building



- 2 -

Activity

Planning! Preparation! Presentation!

Tripod Lashing



- 3 -

Skill Instruction

Everyone on the Tripod



- 4 -

Activity

Planning! Preparation! Presentation!

Floor Lashing



- 5 -

Skill Instruction

Lift Seat Procession



- 6 -

Activity



- 7 -

Main Event

Comprehensive Programming



The photo to the left depicts a troop meeting, ladder building challenge. It's lots of fun! Besides putting their square lashing skills into action, they get to climb what they built while cooperating with one another and exercising team work.



The photo on the right also depicts a ladder building challenge, but with the addition of a cowbell. Scouts not only get to climb their ladder, but also get to *ring the bell!*

This is Comprehensive Programming. Adding the bell lends a whole other dimension of fun to the activity!

Planning! Preparation! Presentation!



As part of a Second Class, five mile map and compass hike, adding a treasure hunt to the map that leads to finding a surprise is an example of Comprehensive Programming.



Dutch oven baked apple dumplings are delicious all by themselves. Topping them off with some vanilla ice cream is a perfect example of Comprehensive Programming.

In order to assure the week-to-week Scouting program is unforgettably fun, any additional expenditure of time and energy devoted to planning and preparation is well worth the extra effort.

Implementing the Program's Objective to Increase Membership and Retention

- Creatively plan how to add more Active and Spectator Fun to each segment of the troop meeting agenda during *scheduled planning sessions*.
 1. Start or continue to use the Troop Meeting Planning Sheets.
 2. Assign a leader or leaders the responsibility for conscientiously preparing and presenting parts of the meeting's agenda.
 3. Utilize the resources featured in troopleader.scouting.org.
- Implement a Sequential Approach to what is presented during troop meetings.
- Like adding icing to a cake, take steps to incorporate additional sources of fun during troop activities.