

Troop Recruitment Guide

TRUSTWORTHY | LOYAL | HELPFUL | FRIENDLY | COURTEOUS | KIND | OBEDIENT | CHEERFUL | THRIFTY | BRAVE | CLEAN | REVERENT



Prepared. For Life.®





BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®
LONGHOUSE COUNCIL





The Troop Open House

An Overview For Boy Scout Recruiting, From Concept Through Implementation

It is very important for each community based Boy Scout Troop to organize and conduct open houses on a regular basis (at least once a year) to:

-  Demonstrate to your community that Scouting is alive and well.
-  Create an opportunity and excitement for all boys to join Scouting.





The objectives of a Troop Open House program are to:

-  Develop new and valuable resource from within and throughout the community to support the Boy Scout Troop. Be sure to invite representatives from community churches, civic & service organizations, and businesses to participate in your event.
-  Improve the transition of Webelos II scouts into the Boy Scout program.
-  Entice new boy members and their parents to join Boy Scouts.
-  Extend invitations to all public private, parochial school, and home-schooled boys.


Planning Your Open House

The Date And Time





Pick a Date:

-  An evening, the same evening as a regularly scheduled Scout meeting.
-  A Saturday morning, or late Saturday morning/early afternoon.
-  Check local school and community calendars for conflicting activities.
-  Duration: approximately 2 hours.








The Location:

-  Choose the troop's meeting place or an outdoor facility that allows fires and has shelter and seating.

The Program:




-  Practice the skills you plan to demonstrate prior to open house.
-  Make sure that equipment needed for the open house is in good working order.
-  Make sure everyone has a job and knows what to do.
-  Refreshments are an important element to the program.

Marketing:



-  Distribute and/or post the flyer at all area schools, churches, the library, civic and service organizations, and community bulletin boards.
-  Mail the flyer to home schooled boys.
-  Develop a Troop webpage and online social networking account, such as Facebook, and upload Troop information, activities information, event announcements and photo albums. Make it attractive and exciting!
-  Place news releases in all area newspapers.
-  Prepare a public service announcement for the local radio station and television stations.
-  Encourage each current Troop member to contact their peers and friends to participate in the Open House. Be sure to have the scouts use social media as well as email. Encourage every scout to bring at least one friend. Provide an incentive for every Scout that brings a buddy.
-  Encourage Troop leaders and parents to invite other interested parents and grandparents.

The Open House




Pre-Meeting Activities:

-  Be sure that both the adults and boys attending are welcomed when they arrive.
-  Conduct innovative ice breaker game activities to release pent up boy energy such as:
 - INDOORS - Hacky sack; Beach ball toss around a circle asking questions; Steal the Bacon.
 - OUTDOORS - Shooting basketball hoops; tossing a ball or throwing a Frisbee; Kickball.
-  Make sure that the attendees complete an attendance card for follow up.


Opening Ceremony:

-  The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) orders the Scout Salute and invites everyone to join in with the Pledge of Allegiance.
-  The SPL displays the Scout Sign and leads the Troop in the Scout Oath, Scout Law, and Motto.




Introductions:

-  The Scoutmaster {SM} introduces himself & the Troop's Adult Leadership in attendance, including Assistant SMs. Troop Committee chairman, Committee members, and the Chartering Organization's representative. The SM also introduces the Troop youth leadership in attendance, including the SPL, ASPL, PL, and APL.
-  The SM shares the history of the Troop, as well as the Troop outdoor program, and explains that the program is boy led.
-  The SPL invites everyone to witness (or view) how Scouting works through the many skills that are taught learned and practiced. The SPL further explains that there will be Round Robin of events. And that refreshments will be served at the end when everyone is called to reassemble.






Round Robin Activities:

-  Select {5} activities that best represents the Troop and Boy Scouting. Be sure to have qualified Scouts and Leaders at each activity. The scout and adult leaders should have practiced the activity prior to the open house.




Refreshments:

-  During the Round Robin activities, set up to serve refreshments (A drink and a small snack).
-  After 60 to 75 minutes of the Round Robin activities, call the participants to gather together in a group.
-  Hand out membership applications to each boy attendee. Ask each boy to share the application with their parents.

Closing Ceremony

-  After the refreshments are enjoyed, the SPL calls the participants to order by using the Scout Sign.
-  The SPL invites all Scouts and boy attendees, along with Troop leaders to form a large circle, and have each person in the circle to join hands with their arms crossed, right arm over left arm and lead the group in Scout Vespers.
-  The SPL extends an invitation to visit the Troop's webpage and Facebook page to learn more about the Troop activities.
-  The SPL then invites his SM for a Scoutmaster's Minute. The SM thanks everyone for participating in the Troop Open House and invites every boy and parent who attended to join the Troop.
-  Strongly encourage all boys to turn in the applications to the SM or his designee.





Program Follow UP

-  Invite every Scout to follow up with friends and peers that attended the Open House. Continue to encourage those boys to complete their membership application and join the Boy Scout Troop.
-  Follow up with the visiting parents and any youth members (at large) who attended the Open House as well follow up phone calls to the boys who did not register at the meeting.
-  Continue to update your Troop webpage and Facebook page. Keep information and activities current and generate excitement.







Suggested Round Robin Activities




1. Backpacking, in 12 to 15 minutes:

-  Show suggested gear to pack for backpacking, including shelter, sleeping, clothing, foul weather, backpacking food and cooking gear, water, and personal hygiene.
-  Show types of backpacks.
-  Show types of hiking boots.
-  Explain where backpacking gear can be acquired or purchased.





2. First Aid, in 12 to 15 minutes. Select one or two activities:

-  Demonstrate the proper techniques to splint a lower arm injury, then apply an arm sling and swath.
-  Demonstrate the proper techniques to immobilize a sprained ankle.
-  Demonstrate how to stop bleeding, then dress the wound with gauze bandage and tape.
-  Explain that first aid techniques are learned for each Scouting rank.






3. Scouts Knots, in 12 to 15 minutes. Select two or three knots:

-  Demonstrate and teach the Scout knots. Demonstrate a trick knot, such as handcuffs or slippery knot.
-  Explain the unique purpose for each Scout knot.
-  Explain why Scout knots are useful and unique ...easy to tie and untie, purposeful and secure.









4. Troop Tents, in 12 to 15 minutes:

-  Demonstrate how to pitch one of the Troop's tents.
-  Explain how to secure the tent for high winds, and how to keep water from seeping into the tent.
-  Explain how to select an ideal tenting location.
-  Demonstrate how to strike the tent and properly prepare it for storage.

5. Canoeing Overview, in 12 to 15 minutes.

-  Exhibit a canoe, paddles and life vests.
-  Fit a paddle to the paddler. —Both arms held 90 degrees overhead.
-  Explain the importance of life vest. (Warmth and safety.)
-  Discuss several points of Safety Afloat, including requirements to know how to swim, planning and safety, the buddy system, proper equipment and qualified supervision.
-  Explain the Troop's canoeing activities including those on high adventures and at summer camp.

6. Outdoor Fire Building, 12 to 15 minutes.

-  Build a small fire adequate for cooking. Have sufficient fire wood on hand to sustain the fire.
-  Leave No Trace. Use a fire pan (inverted steel trash can lid) to build the wood fire in and to prevent scorching the earth.
-  Lash a tripod and hang a pot of water over the fire.
-  Show and explain the three elements for building a fire, including tinder, kindling and fuel.
-  Explain the Fire' N Chit and related fire safety.
-  Explain how to properly extinguish a fire by sprinkling water onto coals and stirring until cold.
-  Set up a roped off area demonstrating an axe yard. Place logs and a bow saw within the yard.
-  Explain the safety involved for handling and axe and bow saw, and using the axe yard.

7. Add or supplement any activities that best represent your Troop operations and interests.