

# OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

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## SCOUTING'S OUTDOOR PROGRAM

**G**oing outdoors is one of the most exciting parts of Scouting. Cub Scouts enjoy many outdoor experiences as they participate in the variety of activities that can be held outside, such as field trips, hikes, nature and conservation experiences, service projects, and camping experiences.

The outdoors is an ideal environment for boys to be able to develop positive qualities such as resourcefulness, ingenuity, self-reliance, team spirit, and an awareness of and appreciation for the natural world around us.

The study of nature in its natural surroundings is an ideal way to encourage boys to appreciate beauty and enhance their capacity to enjoy simple pleasures and respect all living things.

The outdoor program runs like a thread through the Scouting program:

**Tiger Cubs and Cub Scouts** are introduced to the outdoors through den and pack activities and advancement and elective requirements. They learn proper methods and safety procedures for hikes, cookouts, and conservation projects. They enjoy

- Cub Scout day camp
- Cub Scout resident camp
- Council-organized family camp
- Pack overnights

**Webelos Scouts** have a more challenging outdoor experience than Cub Scouts and Tiger Cubs. Webelos den overnight camping introduces the Webelos Scout and his parent or guardian to the Boy Scout camping program. Joint den-troop campouts for Webelos Scouts and adult family members build strong relationships between boys and adults and strengthen ties between the pack and troop.

**Boy Scouts** have the opportunity to develop and polish the skills of long-term camping. A boy uses the basics he was introduced to as a Cub Scout and Webelos Scout and adds to them more complex skills, self-reliance, and greater responsibility.

**Varsity Scouts, Venturers, and older Boy Scouts** have opportunities for even more outdoor excitement and challenge, including high-adventure treks, backpacking, and canoe trips. They use the knowledge and expand the skills they learned in Boy Scouting.

Each step in the outdoor program is a foundation for the next. A boy's outdoor experience in Cub Scouting determines to a large degree how much he will enjoy his later experience in the troop. Our challenge as Cub Scout leaders is to set the stage in the proper way.

Cub Scouts are explorers by nature, but the outdoor program helps open up the world around them even more. As boys hike, explore, run, and romp, they are learning about our beautiful world and the importance of conserving natural resources. As they take part in outdoor sports and games, they learn the values of physical fitness and good sportsmanship. So while they are having fun in the outdoors, they are learning important human values and growing strong in mind and body.

Outdoor den meetings can be family adventures in backyards or community parks. Cub Scouts can make their own outdoor games and nature collections. They can learn to help plan and prepare for family camping experiences, picnics, and trips.

Outdoor pack functions should be adapted to the facilities available. Make good use of rural facilities, local council and church camps, and city parks and recreation areas.

Overnight camping by Cub Scout packs should be conducted at council-approved locations (councils use the Family Cub Scout Pack Camping Park Approval Standards Form, No. 13-508). BSA health and safety and Youth Protection guidelines apply. In most cases, each youth member will be under the supervision of a parent or guardian. In all cases, each youth participant is responsible to a specific adult. Adults giving leadership to a pack overnighter must complete Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation (BALOO) (No. 34162). See Chapter 33, "Cub Scouting Camping," for more details on pack overnighters and BALOO.

Cub Scouting in the outdoors happens all year. Here are examples of activities that can be held during each of the four seasons. (See the *Cub Scout Leader How-To Book*, No. 33832A, for details and ideas for many outdoor activities appropriate for Cub Scouts.)

#### **Winter**

- Bird-watching
- Following and identifying bird tracks
- Looking for nests
- Setting out bird feeders
- Identifying trees without their leaves
- Playing in the snow
- Building snow people, forts, and igloos
- Ice-skating, sledding, and sleigh riding
- Helping others by shoveling sidewalks or driveways

#### **Spring**

- Looking for new buds on trees
- Identifying new flowers and shrubs
- Looking for and watching returning birds
- Searching for the first signs of life in the dead leaves on a woodland floor, marsh, or pond
- Cleaning out flower beds and gardens
- Planting vegetable gardens
- Planting seeds and spring bulbs

- Visiting a greenhouse
- Picking up litter
- Holding kite derbies
- Providing bicycle safety programs
- Going on hikes and fishing trips
- Having marble contests
- Building a tree house

#### **Summer**

- Observing insects
- Collecting nature items (insects, leaves, shells, etc.)
- Swimming
- Going on picnics
- Making ice cream
- Having fishing derbies
- Holding sports or physical fitness competitions
- Going on treasure hunts
- Building an obstacle course
- Going to Cub Scout/Webelos Scout day camp and resident camp

#### **Fall**

- Looking for nuts and berries
- Collecting leaves
- Planting bulbs
- Attending football games
- Having wiener roasts
- Going on a hayride
- Holding or going to a harvest festival
- Picking apples
- Raking leaves
- Conducting a pack overnighter

Whenever Cub Scout activities take place in the outdoors, the boys should be reminded that, as Cub Scouts, they are obligated to follow the Outdoor Code.

## The Outdoor Code

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

## OUTDOOR ACTIVITY TIPS

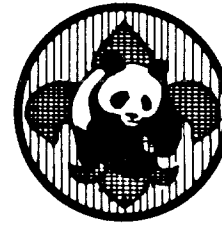
The health and safety of boys, leaders, and families must be one of the first considerations in planning any outdoor activity. Try to anticipate and eliminate hazards. *Remember: Most accidents can be prevented.* See Chapter 13, “Health and Safety,” and Chapter 14, “Water Safety,” for more specific information.

### Follow these tips when planning and conducting an outdoor activity:

1. Get permission from parents or guardians for activities that are held away from the regular den and pack meeting places. See the Informed Consent Agreement in Appendix 1 (page 34-36.)
2. File a Local Tour Permit (page 34-37) if necessary. Check with your council on its policies regarding field trips in your area. See “Local Tour Permits” (page 32-7) or Chapter 13, “Health and Safety.”
3. Be sure to have sufficient adult leaders for the activity. Refer to the *Guide to Safe Scouting* (No. 34416B) for guidelines.
4. Check out the site before the activity. Check on reservation procedures, restroom facilities, availability of adequate drinking water, and any potential hazards.
5. Use the buddy system. Coach the boys in advance what to do if one gets lost.
6. Carry a first aid kit and know how to use it. Be prepared with emergency procedures.
7. Arrange adequate and safe transportation. (See the *Guide to Safe Scouting* and Chapter 13, “Health and Safety,” for BSA policies on transportation.)
8. Always leave a site in its natural condition.

## NATIONAL OUTDOOR PROGRAM AWARDS

### Cub Scout World Conservation Award



Cub Scouts and Webelos Scouts who have participated in either a den or pack conservation project and have completed certain requirements can earn the World Conservation Award. This international award also can be earned by Boy Scouts and Venturers who complete different requirements. The colorful temporary patch is worn centered on the right shirt pocket of the uniform.

Tiger Cubs do not earn the World Conservation Award. Boys may earn it when they are Wolf or Bear Cub Scouts or Webelos Scouts.

See the Boy Scouts of America Cub Scout World Conservation Award Application in Appendix 1 (page 34-32) for the specific requirements for each age in the program. Wolf Cub Scouts complete Wolf Achievement 7, two electives, and take part in a den or pack conservation project. Bear Cub Scouts complete Bear Achievement 5, all projects in two electives, and take part in a den or pack conservation project. Webelos Scouts earn three activity badges in addition to taking part in a den or pack conservation project.

### Conservation Good Turn Award

The Conservation Good Turn is an opportunity for Cub Scout packs to join with conservation or environmental organizations (local, state, federal, or private) to carry out a conservation Good Turn in their communities.

The Cub Scout pack contacts a conservation agency and offers to carry out a Good Turn project. The agency identifies a worthwhile and needed project that the unit can accomplish. Working together in the local community, the unit and agency plan the details and establish the date, time, and location for carrying out the project.

Cub Scout conservation projects for this award should involve the entire Cub Scout pack—each den, adult leaders, and family members. Cub Scouts and Webelos Scouts participating in the Conservation Good Turn may be presented with a patch.

Additional information and project ideas are available in the Conservation Good Turn brochure (No. 21-386) available from your local council service center.

## National Summertime Pack Award



Your pack can qualify for the National Summertime Pack Award certificate and streamer by planning and conducting three pack activities—one each in June, July, and August. This award can be an incentive for greater attendance at your summer pack activities.

Qualifying packs receive a colorful streamer for their pack flag. Dens with an average attendance of at least half their members at the three summer pack events will be eligible for a colorful den participation ribbon. Boys who participate in all three pack events are eligible to receive the National Summertime Pack Award pin, which is worn on the right pocket flap of the uniform. (This is an individual recognition for boys, not adults.)

The purpose of the National Summertime Pack Award is to encourage packs to provide a year-round program by continuing to meet during the times when school is out of session for several weeks or months. If your pack is in a “year-round school” (or part of a home-school association) that has several three- to four-week breaks at various times during the year, you could earn the Summertime Pack Award by having a special pack activity during these breaks. If your pack conducts a special activity during three of these breaks, it can also qualify for the Summertime Pack Award.

## Cub Scout Pack National Quality Unit Award

The Cub Scout pack national Quality Unit Award recognizes outstanding packs that conduct quality programs for their youth. The award is based on the pack’s achievement during the previous charter year. A Cub Scout pack must achieve six of 10 requirements to qualify for this award. Applications are included in your pack’s charter renewal packet. See your unit commissioner for a copy of the current application.

One of the required items for this award is outdoor activities. This may include participation in Cub Scout day camp, resident camping, family camping, a Webelos den overnight campout, and/or other activities conducted and/or approved by the local council.

Recognition for achieving the national Quality Unit Award is an embroidered cloth strip dated for the year in which your pack earned the award. Both boys and adults may wear the strip, centered on the right sleeve of the uniform shirt, 4 inches below the shoulder seam. Only the most recent award may be worn. The pack also receives a streamer for the pack flag.

## OUTDOOR PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Tiger Cubs, Cub Scouts, and Webelos Scouts enjoy many different activities in the outdoors. The following pages give some information about and ideas for some of these activities. See the *Cub Scout Leader How-To Book* (No. 33832A) for more suggestions on outdoor and nature activities appropriate for Cub Scout dens and packs.

### Hikes

A hike is a journey on foot, usually with a purpose, a route, and a destination. Tiger Cub and Cub Scout dens will enjoy short hikes, and Webelos dens will have several opportunities for taking hikes related to activity badge requirements.

Boys should be properly clothed for the season. In winter, clothing should provide warmth; in summer, protection from the sun. Suitable footwear is always very important.

Use the buddy system when hiking, with a leader at the front and a leader at the end of the line.

#### Here are some suggestions for different types of hikes:

**Homes Hike.** Look for spider webs, nests, holes, and other homes in nature. Make a list.

**Stop, Look, and Listen Hike.** Hike for a specified length of time or for a certain number of steps. Then stop and write down all that you see and hear. Make several stops.

**Puddle Hike.** Hike in a gentle rain or just after a rain, with boys wearing appropriate rain gear. See how animals and insects take cover from the weather.

**Crafts Hike.** Collect nature items to be used for crafts—leaves, rocks, shells, etc. Make leaf rubbings, leaf prints, or other projects later.

**Penny Hike.** Flip a coin to see which direction you will go. Flip the coin at each intersection or fork in the road or trail.

**Color Hike.** Look for objects of preselected colors. Make a list.

**Historical Hike.** Hike to an historical spot. Know the history before going on the hike.

**City Hike.** Look for scraps of nature between cracks in the sidewalk. Look at the buildings for various architectural details—carvings, cornices, etc. A vacant lot can provide a lot of interest; even one overturned rock can reveal surprises. Look for specific birds and trees.

## Nature Activities

With our increased awareness of the dangers of pollution and the need for better environmental education, we should help boys develop a deeper understanding of and appreciation for nature. They will learn how to do their best to protect and conserve our natural heritage.

Suggestions for nature activities include projects that help boys earn the Cub Scout World Conservation Award, and many of the advancement and elective requirements in the boys' handbooks.

Projects that emphasize conservation and the appreciation of nature can be fun and exciting. Consider activities such as making bird feeders, collecting nature items, planting seeds, and building terrariums.

## Service Projects

Organized Cub Scout service activities not only benefit the boys' development, but these activities meet some real needs of people in the community.

Many of the projects that boys do for service take place outdoors. Recycling, picking up litter, sweeping and shoveling, weeding and planting are the most fun in an outdoors environment. See Chapter 29, "Den and Pack Activities," for more information on and ideas for service projects.

## Games and Sports

Outdoor games and sports provide opportunities for teaching boys skills of good sportsmanship, including

- Following rules
- Having a positive attitude
- Taking turns and sharing
- Getting along with others
- Playing fair

Such outdoor activities combine fun and fitness. They provide the opportunity for every Cub Scout to learn the basic skills of a sport, game, or competition while learning good sportsmanship and habits of personal fitness. Remember that participation and doing one's best are more important than winning.

For suggestions and instructions on games that could be played outside, see the *Cub Scout Leader How-To Book* (No. 33832A). For suggestions and instructions on various sports, see the *Cub Scout Academics and Sports Program Guide* (No. 34299).

## Ceremonies

Ceremonies are always important, including in the outdoors. Outdoor pack activities usually call for an opening and closing ceremony (or closing campfire). Outdoor pack activi-

ties that take the place of regular pack meetings should also include advancement ceremonies so that awards can be presented promptly.

If weather permits, the outdoors is a good place to hold Webelos-to-Scout transition ceremonies. (See *Cub Scout Ceremonies for Dens and Packs*, No. 33212B, for more details.)

Remember these points when planning outdoor ceremonies:

- **Weather.** It is difficult to keep candles lit in winds or light rain. Have a backup plan, with some type of protection.
- **Acoustics.** The wind sometimes carries voices in the wrong direction. Make sure speakers can be heard.
- **Natural Surroundings.** Make the most of the surroundings to furnish background. Lakefronts or open areas in the woods make good ceremony sites.
- **Length.** Make ceremonies short, especially if the audience is standing.
- **Flag.** Be certain that the U.S. flag is adequately anchored. A flag holder will usually require extra security on a windy day. Insist on respect for the flag, indoors or outdoors.

## Campfires

Campfires can be an exciting and inspirational part of the Cub Scout outdoor program. There is no better way to end an evening pack outdoor activity than with a well-planned campfire.

### Selecting a Campfire Site: A Checklist

- Choose a scenic spot with good drainage so that the ground will be dry for seating.
- Provide protection from the wind.
- Provide protection from insects.
- Check out the firewood supply; you might need to bring wood with you.
- Check for fire safety.
- Check with local authorities for any necessary permission to have a fire.
- Make sure that the fire is built, and can be extinguished, safely. Have a plan for extinguishing the fire. It may be necessary to bring water to the campfire site.
- Listen for outside noises that could be distracting or annoying. It is much better to have waves lapping against the shore or wind blowing through the trees than highway or airplane sounds.

The campfire program should have lots of pep as the fire leaps high, and then quietness and inspiration as the embers die. Use the Campfire Program Planner (page 34-45) as a guide for planning the campfire program.

Successful campfires have four important ingredients:

### 1. Songs

- Fun
- Action
- Patriotic
- Inspirational

### 2. Stunts and Ceremonies

- Fire lighting
- Opening—to set the tone of the program
- Advancement, if needed
- Stunts or skits
- Closing—quiet or inspirational

### 3. Stories

- Fun
- Adventure
- Teaching
- Action
- Mystery

### 4. Showmanship

- Dress up the setting.
- Encourage enthusiasm.
- Get everyone involved.

*Remember:* Scouts leave no trace of fire scars or litter when they leave a campfire. Enlist the help of den chiefs in laying, lighting, and putting out campfires.

## Pack Overnights

Pack overnights are pack-organized overnight events involving more than one family from a single pack, focused on age-appropriate Cub Scout activities and conducted at council-approved locations (councils use the Family Cub Scout Pack Camping Park Approval Standards Form, No. 13-508). BSA health and safety and Youth Protection guidelines apply. Overnight camping by Cub Scout packs should be planned as an event for the boy and his entire family.

Overnight camping as a den unit is approved only for Webelos dens (see Chapter 21, “The Webelos Scout Program”).

For detailed information on planning a pack overnighter, see Chapter 33, “Cub Scout Camping.”

## Den and Pack Trips and Excursions

Den and pack trips are a welcome change from the routine of pack and den meetings during the school year. They make good outing experiences that teach the boys something about their community and environment. Get parents’ permission before you go. (See the Informed Consent Agreement, page 34-36.) Remember that a minimum of two adults must be present on all field trips (two-deep leadership). Here are some suggestions:

- **How Things Are Made.** Visit manufacturing plants such as aircraft, automotive, appliance, or electronic firms; chemical, paper, plastic, paint, furniture, or toy plants; and hand-crafts or other small-craft industries.
- **How Your City Runs.** Visit power, water, and sewage plants; a gas company; police and fire stations; city hall; municipal buildings; the county jail; a telephone company; the post office; the Red Cross; hospitals; newspaper plants; and radio, television, and weather stations.
- **How Your City Travels.** Visit boat, bus, truck, railroad, subway, airplane, ferry, and shipping terminals and facilities. Take a ride.
- **How Your City Is Fed.** Visit truck and dairy farms, flour mills, and bakeries; food processing, canning, or bottling plants; stockyards and meat or poultry packing houses; a fish hatchery; beverage, candy, and ice-cream companies; markets; and food distributors.
- **Learn About Your Heritage.** Visit art galleries, museums, and memorials; celebrated old homes, monuments, and other historic sites; places of worship; civic centers; important local buildings; summer theaters and band concerts; and local historical celebrations.

### The National Council has established the following guidelines for den and pack trips:

1. Trips normally will be one-day excursions.
2. Although overnight stays are permitted, they are not encouraged.
3. When overnight stops are necessary, participants will stay in private homes, motels, or hotels.
4. The local council may approve lock-ins or overnight programming at local museums.
5. Den leaders, pack leaders, and parents are expected to accompany boys on approved trips.
6. Tiger Cubs are limited to boy-adult partner excursions, day camps, or council-approved family camping.

Adult family members should be called upon to provide assistance, supervision, and transportation for pack and den trips. They will be a big help and will enjoy the experience.

You must follow certain rules when taking trips, such as filing tour permits and providing safe transportation and supervision.

### **Local Tour Permits**

A Local Tour Permit Application (page 34-37) must be filed with the local council service center two weeks before any pack trip of less than 500 miles. (If the destination is 500 miles or more, use the National Tour Permit Application, page 34-39.) The Local Tour Permit is required for these reasons:

- Your council is always concerned with the health, safety, and success of Scouting groups wherever they are. This permit and its application are designed to help you plan a safe, interesting, and enjoyable trip.
- In case of emergency, calls might come to your local council service center, so the office should know where your pack is.
- Your council would like to have a more accurate record of local tours and short-term camps in order to give each pack proper credit in its records and in news releases.
- Tour leaders take satisfaction in the fact that their tours are officially recognized and that they are responsible Scouting groups.
- Local officials in state and federal parks and forests can be assured that touring and camping groups have official status.
- Often, certain courtesies—not privileges—are extended to Scouting groups when official status has been determined.

Leaders should carefully read “Our Pledge of Performance” found on the back of the Local Tour Permit Application so that they will be familiar with the requirements.

Packs should file tour permits for any pack trips. Webelos dens should file tour permits for Webelos overnight campouts. Tour permits are recommended along with permission slips from parents whenever the den travels to a place other than its regular meeting place even for short, in-town trips.

### **Planning for Den and Pack Trips**

Good planning contributes to fun-filled and worthwhile den and pack trips. Both boys and leaders should be properly prepared.

See Chapter 13, “Health and Safety,” and the *Guide to Safe Scouting* (No. 34416B) for BSA policies concerning tour permits and transportation of Cub Scouts on den and pack trips.

Here are steps to consider when planning den and pack trips:

1. File a Local Tour Permit Application (page 34-37) with your local council service center.
2. File the National Tour Permit Application (page 34-39) for longer den trips. Check with your local council service center for trip policies.
3. Obtain an Informed Consent Agreement (page 34-36) from parents for den trips. Den families should be notified any time that the den is away from the regular meeting place. The pack committee and Cubmaster should also be informed about den trips.
4. Secure adequate, responsible, and safe transportation. Ask families to help provide transportation for den and pack trips.
5. Wear proper uniforms and behave appropriately, as Cub Scouts and leaders are representing the Boy Scouts of America.
6. Provide plenty of adult supervision. Enlist the help of adult family members. A minimum of two adults must be present on any den or pack trip.
7. When planning, consider the time, money, and interest levels of your den or pack members.
8. Make arrangements in advance with the place that you plan to visit. Be on time.
9. Tell the boys in advance the highlights of what they can expect to see and do. Coach them to be attentive and courteous and to observe all rules.
10. Establish the buddy system before starting the trip. Make it clear that buddies are to remain together at all times.

### **Two-Deep Leadership**

It is the policy of the Boy Scouts of America that trips and outings may never be led by only one adult. Two registered adult leaders or one registered adult leader and a parent of a participant, one of whom must be 21 years of age or older, are required for all trips and outings.

It is the responsibility of the chartered organization of any Cub Scout pack, Boy Scout troop, Varsity Scout team, or Venturing crew/ship to stress to the committees and leadership of the unit that sufficient adult leadership must be provided on all trips and outings.

11. Do not caravan or travel in a convoy. Meet for departure at a designated area. Then prearrange a schedule for periodic checkpoints as a group, if needed.
12. If your destination is a state or national park, show your tour permit upon arrival.
13. Locate restrooms immediately upon your arrival.
14. Decide on rendezvous points, gathering times, and plans for eating.
15. Know where emergency care can be obtained. See that each boy has enough money for an emergency phone call.
16. Know how many boys are with you, and have a list of them. Be sure each has an identification card.
17. Upon your return, have the boys write thank-you notes to anyone who was helpful during your trip.