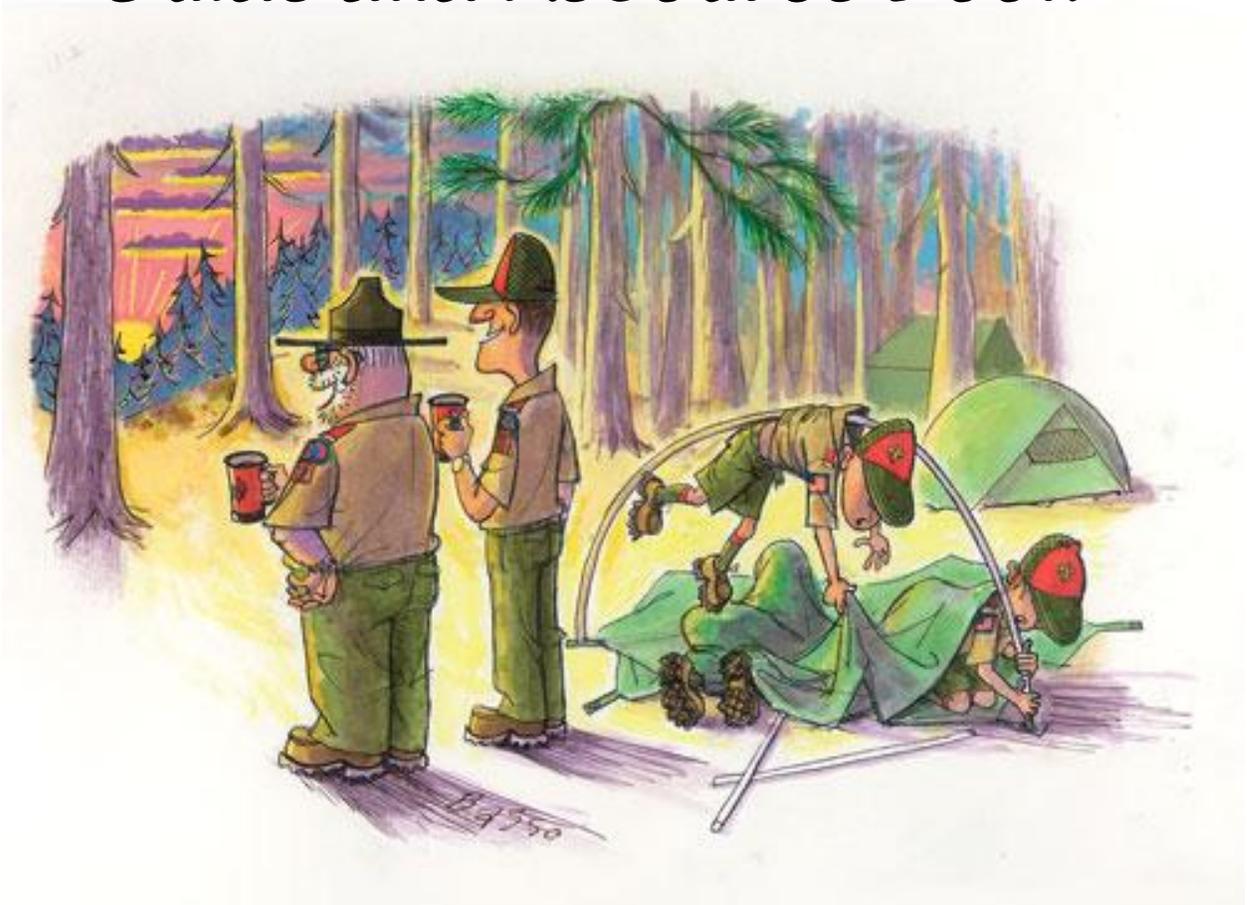


ADVANCEMENT ♦ SPIRIT ♦ PARTICIPATION  
**TROOP**  
**818**  
Walnut Creek, CA

# Guide and Resource Book



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Walnut Creek, California

[www.troop818.org](http://www.troop818.org)







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TO: The Parents, Leaders, and Scouts of Troop 818

Subject: Letter of Introduction to Scouting and Troop 818

Date: September 17, 2012

The book has been prepared to provide you with guidance and reference material about Scouting, Troop 818, and the equipment that you will want and need to be a successful scout.

Although greater details are set forth in this book about the Troop and its programs and how it operates, here is a brief summary of our program and our expectations:

1. **PARTICIPATION:** Your son will be expected to attend every Troop meeting and most outings. Through this means, the Scouts will take great pride in the Troop and enjoy each other and thus make every effort to maintain 100% attendance. Participation is a key element to achieving an esprit de corps.
2. **UNIFORM:** Your son's uniform should consist of these Scout items: short sleeve shirt, shorts, Scout socks, belt, and neckerchief; his neckerchief and the patches will be presented to him by the Troop. In this booklet there is a chart that shows where to sew the patches on the shirt.
3. **OUTINGS:** This is an "outing" Troop. Each year we average 12 to 15 activities. These include weekend campouts, high adventure activities, one week of summer camp, conservation projects, community service projects, and fund raising projects. (Some of these are "required" and some are optional.)
4. **EQUIPMENT:** In addition to his uniform, your son will need equipment suitable for camping. (an equipment list is included with this booklet).
5. **PARENTAL ASSISTANCE:** It is necessary that the parents participate in some way during each scouting year. We realize that many have jobs that keep them on the go and that not all can participate at the same level. That is okay. There are many jobs to do and we know that you will find your niche and thus contribute in the way that you can.
6. **Dues - Troop Funds:** We collect annual dues for each boy in the Troop; the Troop year is from October 1 to September 30 - so annual dues are based on that time period.

Annual dues are one component of the funds necessary to operate the Troop. The dues take care of registration with the BSA, insurance, Boy's Life magazine, and other expenses of the Troop. Your son will be coming into the Troop in mid-year (May), but the fee is one-half (1/2) the annual charge.

When a boy comes into the Troop, we naturally want to see him make it his goal to climb the trail to Eagle Scout. If a boy works at it, this takes approximately 4 to 5 years. During this time the leaders of Troop 818 and the Troop Committee will give him a great deal of encouragement. However, this is not enough! Our whole program is built around

### **ADVANCEMENT - SPIRIT - PARTICIPATION**

If you do your share to encourage the above, you will have a lot of fun too and your son will be an all around Scout, and, he will achieve his goals in Scouting.

if you have questions concerning anything about the Troop, please feel free to call me or email me, , or call any of the other leaders, at any time .

T: 285-3156 or E: 818Scoutmaster@gmail.com

Yours in Scouting,



Bruce A. "Goose" McIntosh  
Scoutmaster, Troop 818

## INFORMATION ABOUT TROOP 818

Troop 818 is a community troop sponsored by Palmer School where it meets every Monday night during the school year, 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., except for school holidays, which are indicated on the Troop Calendar found on the website:

<http://www.troop818.org>

Id: Trooper818

Password: 818isgreat

At any one time, the troop serves between 25 and 40 boys, ages 11 to 18, actively participating in the Troop. The Scoutmaster is Bruce McIntosh, who is assisted by seven trained Assistant Scoutmasters.

The Troop sponsors a variety of outdoor activities, with an outing occurring every month except December. These activities include weekend campouts during the school year, a one-week camp for the entire troop, and high adventure activities during the summer.

The Troop's motto is "**Advancement - Spirit - Participation.**" The Troop operates a boy-led program in accordance with rules of conduct that are consistent with what one expects from Boy Scouts.

The purposes of the Troop's programs are to teach camping, backpacking, and related skills, and to enjoy the out-of-doors and the fellowship of scouting; the goals of the Troop's programs are to teach and develop leadership skills, to help boys grow and develop into responsible young men and good citizens, and to develop a wholesome reverence toward God.

## TROOP MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Troop is that of the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America, which is to prepare young people to make ethical moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and the Scout Law.

## GOALS AND PURPOSES OF THE TROOP

The goals and purposes of the Troop are to carry out its mission and the Vision of the National Council by:

- Offering the Scouts, boys ages 11 to 18, venues for responsible fun and adventure;
- Instilling in the Scouts lifetime values and developing in them ethical character;
- Developing the Scout's leadership potential through leadership training and the operation of boy-run programs;
- Training the Scouts in good citizenship and community service; and
- Developing in the Scout a clear understanding of their duty to God.

## VISION STATEMENT OF THE TROOP

The Troop is a part of the Boy Scouts of American, which is the nation's foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training.

In the future, Scouting and Troop 818 will continue to:

- Offer young people responsible fun and adventure;
- Instill in young people lifetime values and develop in them ethical character as expressed in the Scout Oath and the Scout Law;
- Train young people in citizenship, service, duty to God, and leadership;
- Serve America's communities and families with its quality, values-based programs.

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## THE TROOP COMMITTEE

The policies, programs, activities, leadership, and operation of the Troop are provided oversight by the Troop Committee. The Troop Committee is lead by the Committee Chairman, who is Jim Marcotte.

The National Council model is for the Troop Committee to meet monthly and to be closely involved in the running of the troop. Under the National Council model, the Troop Committee functions much like a board of directors and usually consists of the Troop Treasurer, the Transportation Chairman, the Camping Chairman, the Advancement Chairman, the Quartermaster Chairman, and such other individuals as are needed to represent the functions of the troop.

We have found that the parents in Walnut Creek have very full schedules and that meetings are not highly desired. Therefore the Troop's policies, programs, activities, operations, and day-to-day operational guidance are provided by the adult leaders (who are trained and aware of and understand the policies and standards of the National Council), subject to the general oversight of the Committee Chairman and input and feedback from the parents.

Thus the Troop 818 Committee is organized more as a support organization than as a board of directors. For further details on the makeup of the Troop 818 committee, see the "LEADERSHIP" page of the Troop's web site at <http://www.troop818.org>.

## STATEMENT OF GENERAL POLICIES

1. **PURPOSE OF STATEMENT:** Any organization, in order to be successful in achieving its purposes and to have meaning and relevance, must be important to its members, must have members and leaders who are dedicated to its objectives, and must set high goals and standards. Toward this end and to achieve clarity of understanding, this Statement of General Policies, as adopted by the Troop Leadership Council, is promulgated.

2. **CONDUCT AND DEPORTMENT:** It is expected that all members of the troop will at all times, to the best of their ability, live by and exemplify the Scout Oath and the Scout Law. Scouts are expected to obey troop rules, show respect to troop leaders, and to be courteous to leaders and each other.

3. **GENERAL POLICIES:**

(a) Scouts are expected to attend all troop functions. If it is impossible to attend a troop function, the scout should notify the scoutmaster and his patrol leader in advance.

(b) Scouts may not bring to campouts or summer camp any gear not specifically authorized by the scoutmaster. Radios, tape recorders, walkman type devices, and personal stoves are specifically not authorized.

(c) Profanity is not permitted.

(d) Scouts are not permitted at any time to have tobacco in their possession.

(e) No person, scout or adult, is permitted to bring any alcoholic beverages to any troop function or any function sponsored by the troop or any of its organizations. Scouts should be punctual at all times. To this end, they should arrive at troop meetings at 7:25 p.m. in order that the meeting may start at 7:30 p.m. sharp. Meetings will end at 8:30 p.m. sharp.

(g) The designated uniform should be worn at all functions. (See

(h) Scouts should not have any medicines in their possession unless the scoutmaster is so advised in advance and given written instructions regarding proper administration of the medicine.

(i) At no time will scouts play with matches or fire nor will they have any fire or burning material in or near a tent.

4. **PERFECT ATTENDANCE:** Perfect attendance is defined as having attended and participated in all Troop meetings and required campouts without having missed, in a consecutive

twelve (12) month period, more than three (3) meetings and/or campout days. (See Troop Attendance and Participation Policies.)

5. **PATROL ASSIGNMENTS:** Generally, we do not like to move scouts from one patrol to another. However, we are aware that valid reasons may exist for a reassignment. If a scout is dissatisfied with his patrol or is having difficulty with his patrol leader or with other scouts in the patrol, the scout or his parents may feel free to discuss these matters with any leader with assurance that the discussion will be kept in strict confidence.

6. **RESPONSIBILITY FOR TROOP EQUIPMENT:** The Troop has sufficient organizational camping gear to outfit each patrol. The gear will be signed out to the patrol leader prior to a campout and turned in at the first troop meeting after a campout. The patrol will be held financially responsible for damaged or lost gear.

7. **FOOD FOR CAMPOUTS:** Most campouts require the patrol to prepare food as a group. Food purchase and cost sharing will be administered by the patrol leader at the patrol level. One patrol member should be selected to purchase the food and supplies required. The total cost should be estimated and paid in advance. Over-collection should be reimbursed.

8. **MERIT BADGE COUNSELORS:** Except in cases approved by the Scoutmaster in advance, parents may not act as merit badge counselors for their own sons.

9. **OTHER TROOP POLICIES:** For statements regarding other troop policies, see the following:

- Belief In God and Its Role In Scouting
- Troop Attendance and Participation Policies
- Troop Transportation Policy - Drivers and Insurance
- Troop Transportation Policy - Parents' Responsibilities
- Merit Badge Policy and Procedure
- Merit Badge Counselors' Guide

## TROOP ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICIES

1. **PURPOSE:** The purposes of this document are to set forth Troop policies regarding attendance at Troop meetings and campouts, to integrate campout attendance into the perfect attendance award, and to set standards with regard to satisfactory participation as it relates to attendance.

2. **ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS:** Scouts are expected to attend all Troop meetings, campouts (unless optional), and summer camp. Optional campouts will be so indicated on the Troop Activity Schedule.

3. **PERFECT ATTENDANCE:** Perfect attendance is defined as having attended all Troop meetings and required campouts without having missed, in a consecutive 12 month period, more than three (3) "Troop Events".

4. **SATISFACTORY PARTICIPATION:** Satisfactory participation is defined in terms of campout and Troop meetings, as follows:

(a) **Campouts:** If a scout misses more than two (2) required Campout Days in a Term, his participation for such Term will be deemed unsatisfactory. A Term is January through May and September through November.

(b) **Troop Meetings:** If a scout misses more than three (3) troop meetings during a Term, his participation for that Term will be unsatisfactory, unless alternative participation is arranged.

5. **EFFECT OF UNSATISFACTORY PARTICIPATION ON ADVANCEMENT:** Participation relates to development of skills and leadership and to scouting spirit, which are required to advance in rank. Therefore:

(a) **Tenderfoot, Second Class:** Scouts advancing to the Tenderfoot, and Second Class level, who normally advance after one (1) Term, will not be permitted to advance if their participation is unsatisfactory.

(b) **First Class, Star, and Life Advancement:** Scouts advancing to the First Class, Star, and Life level, who normally advance after two (2) Terms, will not be permitted to advance if their participation is unsatisfactory in both Terms.

(c) **Eagle Advancement:** In order to be permitted to have an Eagle Application submitted to the Council, an Eagle Candidate must maintain satisfactory participation during the majority of the Terms since he has attained Life and during the Term in which he submits his application. Alternative participation may be allowed in limited and prearranged cases.

6. TROOP EVENT DEFINED: A Troop Event is a Troop Meeting or a Campout Day. A "Troop Meeting" is a regularly scheduled meeting of the Troop. "Campout Day" is each day of a campout, i.e., Saturday is one (1) Campout Day; Sunday is one (1) Campout Day:

(a) To earn credit for attending and participating in a Troop Meeting, a scout must attend at least most of the meeting;

(b) To earn credit for attending and participating on a Saturday, a late scout must arrive at the campsite no later than 1:00 p.m. and participate the remainder of the day and spend the night with the Troop.

(c) To earn credit for attending and participating on a Sunday, a scout must arrive at the campsite no later than 4:00 p.m. on Saturday and must spend the night (Saturday night) with the Troop and be present on Sunday morning until the Troop is dismissed to go home.

(d) LATE-COMERS AND NON-ATTENDEES; SHOW-UP RULE: Unless impossible due to the nature of the cause for coming late to the campout or not attending the campout, late-comers and non-attendees will be expected to be in attendance at the Hut before the Troop departs for the campsite. This will aid in organization for the campout and provide vital data to the Transportation Chairman for purposes of planning take home transportation.

7. ATTENDANCE BY PATROL LEADERS, STAFF AND LEADERS: Leadership is by example. Therefore, except in special circumstances, patrol leaders, staff, and leaders are expected to attend all campouts, except the Snow Ski Trip/Polar Bear campouts, which are optional for all scouts and leaders. By accepting the patrol leader or staff position, the scout automatically commits to this level of commitment.

8. SPECIAL PROVISIONS RE WATER SKI CAMPOUT: Attendance and participation for at least a substantial portion of either day or staying overnight will constitute satisfactory attendance for perfect attendance and participation purposes. Scouts who do not so attend the Campout will be charged with only one (1) day of absence.

9. CREDIT FOR ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES: If a scout misses a troop activity because of participation in another scouting activity or a church or religious activity, for purposes of perfect attendance, he will be treated as though he were present at the troop activity.

## Two-Deep Leadership and Scout Protection

The purpose of this Memo is to re-state and reinforce the Boy Scouts of America policies regarding the interaction between scouts and adults. These policies are:

➤ **Two-deep leadership.**

At least two adults are required on all trips and outings, at least one of whom shall be a registered leader and, in such case, the other shall be a parent of a participant. All registered leaders shall be at least 21 years of age.

➤ **No one-on-one contact.**

One-on-one contact between adults and youth members is not permitted. In situations that require personal conferences, such as a Scoutmaster's conference, the meeting is to be conducted in view of other adults and youths.

➤ **Respect of privacy.**

Adult leaders must respect the privacy of youth members in situations such as changing clothes and taking showers at camp, and intrude only to the extent that health and safety require. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations.

➤ **Separate accommodations.**

When camping, no youth is permitted to sleep in the tent of an adult other than his own parent or guardian. Councils are strongly encouraged to have separate shower and latrine facilities for females. When separate facilities are not available, separate times for male and female use should be scheduled and posted for showers.

Additional information and guidance can be found in the BSA's Guide to Safe Scouting - <http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx>.

## TROOP TRANSPORTATION POLICY – RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **Parents' Responsibility:** It is the responsibility of all parents to be available to drive scouts to and from Campouts as assigned by the Transportation Chair.

2. **Transportation Chair's Responsibilities:**

(a) To make driving assignments and to provide maps and directions to campout sites. The Transportation Chair will also adjust driving capacity to actual needs by determining which drivers will be excused if the assigned capacity exceeds the need.

(b) To obtain Tour Permits for all Troop trips either online or by hand.

(c) To maintain the online ([www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org)) Tour Permit database current, collecting annual information updates from all troop families.

3. **Some General Guides:**

(a) The parent, in driving, serves the Troop, not his or her son. So a parent who is assigned to drive is expected to fulfill that assignment even if his or her son is not going.

b) If a parent cannot fulfill a driving assignment, it is his or her responsibility to find a replacement and to advise the Transportation Chair of that fact. It is not the responsibility of the Transportation Chair to find replacements; he or she simply assigns, coordinates, and provides maps.

If you are assigned to drive and are going to transport latecomers/early leavers, your son and/or others, advise the Transportation Chair so that he or she can make capacity needs adjustments.

2. **Minimum Requirements for Drivers:** The driver of any vehicle transporting members of the Troop in connection with any authorized Troop activity shall:

(a) Be at least twenty-one (21) years of age and shall hold a valid California Vehicle Operator's License; and

(b) Not consume any alcoholic beverage of any kind for at least four (4) hours prior to the providing of transport. No alcoholic beverage of any kind shall be consumed during the course of transport.

3. **Scouts as Drivers:** Except in special circumstances and with Scoutmaster prior approval, a scout may not drive a vehicle to or from a Troop function. A "Troop function" does not include transport from home to the troop meeting place or from the troop meeting place to the home.

## DUTY TO GOD - BELIEF IN GOD AND ITS ROLE IN SCOUTING

1. One of the requirements for a Scout is to recite the Scout Oath and to recite that on he honor he will do his best to do his "... duty to God. Likewise, to become an Eagle, the Scout is required to attest to the fact that he has a genuine belief in a Supreme Being.
2. From the beginning of the scouting movement there has been recognition of the importance of a belief in a Supreme Being in the development of good character and an adherence to a proper moral code, such as the Scout Oath and the Scout Law. It is because of this recognition that the Oath contains a solemn promise to "... do my duty to God ...". In addition, one of the points of the Scout Law states that a Scout is "Reverent".
3. The adult leader's application form contains a "Declaration of Principle" which states:

"Declaration of Principle:" The Boy Scouts of America maintains that no boy can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing his obligation to God and, therefore, acknowledges the religious element in the training of the boy, but it is absolutely nonsectarian in its attitude toward that religious training. Its policy is that the organization or institution with which the member is connected shall give definite attention to his religious life. Only persons willing to subscribe to this declaration of principle and the Bylaws of the Boy Scouts of America shall be entitled to certificates of leadership."
4. The foregoing applies also to Scouts in general and, specifically, to candidates for Eagle Scout.
5. It is National Council policy that Scouts do their Duty to God by taking part in a Troop non-sectarian worship service on Sundays. **Troop 818 complies with that policy by conducting a Duty to God service whenever it is on an activity on Sunday.**
6. If any parent, Scout or Scouter feels that the foregoing may present difficulty, either now or in the future, the Scoutmaster should be contacted immediately.



## THE MERIT BADGE PROGRAM

A scout progresses on two “tracks” in Scouting: Rank and leadership.

Rank marks the personal progression of the scout. When a scout enters the Troop as a new scout, his rank is “Scout”(the boys refer to that as a “Rookie”). The progression is Scout, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle.

One of the requirements that a scout is required to do to advance in rank, starting at advancing to Second Class, is to earn merit badges. Merit badges are studies of specific topics. For each merit badge, there is a BSA book (Merit Badge Book) that sets forth the requirements and that has an informative text on the subject. Pictured above, as examples, are the merit badge patches for American Business, Backpacking, Cooking, Fishing, Orienteering, and Woodworking.

The purposes of the merit badge program are to expose a scout to learning different skills and topics, which sometimes leads to hobbies and even careers, to teach the scout how to organize approaching a task and completing a task, to give the scout an opportunity to meet and interact with adults, and to build self esteem through successfully meeting a challenge and achieving success.

### Merit Badge Policy and Procedure - Scouts

1. **POLICY:** Scouts working for Second Class and above are required to earn merit badges. See Troop Advancement Policy, dated November 8, 2009, for merit badge requirements for each rank.
2. **PROCEDURE:** The procedure for earning a merit badge is as follows:
  - (a) Obtain a "blue" merit badge card from any leader.
  - (b) Obtain a current merit badge pamphlet for your selected merit badge. For most merit badges, the pamphlet can be obtained from the Troop Librarian.
  - (c) After becoming familiar with the merit badge pamphlet, you should contact an approved merit badge counselor and make an appointment to discuss the merit badge with him or her. Usually, only a person on the Troop 818 or Council merit badge counselors list may sign off the completion of merit badge requirements. The Troop list will be posted on the Troop’s web site: accessible from the RESOURCES page.

(d) You may not use one of your parents as a merit badge counselor except with prior consent of the Scoutmaster.

(c) At the first meeting with the merit badge counselor, he or she will find out what you already know and assist you in developing a program for learning the remaining items or provide guidance in completing projects. Additional meetings may be scheduled, as you and your counselor feel appropriate.

(d) When you feel prepared to prove your ability, set up an appointment with your counselor at which he or she will judge your competence and either sign your "blue card" or arrange additional experience for you. Please note that at least two (2) meetings may be required to obtain a merit badge

(e) When your blue card is signed off, turn in your merit badge pamphlet to the librarian (if you checked one out) and obtain the librarian's dated initials to show you do not have a delinquent merit badge pamphlet.

(f) Take the blue card to a Scoutmaster. He will keep the "Application" portion of the card, sign and date the "Applicant's Record" portion and return that portion to you as a receipt.

### MERIT BADGE COUNSELORS

For each merit badge, one or more persons serve as a merit badge counselor. A merit badge counselor is one who, on the basis of hobby, special knowledge, or interest, volunteers to be the adult who guides scouts through the completion of the requires of a merit badge. (See Merit Badge Counselors Guide at 4 of this book.)

**We ask that all parents sign up to serve as a merit badge counselor for at least one merit badge.** For a list of Merit Badge Counselors, see the "RESOURCES" page on the Troop's web site.

## Merit Badge Counselors' Guide

1. Purposes of the Merit Badge Program:
  - (a) To serve as a vehicle for Scouts to explore potential vocations and avocations.
  - (b) To allow the Scouts an opportunity to work closely with adults who can serve as good role models.
  - (c) To provide an opportunity for Scouts to learn how to plan and carry out projects.
2. Your Job: Your job is to satisfy yourself that each Scout who comes to you meets all the requirements of the merit badge. In this sense, you are an examiner. But, a larger opportunity lies in coaching – helping the Scout over the different hurdles of the requirements.
3. The Procedure to be Followed: At the initial meeting with the Scout, the Scout should bring a filled out merit badge application card; please review it for completeness. At least three people should be present at all meetings; either the counselor and one or more adults and the Scout or the counselor and two or more Scouts.
  - (a) When he meets you, the Scout should bring any projects required for completion. If the things he has done cannot be transported, he should present you with satisfactory evidence, such as a photograph of the project or adult certification. Your job, in addition to coaching, is to satisfy yourself that the requirements have been met. Question the Scout and, if you have any doubts, contact the adult who signed the Certification.
  - (b) When you are satisfied that the Scout has met the requirements, sign his merit badge application, give it to the Scout, and congratulate him on his achievements.
4. Standards of Performance:
  - a. The Scout is expected to meet the requirements as stated - no more and no less. Furthermore, he is to do exactly what is stated. If it says "show or demonstrate", that is what he must do. Just telling about it isn't enough. The same thing holds true for such words as "make," "list," "in the field and collect, identify, and label."
  - b. If you have asked a Scout to present certain requirements in written form, you should insist that it be neat, complete and well written. If it is not, tell him what is wrong and have him do it over again. Neatness shows self respect and respect for you.
5. Group Work: You can coach more than one at a time, but only one Scout at a time can satisfy you that he has met the requirements.

6. *General Comments - Admonishments to Counselors:* By acting as a Merit Badge Counselor you are assuming a serious responsibility to the Troop and the Scouts. As you are examining a Scout on his merit badge work, you in turn will be critically examined by him to see if you measure up to Troop 818's high standards and are true to yourself and the conscientious effort that the Scout has come to expect from a Troop 818 Merit Badge Counselor.

The Troop—and Boy Scouts of America—thank everyone who supports the Troop with your time and skills.



### INFORMATION SHEET –SLEEPING BAGS

Based on experience and on information obtained from REI at [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com)

Date: November 8, 2009

The purpose of this information sheet is to provide the scout and his parents with information that will aid them in the initial purchase of a sleeping bag and the care, and use of the sleeping bag.

### PURCHASE RECOMMENDATIONS

When buying a sleeping bag for your son, we recommend that you follow these guides:

- Type bag: Mummy;
- Fill: Synthetic;
- Construction: Seams are covered with insulation;
- Temperature Rating: Rating of +20 F or lower (i.e., warmer);
- Weight: No more than 3 to 4 pounds;
- Attachment to backpack: Use straps (no bungee cord);
- Where to buy: REI, L.L. Bean, Cabelo's, or any outdoors supply store

### DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION

#### WARMTH

Generally speaking a temperature rating of +20° F is adequate for a new scout. A warmer bag (or a bag within a bag) will be required further down the road for the Polar Bear Campouts or for the High Sierra Treks.

#### WEIGHT

The lower the "temperature rating", the heavier the bag. Generally the bag should not be heavier than 3 to 4 pounds for backpacking.

#### SHAPE

The shape of the bag is important to warmth. Rectangular or barrel shaped bags are roomy and are adequate for moderate temperatures. But for colder weather a mummy shaped bag provides more warmth with less weight and bulk.

### TYPE OF FILL

There are two (2) basic types of sleeping bag fills: Down and Synthetic. The advantages of Down are that it is a more efficient insulation per pound and will stuff smaller and be more compact. The advantages of the synthetics are that they are much less expensive and will not absorb moisture. The disadvantage of Synthetics is that they are more bulky than Down when stuffed. The disadvantages of Down are that it soaks up water quickly and in large quantities, thus losing its loft and insulating abilities, and is more expensive

### CONSTRUCTION

There are many different types of construction, each of which has its own advantages. The main concern when choosing a bag is that the seams are covered with insulation so no cold spots develop. Exposed seams will allow cold air to penetrate into the bag. Do not buy sewn through construction. A two (2)-way zipper is desirable since this allows ventilation in the foot area without opening entire bag. The zipper should be full length and should have baffle to prevent cold air from entering along the zipper area.

### WASHING

Sleeping bags, both down and Synthetic can be washed at home if done properly, but dry cleaning is recommended. We recommend that this gets done at least once a year.

### HOW TO STORE

Bags should never be stored in the stuff bag. Store them loosely folded on a shelf, or hung in a closet, or in a fluff storage bag. Allow some air to circulate around the bag in storage.

### SLEEPING PAD

For added warmth and comfort, one should have an insulation pad or small backpacking air mattress. Insulation pads are light, easy to roll, will withstand abuse and can be used for a splint in case of injury. The "Thermarest" pad is excellent. The "two-thirds" length is sufficient and is lighter.

### STUFF BAG

The sleeping bag will come with a stuff bag. The caps on some stuff bags are too small, so it may be useful to enlarge them to prevent the sleeping bag from working its way out of the stuff bag.

### BUNGEE CORD

Bungee cord is not recommended for attaching the sleeping bag to the backpack frame, as it does not hold. Use self-locking straps to secure the bag to the backpack frame.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information go to [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com). On the REI home page, at the top, under "Search REI.com", type in "sleeping bags" and click on "Go". Scroll down the sleeping bag page to "Expert Advice" and click on that.

### TROOP'S REI ACCOUNT

If you purchase at REI and if you do not have an account, you may credit your purchase to the Troop's account, [Account No. 10491753](#), which earns the Troop benefits.



### INFORMATION SHEET – HIKING BOOTS

Based on experience and on information obtained from REI at [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com)

Date: November 8, 2009

The purpose of this information sheet is to provide the scout and his parents with Information that will aid them in the initial purchase of hiking boots.

### **PURCHASE RECOMMENDATIONS**

When buying an initial pair of hiking boots for your son, we recommend that you bear in mind the fact that your son will outgrow whatever you purchase and that for the first three years his backpack hiking will be short trips. With that in mind, we recommend that you follow these guides:

Type Boot:	Lightweight hiking boots;
Material:	Nylon split-grain;
Price Range:	\$ 25.00 to \$ 50.00
Where to buy:	REI, L.L. Bean, Cabelo's or any outdoors supply store (Big 5 Sporting Goods has very reasonably priced starter hiking boots).

### **DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION**

#### **TYPES OF HIKING BOOTS**

Hiking boots can be divided into 3 basic categories:

\*1. Lightweight hiking - These boots (and trail shoes) are designed for day hiking and very short overnight trips only. They stress comfort, cushioning and breathability. As a result, they are less supportive and durable than the options below.

\*2. Midweight hiking/backpacking - These boots are designed for on- and off-trail hiking with light to moderate backpacking loads. They are more durable and supportive than lightweight hiking boots, but they are still intended primarily for short to moderate trips over easy to moderate terrain.

3. Extended backpacking/mountaineering - These boots are designed for on- and off-trail hiking with moderate to heavy backpacking loads. They are designed with multi-day trips in mind. Durable and supportive, they provide a high degree of ankle and foot protection. Some of these models are designed specifically for rough terrain with heavy backpacking loads. They offer

the very best in durability, support and protection.

### **TYPES OF MATERIALS**

The materials used in a given boot will affect its weight, breathability, durability and water-resistance. Since boots made of different fabrics can be very similar in performance, however, personal preference is often the key when choosing between them. Hiking boots are made of 4 basic types of material:

**Nylon mesh and split grain leather:** Nylon and split-grain leather boots are lightweight and breathable, which makes them perfect for warm-to moderate-weather use and short to moderate backpacking trips. They tend to be softer on your feet, they take less time to break in, and they are almost always lighter than full-grain leather boots. They also cost less. Unfortunately, nylon/split grain boots tend to be less water-resistant than full-grain leather boots (although styles that feature waterproof liners can be just as water-tight, if not more so).

**Full-grain leather:** Full-grain leather is extremely water-resistant, durable and supportive (more so than split-grain leather or nylon). It's used primarily in backpacking boots designed for extended trips, heavy loads and hard terrain. Not as lightweight or breathable as nylon/split grain combinations, but it typically lasts far longer. Full-grain leather usually requires a break-in period.

**Waterproof barriers:** Lightweight, waterproof barriers (like Gore-Tex™) are built into many hiking boots to enhance their water resistance. These barriers are available in a variety of boot styles, from lightweight hikers to extended hiking/backpacking models. Waterproof performance depends upon the type of barrier used, the materials protecting it and how well the boots/shoes are taken care of. If cared for correctly, these waterproof barriers often last longer than the boots themselves.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

For more information go to [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com). On the REI home page, at the top, under "Search REI.com", type in "hiking boots" and click on "Go". Scroll down the hiking boot page to "Expert Advice" and click on that.

### **TROOP'S REI ACCOUNT**

If you purchase at REI and if you do not have an account, you may credit your purchase to the Troop's account, [Account No. 10491753](#), which earns the Troop benefits.



### INFORMATION SHEET - BACKPACK

Based on experience and on information obtained from REI at [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com)

Date: November 8, 2009

The purpose of this information sheet is to provide the scout and his parents with information that will aid them in the initial purchase of a backpack.

### PURCHASE RECOMMENDATIONS

When buying an initial backpack for your son, we recommend that you bear in mind the fact that your son will outgrow whatever you purchase and that for the first three years his backpack hiking will be short trips. With that in mind, we recommend that you follow these guides:

Type Backpack:	External frame
Price Range:	\$ 75.00 to \$ 125.00
Where to buy:	REI, L.L. Bean, Cabelo's or any outdoors supply store

### DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION

There are two types of backpacks, internal-frame packs and external-frame packs.

#### Advantage of Internal Frames

**Flexibility** - The pack to move in harmony with body movements, a big plus for climbers and skiers.

**Balance** - Internal frames hug the body. This holds the equipment closer to the hiker's natural center of gravity and helps one to keep one's balance

**Stability** - Compression straps are everywhere on an internal. One can use them to cinch down the load and keep individual items bunched together.

**Adjustability**. Internals use suspension systems (involving the shoulder harness and hip belt) that can be adjusted more precisely to a person's body than an external-frame

#### Disadvantage of Internal Frames

**The black hole** - . Most internals have a cavernous main storage compartment, plus a separate section for a sleeping bag. Other than a lid pocket, nearly everything gets stuffed into that single, deep compartment.

**Hot stuff** – One will sweat more wearing an internal because it rides so close to the back. The design offers little room for ventilation.

**Cost** - Internal frame packs typically cost more than external frame packs of a similar size.

### **The Advantages of External Frames**

**Cooler to carry** - An external's load does not sit flat against the back, thus allowing air to circulate.

**Easier to pack** - External frames feature at least two main compartments plus several side pockets. One can organize one's gear into "zones" and locate it more easily.

**Heavy loads won't sag** - They might in an internal frame pack, depending how it is packed. Plus, since the center of gravity sits higher in an external frame pack, it's easier to walk upright.

**Cost** - You'll pay less for an external.

### **The Disadvantages of External Frames**

**Minimal agility** - They tend to make one walk more stiffly, making external frames cumbersome when one try's to walk off-trail. Attempting to scramble up rocks or hop across a boulder field while wearing one is difficult, even unpleasant.

### **Which people are better suited for an external frame pack?**

- \* Beginning hikers; and
- \* Hikers hauling heavy loads over easy to moderate trails and terrain.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

For more information go to [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com). On the REI home page, at the top, under "Search REI.com", type in "backpacks" and click on "Go". Scroll down the backpack page to "Expert Advice" and click on that.

### **TROOP'S REI ACCOUNT**

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### INFORMATION SHEET – HIKING SOCKS

Based on experience and on information obtained from REI at [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com)

Date: November 8, 2009

The purpose of this information sheet is to provide the scout and his parents with information that will aid them in the initial purchase of hiking socks.

### PURCHASE RECOMMENDATIONS

When buying an initial pair of hiking socks for your son, we recommend that you bear in mind the fact that his backpack hiking will be short trips. With that in mind, we recommend that you follow these guides:

- Type Socks:                      Sock liner and mid-weight hiking/backpacking sock
- Material:                              Wool or synthetic insulating material
- Where to Buy:      REI, L.L. Bean, Cabelo's, or any outdoors supply store

### DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION

Backpacking socks are designed to provide warmth, cushioning and abrasion resistance in a variety of conditions. The right sock depends on the kinds of trips and the weather conditions. Here are the basic categories one has to choose from:

- \*      Liners - Sock liners are thin, lightweight wicking socks designed to be worn right next to the skin.
- \*      Lightweight hiking/backpacking socks – These socks are designed for warm conditions and easy trails. Lightweight backpacking socks stress wicking performance and comfort over warmth. These socks are thicker, warmer and more durable than liners alone. They also provide more cushioning. Mid-weight hiking/backpacking socks - These socks are designed to provide reliable cushioning and insulation in moderate to cold conditions. They tend to be thicker and warmer than lightweight hiking socks. Many models have extra padding built into high-impact areas like the heel and the ball of the foot for maximum comfort. These socks should be worn with liners.
- \*      Mountaineering socks - Mountaineering socks are the thickest, warmest and most cushioned socks available. They are designed for long trips, tough terrain and cold temperatures. Usually, mountaineering socks are too thick and warm for basic backpacking journeys in warm conditions.

There are five material options. These are:

- **Wool** - Wool is an extremely popular natural sock material. It is warm, cushioning, and retains heat when wet. Unfortunately, wool can take a long time to dry. It can also wear out quickly if not reinforced with other materials. Wool blends (combinations of wool and synthetic materials) are extremely popular because they address many of these problems.
- **Synthetic insulating materials** – There are a number of man-made materials designed to insulate like wool and wick moisture, without the negatives mentioned above. These materials (Hollofil(R), Thermax(R), Thermastat(R)) trap warmth like wool, but they are softer on the skin. They also dry more quickly and are more abrasion resistant. These materials are available in a variety of sock styles and thicknesses.
- **Silk** - Silk is a natural insulator. It's comfortable and lightweight, but not as durable as other options. It's occasionally used in sock liners for reliable wicking.
- **Synthetics wicking materials** - The synthetic wicking materials (like polypropylene and Coolmax) used in wicking sock liners are often woven into thicker backpacking socks as well, to enhance wicking performance.
- **Cotton** - 100% cotton is not recommended as a sock material for backpacking. Cotton absorbs sweat, dries slowly, provides no insulation when wet and it can lead to discomfort and blisters out on the trail. However, cotton is extremely comfortable. And when combined with wool or other wicking and insulating fibers, cotton can be a great choice for light hiking in summer.

Buy more than one pair. It is always a good idea to carry a spare pair of socks. There is nothing worse than having your foot slip into a stream and to have to hike with wet socks.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

For more information go to [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com). On the REI home page, at the top, under "Search REI.com", type in "hiking socks" and click on "Go". Go to "Expert Advice" and click on that.

### **TROOP'S REI ACCOUNT**

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