

TROOP 58

ADVANCEMENT GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Scouting offers a fun and challenging program in the great outdoors. Scouts have fun with their friends at meetings and on trips, and have a blast doing some awesome outdoor activities like climbing, rafting, caving, backpacking, canoeing and more. Scouts are learning to be responsible for themselves and for others. They are learning how to plan, lead and organize an activity or trip. They are learning how to teach others. They are learning how to serve others and their community. They are learning leadership skills and have lots of opportunities to try their hand at leading others. Scouting offers these opportunities for personal growth and confidence building like no other program.

Advancement in scouting is a by-product of being an active scout. An active scout that attends Tuesday meetings and trips will learn new scouting skills and can complete requirements for rank advancement. Some scouts attend every activity and advance more quickly. Some scouts attend sporadically due to school, sports, or family activities and will advance more slowly. Either way is great. There is no deadline for advancement (other than reaching age 18) or penalty for missing meetings or trips. A scout who plays a sport during a season can pick up where he left off when he returns.

Advancement in the scouting program has four basic parts:

1. Learning core scouting skills
2. Earning Merit Badges
3. Serving in leadership positions
4. Serving our community

A scout can advance through seven ranks including Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life and Eagle. Scouts and parents should familiarize themselves with the advancement requirements by closely reading the Scout Handbook.

Advancement can be thought of as a three-legged stool:

1. **Scout:** The scout takes responsibility for knowing where he is and what he needs to advance.
2. **Troop:** The troop will provide plenty of opportunities throughout the year to learn and pass off skills, service and leadership opportunities, or take a Merit Badge class.
3. **Parents:** The parents should support the scout by encouraging attendance and pushing as needed to take advantage of opportunities to learn and pass off skills.

Rank Advancement for New Scouts:

The first four ranks (Scout rank through First Class rank) require that a scout learn basic scouting skills including outdoor camping skills, first aid and rescue skills, citizenship, knots and lashings, map and compass, physical fitness, personal safety and responsibility, cooking and scouting principles. These skills give the scout a core knowledge of the scouting program and will help him enjoy the outdoor program.

Advancement Procedures:

1. A Scout in Troop 58 is responsible at all times for his own advancement. Parents should encourage participation at meetings and trips.
2. Scouts advance at a different pace based on meetings and trips attended and interest in learning scouting skills.
3. Each Scout should bring his Scout Handbook, pen/pencil, and a small notebook to every meeting.
4. Rank skills will be taught by older, experienced scouts.
5. To pass off a rank skill, the teaching and mastery of the skills must be confirmed by the Scoutmaster/Patrol Advisor or older scout. Every patrol has two Scoutmaster/Patrol Advisors who are available to review advancement.
6. All skills passed off will be initialed and dated by the SM/Patrol Advisor or older scouts in the Scout Handbook.
7. Scouts are responsible for showing their signed Scout Handbooks to an Advancement representative for recording into TroopMaster, the troop advancement tracking program. An emailed photograph is also acceptable.
8. When a scout has completed all requirements for his next rank, he will meet with his SM/Patrol Advisor for a Scoutmaster Conference (SMC).
9. The SM/PA will report to the Advancement Chair that a scout is ready for his Board of Review (BOR).
10. The Scout Handbook is the scout's record of what has been passed off and what he needs to learn. Parents and scouts can look in their SH at any time to see where they are and what is needed to advance. Parents are welcome to contact the SM/Patrol Advisor at any time, but are encouraged to allow their son to take the initiative himself.

School Year Troop Programming: Troop 58 intends to teach the entire scouting skill program during a school year. All skills are taught by older, higher ranked scouts that have mastered these skills. Beginning in September, an active scout that attends most meetings and trips can advance to the rank of First Class by June.

Missed Meetings or Skill Instruction Needed: A scout that misses a meeting or trip when certain skills were taught, or a scout that needs to learn skills that will not be taught until later in the year should do the following in this order:

1. Talk to his Patrol Leader to arrange a time to be taught. All skills are taught by older scouts that have reached First Class rank. Teaching can occur from 6:00-7:00 before troop meetings, during meeting, or on trips, or at another convenient time. The instruction and mastery of the skill must be confirmed by a Scoutmaster/Patrol Advisor.
2. If the Patrol Leader is not helpful, the scout should talk to the Scoutmaster/Patrol Advisor assigned to his patrol. He will work with the PL and scout to arrange a

- time for instruction. The SM/Patrol Advisor must confirm all teaching and mastery of skills.
3. If the Patrol Leader and SM/Patrol Advisor are not helpful, a scout should talk with the Scoutmaster.

Rank Advancement for Star, Life and Eagle:

Once a scout is working towards reaching the rank of Star, Life and Eagle, he is expected to 1) have a Position of Responsibility, 2) earn service hours, and 3) earn Merit Badges.

1. **Position of Responsibility (POR):** To advance, a scout must serve in a Position of Responsibility. These range from Patrol Leader, Historian, Librarian, Quartermaster, Den Chief, Instructor, Troop Guide and Senior Patrol Leader. He must actively serve in this role for the period required for the next rank. Carrying a Scoutmaster assigned leadership project to help the troop is another way to complete this requirement.
2. **Service Hours:** A higher ranked scout must also serve his community. A scout can earn service hours for a rank by working on another scout's Eagle Project. He may also earn hours by serving another charity or church or community service event.
 - a. **Service Hour Reporting:** To report service hours, a scout should print and complete the Service Hour Form from the troop website. A note signed by the charity or leader of the event that briefly describes the event, the date, and the number of hours served is an acceptable alternative. A scout that serves on an Eagle Project must bring a Service Hour Form signed by the Eagle candidate with the hours worked. All service hours reported may be turned in to your Scoutmaster/Patrol Advisor or directly to an Advancement representative.
3. **Earning Merit Badges (MB):** The higher ranks also require that a scout earn Merit Badges. Some Merit Badges offer scouts a chance to learn a lot about a particular core scouting subject like First Aid, Camping, Swimming, Lifesaving, Emergency Preparedness or Citizenship. Other MB are more focused on hobbies or interests like Energy, Pet Care, Wood Carving, Pioneering, Dentistry, Basket Weaving, Geology, Indian Lore, Canoeing, Climbing, Archery, Art, Shotgun or Rifle, Wilderness Survival, Golf, Athletics, Water Sports, and many more. Complete information about the BSA Merit Badge process can be found at www.scouting.org/scoutsources/guidetoadvancement/themeritbadgeprogram.
4. For the rank of Eagle, a scout must have earned 21 Merit Badges. There are 13 required MB and several hundred others to choose from. Each rank above First Class requires a certain number of Eagle required MB's and optional MB's. These are listed in the Scout Handbook and specific requirements and worksheets can be found at www.meritbadge.org. A complete list of merit badges can be found at www.scouting.org/meritbadges.

Merit Badges can be earned a number of ways:

1. Camp Daniel Boone-The most popular way is to attend summer scout camp. During a fun and productive week at camp, a scout can come home with 4-6 MB's.
2. Duke Merit Badge Encampment- This is held on a Saturday in May at the Duke Power Explorium. A wide range of MB are offered.
3. Local MB Weekends- Discovery Place, CPCC, others
4. The troop will offer several MB's throughout the year. Sometimes they are only offered to a select group of older scouts and other times they are open to all.
5. A scout that wishes to start a MB can contact the Troop MB Coordinator to ask if the troop has a registered MB counselor for that MB and when that MB might be offered. Merit Badges are started and recorded using a blue card that has all pertinent information about the scout, the troop, the counselor, etc. When a MB is completed, the blue card is presented to Mecklenburg council as evidence of completion. A second section of the blue card is given to the scout at COH along with his MB patch. It is recommended that a scout keep all of his blue cards for his own record. Blue cards for merit badges that have been started, but are not complete, are kept by the MB Coordinator. These are referred to as "partials." Some merit badges may remain as partials for a year or more.
6. If the troop has no plans to offer the MB, the scout can find an adult with expertise in the area pertaining to the MB. If a parent or other non-scouting adult teaches a MB, they must first register with BSA, complete Youth Protection Training and complete a MB Counselor form all of which must be turned in to the troop MB Counselor Coordinator.
7. If a parent wishes to teach a MB, the MB must be opened up to allow other scouts to also take the MB. The troop will not allow a parent to only teach his/her son. There is great benefit to having scouts take MB's together. One of the eight methods of scouting is interaction with adults. We want to encourage our sons to interact with other strong positive and encouraging adult role models. It also offers our boys the opportunity to be held accountable by another adult who is not their parent.

Rank Advancement and Boards of Review:

Once a scout has completed all requirements for his next rank, completed a Scout Master Conference **AND** those requirements have been entered into the troop advancement tracking program (TroopMaster), he will be notified that he is eligible to advance.

An eligible scout can advance at any time a BOR is offered, provided that the steps above have been followed. His rank patch will be awarded at our closing circle on the night of his BOR. He will be formally recognized as earning that rank at the next Court of Honor.

For a Scoutmaster Conference (SMC) or Board of Review (BOR), a scout must appear in full uniform- scout shirt, pants/short, belt, socks, and red neckerchief. He must

bring his Scout Handbook and must be prepared for questions. If he is not prepared, the Scoutmaster will ask him to better prepare and return next week. There are two parts to rank advancement.

1. **Scoutmaster Conference (SMC):** He must first have a Scoutmaster Conference with his SM/Patrol Advisor or another Scoutmaster. This is a review of the rank requirements, and skill questions will be asked to verify mastery of the requirements. It is also a chance to talk with the scout about the scouting program, what he likes, what he would change, who his friends are, what leadership roles he thinks he would like, what his plans are for his next rank, etc. If a scout is not prepared, he will be asked to study the rank requirements and come back later.
2. **Board of Review (BOR):** Once a scout completes his SMC, he is eligible for a BOR. A BOR is conducted by three non-Scoutmaster parents. It is a review of the requirements, and skill questions can be asked. It is also a review of the scout's experience with the troop. Parents are needed for Boards of Review. The troop requests that each scout's parents plan to attend two BORs throughout the year. A sign-up link is available.

Court of Honor:

As discussed above, a scout can advance at any time. He will usually be awarded his new rank patch at our closing circle after completing his BOR. Our Courts of Honor offer a chance for parents and guests to come and hear about what the troop has been doing. This is also an opportunity to celebrate recent rank advancement and for scouts to receive recognitions and patches for any merit badges earned. The COH's are typically held in October, March and June on Tuesday nights. Parents are asked to bring drinks and snacks for a reception following the COH.

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