

A Parent's Guide to Advancement

SUPPORTING YOUR SCOUT AT HOME

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Advancement is a by-product of being an active Scout. A Scout who comes to Tuesday meetings and trips naturally picks up skills and checks off rank requirements — some quickly, some more slowly around school, sports, and family. **Either pace is great.**

Three ways you can help

- 1 Show up ready.** Encourage attendance and events, full uniform when it's called for, and active participation — and always have their Handbook plus something to write with.
- 2 Know the big picture.** You don't have to understand all of the details of how advancement works, but a basic understanding as outlined in this guide can help you support your Scout.
- 3 Build systems at home.** Help your Scout set up simple ways to keep track of their own progress.

RESOURCES & CONTACT

- ▶ [mytroop58.com > Program > Rank Advancement](https://www.mytroop58.com/Program/Rank-Advancement)
- ▶ [mytroop58.com > Program > Merit Badges](https://www.mytroop58.com/Program/Merit-Badges)
- ▶ Questions? bt58advancements@googlegroups.com

Robert Baden-Powell famously said that scouting is a character development program disguised as a camping program. Advancement is one part of that. Rather than simply checking boxes, the process of advancing through ranks and gaining skills through merit badges helps scouts develop skills like making a goal, following a plan, asking for help, seeking mentorship and following through. **Advancement helps scouts develop personal agency.**



Advancement Milestones

WHAT TO EXPECT: SMC · BOR · COH

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Scoutmaster Conference · SMC

A one-on-one conversation between your Scout and a Scoutmaster, held once your Scout is ready for a rank. Together they review the rank and talk about how Scouting is going — what your Scout enjoys, what they'd change, leadership roles they're curious about, and goals for what's next. It's the step just before the Board of Review.



Board of Review · BOR

When a Scout completes all requirements for their next rank (Tenderfoot through Life) by the posted due date, they sit for a Board of Review. This is a conversation led by three Troop parents about the Scout's experiences earning the rank, their troop involvement, and their future goals. It's a wonderful chance for Scouts to reflect on their journey and practice communicating their goals in a supportive environment.



Court of Honor · COH

A formal recognition ceremony held a few times a year, where families are invited to celebrate our Scouts' achievements. Scouts are awarded the rank advancements, merit badges, and honors they've earned over the preceding months. It's typically a shorter meeting (about an hour) followed by a reception where families bring a treat to share — come celebrate our Scouts' success!



Rank Advancement

FROM SCOUT TO FIRST CLASS — AND BEYOND

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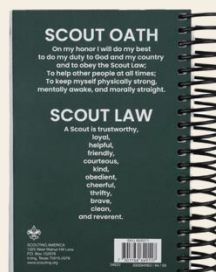
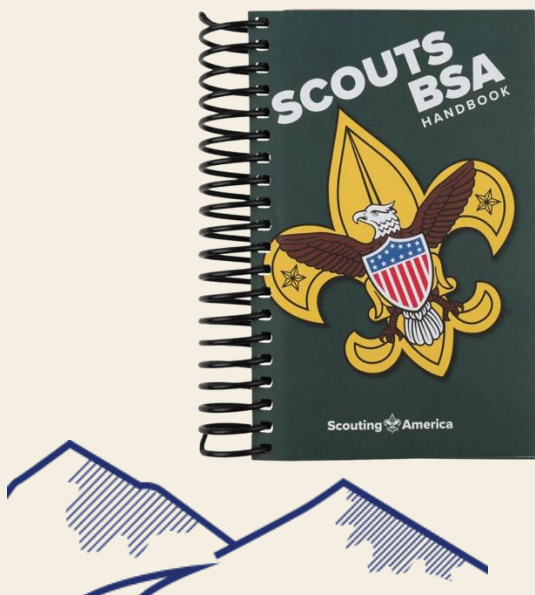
This is how a Scout moves up — Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, and so on. The first four ranks build the core skills your Scout will lean on throughout Scouting:

Camping & the outdoors · First aid & rescue · Citizenship · Knots & lashings · Map & compass · Fitness · Personal safety & responsibility · Cooking · Scouting principles

How you can help at home

- ✓ Look in the back of the Handbook, then encourage them to work on a skill or two at the next meeting or campout — build a camp gadget, or show a leader they're packed for a campout, and get it checked off there.
- ✓ Put Board of Review (BOR) dates on your calendar. If a rank is close, everything must be finished a week before the BOR — so review the book together a few weeks ahead.

***Hint:** the Handbook is the guide — the how-to for every skill is right in its own section.*



Merit Badges

EARNING & KEEPING TRACK OF THEM

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Scouts earn Merit Badges several ways:

At summer camp · at meetings & on trips (especially the American Heritage Trip) · council-wide sessions (welding, auto maintenance) · independently, with a counselor

The process, in short

Your Scout leads every step:

- 1 Your Scout asks a leader or our team for a **blue card** once a badge is in mind. They fill out their name and address on the card.
- 2 Your Scout gets the **Scoutmaster's approval** after explaining their plan for the Merit Badge, and asks them to sign the card.
- 3 Your Scout asks our team for a counselor for that Merit Badge, then emails that counselor **before beginning any work** — always copying a parent.
- 4 Your Scout works through the requirements with the counselor. Once the counselor signs off, they bring the card to the Scoutmaster for a final signature, then to our team to record in TroopMaster.
- 5 Your Scout receives the badge at the next **Court of Honor**.

Two keys: your Scout **starts it** and **keeps track of the blue card**.



How you can help at home

- ✓ Help set up a system for partial blue cards — snap photos, use a binder with card protectors.
- ✓ Remind your Scout to ask us to enter partials into TroopMaster, so progress is saved.
- ✓ Point out Merit Badge opportunities that come up at meetings, on trips, or council-wide.

Have a skill to share? Parents can become **Merit Badge counselors** — email bt58advancements@googlegroups.com.

