

Frequently Asked Questions

Eleven Frequently Asked Questions for Boy Scout Troop 22 Cleveland Heights, Ohio

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1. How does a boy join Troop 22?

Although many boys join Troop 22 as part of a webelos den there are some boys who were never in Cub Scouts. To join Boy Scouts, a boy must have completed 5th grade or be at least 11 years old. Webelos Scouts are usually invited to attend part of a campout, a Troop meeting, and a spring awards ceremony. Boys who are not webelos should attend some Troop and patrol meetings and possibly a campout before making the decision to join the Troop.

2. What do I need to be a Scout?

If you have visited and intend to join Troop 22 you will need a few things to be official.

- The Boy Scout Application – a multi-copy form that is on 8½ by 5½ paper.
- Dues money – we register everyone in the Troop in late February. You will pay the prorated amount of the annual dues, which has remained at \$30 for many years. The first year the dues will pay for: council and national dues, Troop dues, Troop T-Shirt, beret, neckerchief, and slide.
- Purchase of uniforms, patches, and handbooks are the responsibility of the family.
- Medical Form – the Boy Scouts Class 1&2 medical form needs at least the medical history filled out and signed. The physical exam from a doctor needs to be filled out before we can take you to a week-long summer camp. Any pertinent medical information that will help us care for you needs to be provided as soon as possible.
- Troop registration form – we have our own form that asks for more information.

3. What should I know about uniforms?

The Boy Scouts of America is a uniformed organization. Boys should have and wear their uniform shirt to Troop functions as soon as possible after joining. We usually have some uniform parts that have been donated after boys outgrow them. You can have one if it fits. If you need to buy a shirt, a short sleeve shirt is more practical than the long-sleeve.

Uniform pants are also part of the uniform. When boys are very young it may be impractical, but an attempt should be made to have and wear the pants, shorts for warmer weather are nice to have. Scout socks are not necessary when wearing the long pants, although with shorts they should be worn. If you do not have Scout socks with your shorts, please wear an all white sock (no logos) instead.

The neckerchief for our Troop is a red paisley bandana. There is no standard for this. Boys should receive a neckerchief and a knotted rope slide when they join. Other similar neckerchiefs and other slides may be worn. The hat of our Troop is a black beret that is awarded to boys after they have camped with the Troop.

Troop T-shirts alone may be worn in lieu of uniform shirts at meetings if the leadership of the Troop so determines and advises the Scouts. Many meeting activities are planned to be out-of-doors, even in the winter. Be Prepared!

4. How does advancement work?

Advancing through the ranks of the Boys Scouts (Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, Eagle) is a long process of learning, practice, and testing. Each rank has its own requirements. For the ranks up to First Class Troop 22 uses a card that has all of the requirements listed with places for them to be signed off. After First Class the requirements are in the Scout Handbook. Although the requirements that the Troop lists seem different from the national organization, a close inspection will show that we are aligned well. Our order of requirements for each rank is different. Advancement gives us an opportunity for recognizing boys who accomplish what they set out to do.

To get requirements signed off boys first learn and practice a skill. They are then tested by their patrol leader, older boy leader, or an adult Troop leader that has the authority of the scoutmaster. This process ensures that there is some consistency in the knowledge required for each rank.

The Boy Scout program gives boys a chance to learn and be tested by an expert in a variety of fields. There are over 120 merit badges that are available (Photography, Hiking, Music, Camping, etc). All boys can earn merit badges at home or at camp. The first step in doing this is to get Scoutmaster approval. In addition, the Scoutmaster will direct the Scout to specific counselors who are signed up to work on the badge with the boy. In some cases our Troop provides classes to help in earning merit badges. Other badges only require that the boy studies on his own and meets with a counselor. Requirements for most badges currently exist on the internet at: <http://meritbadges.com>.

The Boy Scouts have publications that also list requirements as well as the needed information for many badges.

After all requirements for the Scout's next rank have been completed the Scout will have a conference with the Scoutmaster (or designee). This conference will serve to keep the adult leaders in touch with the Scout, set some goals, and in general, see how things are going.

Lastly, the Scout will have a Board of Review. For ranks from Tenderfoot to First Class, the Board of review is conducted by at least three boy leaders who are trained to conduct Boards of Review. For the upper ranks the Boards are planned and executed by members of the Troop Committee (mostly parents of current or past members of the Troop). The purpose of the Board of Review is to spot check the teaching process in the Troop. It is their job to make sure that boys trying to achieve rank in the Troop have the requisite knowledge. It is not the job of the Board to test each requirement for a rank. In addition, the Board may ask for the Scout to reflect on what they have been doing in the Troop. They may ask about the level of participation since attaining the last rank. They will expect that boys come in full uniform with their advancement card. For upper ranks the Board will expect that the Scout come with his leadership goals (known in the Troop as a ticket). The Board may decide that the Scout is not ready to go to the next rank or may sign off that the rank has been achieved.

The boys who achieve rank in the Troop get formal recognition at the semi-annual courts of honor. Sometimes there are other opportunities to award rank.

5. What is a member's responsibility to the Troop?

It is expected that boys attend as many of the Troop and patrol events that they can. If a Scout is unable to attend it is proper for him to call his patrol leader to let him know that he will not be there. When attending a Troop function, members should be in uniform, unless told otherwise. Scouts in the Troop need to follow the directions given them by the boy leadership of the Troop. If they are unruly they will be asked to sit with an adult or asked to leave the event.

Our Troop holds weekly meetings on Monday nights at St Paul's from 7:15-9:00 PM. Patrols hold meetings on their own schedule. There are monthly outings, service projects, a fundraiser in the fall, and a Scout Sunday when the Troop attends a church service (usually in February). All outing dates, Mondays that we will not meet, known service projects, as well as the fundraiser, church service, and more are posted on a calendar that is available in August and will be available on the Troop's internet site:
<http://chuh.net/troop22/index.htm>

6. How does gear work? How does the quartermaster room work?

Troop 22 has gear to lend out to patrols as well as individual boys. Patrols may borrow all manner of cooking equipment as well as tarps. Gasoline or propane for stoves is provided when we get to camp.

Boys may check out tents or tarps for personal use on outings through their patrol quartermaster. The Troop lends out backpacks for trips that require them. We also maintain a limited supply of cold weather sleeping bags for boys who do not yet own one.

In general, equipment borrowed is due back to the Troop Quartermaster the meeting after the outing. Equipment should be returned clean and dry. Tents and tarps need to be cleaned only with warm water, NO SOAP. Cooking equipment is usually portioned out to be cleaned at home by a patrol member, although attempts at cleaning should have taken place at camp.

7. What should I know about campouts?

A mainstay of our Troop's program has been monthly campouts during the school year. We usually leave Friday evening from the auxiliary parking lot of St. Paul's and return to homes on Sunday.

All the information that is needed for each outing is printed and distributed 2-3 weeks before the trip on a Campout Equipment List & Permission Form. These forms are becoming available on a regular basis on the internet through our web site.

All this information and more is listed on the form. There is a tearslip at the bottom of the form that needs to be returned to the patrol leader or returned at the beginning of the Troop meeting before the outing with the money for the outing. For some trips the slip is required 2 meetings before. If the slip is not handed in when due the boy will not attend that outing. There will be a question about driving to or from the outing. Volunteer for driving if you are able. We try to have a driving coordinator call to confirm or cancel all offers before the outing.

Generally, Scouts are not permitted to attend part of a campout. Boys must choose what they want to do. We know that sometimes this choice will take a boy away from an outing. At times there are possibilities for coming late on Friday night or leaving a little early on Sunday. These types of arrangements should be requested on the slip or as soon as the conflict is known.

When the Troop goes on a backpacking trip we will almost always require boys who have not attained the First Class rank to bring in the equipment that they will carry on the trip to the Monday meeting before the outing. This "shakedown" helps less experienced boys to pack correctly. Sometimes before winter outings the boy leadership will do the same thing. Parents of new Scouts are encouraged to attend an informational meeting to help them know how to help their children.

The outing leader must be made aware of boys who need to take medications during a trip. At times it may be wiser to have an adult hold medications, depending on the age of the boy and the circumstance.

Outings are important opportunities for boy leaders to exercise planning skills with their patrols. Gear requirements, food lists, tenting partners, as well as duty rosters are all things that patrol leadership must plan. Boy Scouts is an educational program. Outings serve to give boys practice in leadership skills.

8. What should I know about service projects?

The Troop serves many community organizations and projects by providing boy-labor. Service projects in which the Troop engages are all pre-approved by the boy and adult leadership. Hours worked on Troop sanctioned projects are tallied for advancement purposes for some ranks, to show level of activity in a Scout, as well as to count towards the possibility of public recognition. Boys who perform service outside of Troop projects should still keep their own tally in their personal journal or records, but these hours will not count toward Troop totals.

Providing community service opportunities is a way for us to teach boys the value of volunteerism and good citizenry. We have regular annual projects, periodic Eagle projects, as well as project opportunities that arise as people ask. Getting the Troop to help with a project is best accomplished if the request is made with plenty of lead-time for us to organize, if there are minimal or no safety concerns, and if the benefits are to the community. We have had boys build things, clean up outdoor places, set up and help run pancake breakfasts, and go door to door for donations for various causes. We were even involved in a scientific census for a local university. Boys love to be involved in service to the community.

9. What should I know about fundraisers?

The Troop has at least one opportunity for boys and families to help raise general funds for Troop activities and equipment. We have held a door-to-door light bulb sale in the neighborhood for many years. This event is usually held on one of the last weekends in October. We expect that all boys will participate for half a day on the Saturday fundraiser since all boys benefit from the money raised. Parents are needed to help drive boys either in the morning or afternoon.

In conjunction with the Saturday event we usually hold a pre-sale fundraiser offering either light bulbs or flowering bulbs. The Sunday after the door-to-door part of the fundraiser we sell bulbs following church services at St. Paul's.

10. How are adult involved in the Troop?

Adults who are involved in the Troop help by directly assisting in the program with the boys or help by supporting the logistics of the Troop. We have adults who wear uniforms

to weekly meetings, help advise boy leaders, and come on outings. These adults are generally brought into adult leadership through an interest that they show after attending meetings or coming along to observe on outings. Some have a plethora of knowledge about the outdoors and Scouting whereas some have no background at all. After deciding to become involved, these adults fill out a registration form that must be approved by our Troop Committee as well as our church sponsor. These adults are encouraged to spend some time observing how the Troop operates so that they can best judge how to contribute within the established program. In addition, adults are also given information about local Scout training opportunities in which they may wish to participate.

There are many other supportive roles that adults play to help the Troop function well. These assignments range from attaining and compiling information for outings to arranging lunch for everyone during the fundraiser. Some of these jobs seem small, but all are helpful in supporting the work of the Troop. Parents are asked to fill these jobs at the annual parents meeting in May.

11. How and when do boy leaders get their jobs? What is required of them?

Boys lead the Troop. In the spring the Scouts elect the Senior Patrol Leader and their Patrol Leaders. The Senior Patrol Leader must have at least earned the rank of Star and be nominated for the position. He appoints his assistants, the Troop Scribe, Troop Quartermaster, and may have suggestions for Instructor appointments. Patrol Leaders for established patrols must be at least a First Class Scout and be nominated. Boys are not limited to nominating a Patrol Leader from within their own patrol. For the patrols that will be made up of our incoming class of Webelo scouts and other 11-year-olds the process is different. Interested boys who meet the rank requirement for Patrol Leader submit their names to the boy leadership for consideration. The boy leadership then decides who will be best to lead the new patrols before the general nomination and election of leaders. Patrol Leaders choose their assistants. Decisions regarding patrol responsibilities such as quartermaster, scribe, grubmaster, and so forth are the job of the Patrol Leader.

All boy leaders have specific job outlines they try to follow. The leadership of the Troop is responsible for planning programs for weekly meetings and outings and for the rank advancement of their members. All boy leaders are learning while on the job. As such, they sometimes require guidance and advice. Parents who are dissatisfied with the operation of their son's patrol would best serve the growth of the boy leaders by talking to the Patrol Leader alone, in a positive, non-threatening way, or speak with one of the adult leaders.