



TROOP 33

GUIDELINES FOR RANK ADVANCEMENT

There are seven ranks in Boy Scouting: the joining rank of Scout, followed by Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle. Generally speaking, ranks can be thought of as:

- **Basic ranks – Scout, Tenderfoot, 2nd Class, and 1st Class.** The requirements for these ranks provide a Scout with a solid grounding in the foundation skills in the outdoors, physical fitness, citizenship, patrol and Troop participation, and personal development that will allow him to take advantage of Scouting adventures. The satisfaction he finds in his Troop and patrol activities can solidify a boy's commitment to Scouting, and help him set his sights on the more advanced ranks to come.

BSA strongly encourages boys to reach 1st Class by the end of the first year of Scouting. These Scouts can take care of themselves and others in the outdoors. They also have a better-than-average chance of eventually becoming an Eagle Scout. Troop 33 fully supports "1st Class by the end of the 1st year."

- **Advanced ranks – Star, Life, and Eagle.** These ranks focus on active participation and leadership in the Troop or patrol, demonstration of Scout Spirit, living the Scout Oath and Law in your everyday life, taking part in service projects, and earning a designated number of merit badges.

Questions?

Where do I find the specific requirements for each rank?

Use the *Boy Scout Requirements 2008* book for the most current requirements. Scouts should use their *Boy Scout Handbook* to log the appropriate signatures when they complete each requirement for the basic ranks.

Where can I complete requirements?

At Troop or patrol meetings, on campouts, within the community – almost anywhere you can think of. The Troop's monthly outdoor activities are a great place to complete requirements, especially those that require Scoutcraft (cooking, knots, nature study, first aid, flag ceremonies, and other camping skills).

How do I get requirements "checked off?"

For basic ranks:

- Complete the requirement (1) *exactly as stated*, and (2) *in the presence of a Star, Life, or Eagle Scout*. **Unlike in Cub Scouts, parents cannot sign off requirements for their own son.**
- Get the reviewer to **sign and date** your *Boy Scout Handbook* next to the appropriate requirement. Requirements are found in the *Boy Scout Handbook* as follows:
 - Scout page 4
 - Tenderfoot pages 438-439
 - 2nd Class pages 440-441
 - 1st Class pages 442-443
- After the *Handbook* has the necessary signatures, the Scout shows it to the Advancement Chairperson or Scoutmaster during designated Troop meetings. They will enter the completed requirement in the Troop's computerized advancement system and will mark the Scout's Handbook as entered in the computer.
- *Important:*
 - *The requirement is not officially completed until it's entered into the computer.* It then becomes a part of the Scout's official Troop record.
 - Get requirements entered into the computer as soon as you complete them. Don't wait until you've accumulated a lot of completed requirements before seeing the advancement chairperson or Scoutmaster..
 - It is the Scout's responsibility to follow these procedures, not the Scout's Parent. This helps to reinforce the skills of learned leadership in a boy-led Troop. While it may seem "unscoutlike", any parent presenting their Scout's Handbook to have requirements signed off will be turned away. This is the Scout's responsibility!

For advanced ranks: Star and Life

- Complete the requirement *exactly as stated*.
- Keep a record of your service hours (date, organization, project, number of hours). This is the responsibility of each Scout! Be sure to get the signatures of the Committee Chairperson on the required form *before* you begin. The form can be obtained from on the Troop Website at www.troop33bsa.us/forms.html.

Projects not approved in advance may not be accepted!

- Complete the number of required merit badges. This is listed in your Boy Scout Handbook for each rank section toward the back of the book.
- Be active! More is expected of you now. This is the time to step up and be counted.
 - "Be active in your Troop and patrol for at least six months."
 - The key word is active.
 - Just showing up for meetings is not enough. It means making a contribution.
 - In your Scoutmaster Conference, be ready to tell your Scoutmaster *specifically* how you've done this.

"Serve actively for six months in one or more of the Troop positions of responsibility."

- The key word is actively.
 - Just having a leadership position and wearing the patch is **not** enough.
 - It means showing leadership **and** making a positive contribution.
 - In your Scoutmaster Conference, be ready to tell Mr. Wells *specifically* how you've done this.
- "Demonstrate Scout Spirit by living the Scout Oath and Scout Law in your everyday life."
 - The key word is demonstrate.
 - Scout leaders should see how you do this by the example you set.
 - In your Scoutmaster Conference, be ready to give your Mr. Wells *specific* examples of how you actually live by the Scout Oath and Law. (Hint: "Helping an elderly lady across the street," while a great idea, is probably not something you actually did.)

Unlike in the basic ranks, you do not get requirements for Star or Life checked off by other Scouts or adult leaders. You will review each requirement with Mr. Wells as part of your Scoutmaster Conference. Show him your stuff, and be prepared!

What do I do now that all the requirements are signed off?

When a Scout has all the skills requirements signed off for a rank, it's time for a Scoutmaster Conference and a Board of Review. During the Scoutmaster Conference, Mr. Wells will be asking you questions and testing you on the requirements you have completed to assure that you remember the skills that you have learned. He will also be talking with you about Scout Spirit, as will the Board of Review. The purpose of the Scoutmaster Conference is also to determine if you are ready for a Board of Review. Scoutmaster Conferences must be completed at *least* 2 weeks before the Court of Honor.

Can the Scoutmaster "fail" a Scout in his Scoutmaster conference?

If the Scoutmaster does not believe that the Scout is ready for the next rank, he does not have to "pass" him. While such cases are not typical, it can happen if the Scout has not completed all the requirements or can't **demonstrate** to the Scoutmaster that he knows the skills required for the rank. If a Scout's behavior does not indicate that he has Scout spirit (defined as living the Scout Oath and Law in his everyday life), the Scoutmaster will not automatically send the Scout before the board of review. In these cases, the Scoutmaster will give the Scout specific direction on what he needs to do to successfully complete his next conference. Remember, as the unit leader, the Scoutmaster has the final say.

What do I do after my Scoutmaster Conference?

If Mr. Wells determines you are ready for a Board of Review, you need to contact the Advancement Chairperson to schedule your Board of Review.

The Board of Review is the final step in a Scout's rank advancement. It is designed to ensure that the Scout has completed all of the requirements for that rank, determine the quality of his Troop experience, discuss the impact of the Scouting program on him (how he lives the Scout Oath and Law), and encourage him to advance to the next rank.

Boards of Review are also an important component of one of the missions of Scouting – association with adults. In Boards of Review (as in Scoutmaster Conferences), Scouts are treated responsibly with adults in a non-threatening meeting format; are viewed as equals, not as kids; and are asked questions by adults who value their answers. Most of the interactions that teens have with adults put them in a decidedly subordinate role – not so with Scoutmaster Conferences or Boards of Review, where Scouts are expected to show leadership and speak their mind. With each successive Scoutmaster Conference and Board of Review, the Scout builds his confidence around adults.

The Board of Review is not a retest of skills. By allowing the Scout to appear before the Board of Review, the Scoutmaster has certified that the Scout has completed all the requirements for this rank. If the Scoutmaster is not satisfied that the Scout is ready for the rank, he should not allow the Scout to appear before the board. In this way, the Board of Review is a check on the Scoutmaster and the Troop program.

Just as with the Scoutmaster Conference, the Board of Review is a valuable opportunity for members of the board to discuss with each Scout his activity in the Troop and his understanding and practice of the ideals of Scouting. This is a time to:

- Openly talk about the Scout's progress in the Troop.
- Ask how the Scout has demonstrated leadership in the Troop and his patrol.
- Ask what he's done in his position of leadership.
- Ask how he defines Scout spirit and lives according to the Scout Oath and Law.
- See how much fun he's having.
- Determine whether he's having any problems.
- Ask for suggestions to make the Troop better.
- Ask about non-Scouting areas of the boy's life (school, sports, extracurricular activities, etc.)

Wear your full Class A uniform (Scout shirt, pants, belt, socks, neckerchief, Merit Badge Sash, and all patches sewn on correctly) to all Scoutmaster Conferences and Boards of Review.

When do I receive my new badge of rank (or Merit Badge)?

It is important that a Scout is recognized immediately after earning a new rank (or merit badge). The following is the Troop 33 policy on receiving awards:

- The Scout receives his new badge of rank (and any merit badges he's earned) at the next regularly scheduled Troop meeting after he has completed his Board of Review, if applicable.
- The Scout will not have to wait until the next Court of Honor to receive badges of rank (or merit badges), provided all conditions are met.
- A Scout receiving a new badge of rank (or merit badges) will be formally recognized at the next Court of Honor. He will receive his record cards at that time.

Can I work on any rank requirement, or do I have to finish all the requirements for one rank before working on those for the next?

You can work on any rank requirement for Tenderfoot, 2nd Class or 1st Class at any time. However:

- You must complete all requirements for a rank before you can be awarded that rank.
- You must earn ranks in proper sequence. For example, if you finish all the requirements for 1st Class but haven't earned Tenderfoot, you must earn Tenderfoot and 2nd Class before being awarded 1st Class.
- You may be awarded more than one rank at the same time. For example, you complete all the requirements for 2nd Class and 1st Class at the same time. You are awarded both ranks at the same time. There is no "waiting period" for you to receive one rank, and then the next.

You must earn Star, Life, and Eagle in sequence, one at a time.

Do I need to attend the Court of Honor if I am not being recognized?

Always. Part of your advancement requirements is that of Scout Spirit. You are expected to actively support your fellow Scouts at all times. You are doing this by attending the Court of Honor and helping to recognize the Scouts in the Troop with your attendance.

Do I need to keep the record card that I get with my new Merit Badge or Rank Award?

Yes, yes, yes! This is ultimate proof that you've earned the rank. If the Troop or Council loses your records, or you change Troops, the record card becomes extremely valuable. Keep them in a safe place. Do not throw them away! You will need these cards for your Eagle Scout Board of Review, which is held by the District and Council, not the Troop.

What about requirements for Eagle Scouts?

Those are covered separately in the guide "Life-to-Eagle", available on our website.

So You Know Advancement? Test Your Skills!

True or false ?

There really isn't much difference in content between getting to 1st Class and advancing from Star to Life to Eagle.

False. The basic ranks of Scout through 1st Class emphasize basic Scouting skills, while the advanced ranks of Star through Eagle emphasize individualized learning through merit badges, service, participation, and leadership.

Scouts cannot check off each other as rank requirements are completed.

False. In Troop 33 Scouts with the rank of First Class or higher can check off requirements for boys with the rank of Scout through 1st Class.

Scouts must work on and complete all requirements for Tenderfoot before beginning requirements for 2nd Class.

False. Requirements for the lower ranks can be completed in any order.

A Scout can earn the 1st Class rank before he finishes the requirements for 2nd Class.

False. Ranks must be earned in proper sequence.

Each rank must be completed within 9 months, or the requirements must be repeated.

False. There is no time limit for the completion of any rank, other than before the Scout's 18th birthday, at which time he "ages out" of Boy Scouts.