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5 tips for helping Scouts reach Eagle before time runs out

🕒 March 25, 2015 👤 Bryan Wendell 📁 Eagle Scout, Scouting Tips 💬 94 Comments



Some Life Scouts race against the clock to earn the Eagle Scout award before they turn 18, including a handful who complete their

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board of review on the eve of their 18th birthday.

It doesn't have to be that way.

Dial down the drama of eleventh-hour Eagles with these five tips for helping Scouts reach Eagle with plenty of time to spare.

The ideas were adapted from Mark Ray's *Scouting* magazine article called "**Game of Life to Eagle: Helping Scouts reach the finish line.**" Find more great ideas there.

5. Set a target date.

Everyone needs a deadline. Encourage Scouts to set target dates for completing key requirements. For example: Have all Eagle-required merit badges completed by age 16. Have the Eagle Scout service project completed by age 17. An Eagle coach (known in some troops as a "Life-to-Eagle coordinator" or an "involved parent") can help the Scout come up with these dates.

Make sure the target dates are several months before the Scout turns 18.

4. Manage expectations.

Hope for the best but plan for the worst. Emphasize to Scouts that every step along the journey will take longer than they think.

Then if they finish the requirements early, everyone wins. (And everyone gets to eat cake at the court of honor even sooner!)

3. Take it one step at a time.

The journey to Eagle isn't easy. So it's best taken one step at a time.

That's why you suggest that Scouts concentrate on merit badges first and then the service project (or vice versa), so they won't feel overwhelmed.

2. Finish the time-sensitive merit badges ASAP.



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BLOG CONTRIBUTORS



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The Eagle-required Family Life, Personal Fitness and Personal Management merit badges have requirements that take several months.

Urge Scouts to get those time-sensitive requirements out of the way early.

Those requirements can't be altered in any way, so a Life Scout starting on Family Life requirement 3 — "Prepare a list of your regular home duties or chores (at least five) and do them for 90 days" — two months before he turns 18 would not be able to earn the Eagle Scout award.

1. Remember your role.

A basketball coach encourages and guides his players from the sidelines, but he doesn't take the shots himself.

Similarly, encouragement along the journey to Eagle Scout is fine — and preferable to not paying attention at all.

But don't take the shots for them.

And never work harder than the Scouts you're working with. After all, they're the ones who get the Eagle Scout badge once all requirements are completed — not you.

Make sure they've earned it.

What are your tips?

How do you encourage Scouts along the trail to Eagle?

What memorable experiences do you have with "eleventh-hour Eagles"?

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