

Conducting a Board of Review

Table of Contents

Purpose of a Board of Review	1
Members of a Board of Review	2
Members of an Eagle Board of Review	2
Mechanics of a Board of Review	2
Mechanics of an Eagle Board of Review	3
The Nature of the Questions	4
What Every Scout Should Know	4
Non-advancement	6
Tenderfoot Rank	7
2nd Class Rank	8
1st Class Rank	10
Star Rank	12
Life Rank	14
Eagle Rank	16
Eagle Palms	18

Purpose of a Board of Review

A periodic review of the progress of a Scout is vital in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Scouting program in the unit.

Not only is it important to review those Scouts who have learned and been tested for a rank, but also to review those Scouts who have shown no progress in their advancement over the past few months.

Participants in a Board of Review must keep these objectives in mind:

- Ensure the Scout has completed requirement for the rank.
- Evaluate the experience the Scout is having in the unit.
- Encourage the Scout to progress further.

The Board of Review is not a retesting of requirements. The Scout has already been tested on the skills and activities required for the rank. However, the chairman of the Board of Review should ensure that all the requirements have been signed off in the Scout's handbook. Additionally, the chairman should ensure that leadership and merit badge records are consistent with the requirements for the rank.

The Board of Review is a time to determine the Scout's attitudes, accomplishments, and acceptance of Scouting Ideals. Scout Spirit is defined as living the Scout Oath and Scout Law in a Scout's everyday life. The Boards should make sure that good standards have been met in all phases of the Scout's life. A discussion of the Scout Oath and Scout Law is in keeping with the purpose of the review, to make sure that the candidate recognizes and understands the value of Scouting in his home, unit, school, and community.

Members of a Board of Review

For all ranks (except Eagle) and Eagle palms, the Board of Review consists of three to six members of the Troop Committee. The Troop Advancement Chairperson typically acts as the chairperson of the Board of Review. Relatives or guardians may not serve as members of a Scout's Board of Review. Unit leaders (Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, Varsity Coach, Post Advisor, etc.) may not participate in a Board of Review.

Members of an Eagle Board of Review

For the rank of Eagle, the Board of Review consists of three to six members drawn from Scouting and the community. The chairperson of the Board of Review is a representative from the District Advancement Committee. Unit leaders from the Scout's unit, relatives, or guardians may not serve as members of a Scout's Board of Review. A Board of Review for Eagle may contain members of the community who are not registered Scouters; however, they should be knowledgeable of the principles of Scouting. The Scout may request an individual to be a member of his Board of Review.

Mechanics of a Board of Review

The Scout should be in full uniform.

The Scout is introduced to the Board by a figure of authority, board Chairperson, boy's Patrol Leader, SPL, or Scoutmaster.

For an advancement Board of Review, the chairperson should ask the Scout to recite one or more of the following:

- Scout Law
- Scout Oath
- Scout Motto
- Scout Slogan
- Outdoor Code

For Tenderfoot and Second Class ranks, typically just the Scout Oath and Law are asked. For higher ranks, more should be expected. One or two re-tries are ok for younger Scouts.

The board members ask appropriate questions to the Scout. Sections follow with sample questions for each rank. Open-ended questions are better, allowing the Scout to speak about his experiences, activities, and accomplishments. He should be encouraged to give his opinions. If an answer is too brief, follow up with a “Why?” or “How?” question to prompt for more details. The questions need not be restricted to Scout topics. Questions regarding home, church, school, work, athletics, etc. are all appropriate. The Chairperson should be made aware of any “out-of-bounds” areas. These should be communicated to the entire board before the Board of Review begins.

A Board of Review is typically between 15 to 30 minutes, with time increasing as the rank increases. When all board members have asked their questions, the Scout is asked to leave the room. The board members then decide if the Scout is ready for the next rank. The board’s decision must be unanimous. After the decision is made, the Scout is invited back into the room and the Chairperson informs the Scout of the board’s decision. If the Scout is approved for the next rank, there are general congratulations, and the Scout is encouraged to continue advancing. If there are issues, which prevent the Scout from advancing, the board must detail the deficiencies so the Scout can correct them. The Scout must be told specifically what must be done in order to be successful at then next Board of Review. The Chairperson sends a written follow up to both the Scout and the Scoutmaster regarding the deficiencies and the course of action needed to correct them.

The Chairperson should provide feedback to the Scoutmaster and Committee Chair as appropriate from the Scouts responses. If there are areas of weakness in the Troop, that feedback should be used to improve the Scouting experience for all Scouts. If there were specific positive comments, those should also be passed on. It may be difficult for a Scout to tell the Scoutmaster of things that are not going well, encourage the Scout if they mention things and see that the information is used constructively.

Mechanics of an Eagle Board of Review

The mechanics of a Board of Review for Eagle rank are similar to all other Boards of Review, except that this board is more in depth. The Eagle Scout Rank application, Letters of Recommendation, and Eagle Project notebook are reviewed by the board. Questions can include asking about these documents as well as areas used in lower rank reviews. The letters of recommendation are for the board’s use only;

any comments or questions about them should not reveal who wrote the letters. The letters are retained by the District Advancement Chairperson and are never given to the Scout. After the application has been approved by National Eagle Board of Review and returned to the local council, the letters of recommendation are destroyed.

The Nature of the Questions

The following sections contain typical Board of Review questions for each rank. The questions for the lower ranks tend to deal with factual information about the Scouts' participation in his troop, and his approach to applying the skills he has learned toward earning the next rank. The questions for the higher ranks explore how Scouting is becoming an integral part of the Scout's life. Questions like, "Where did you learn about ..." or "Why do you think it is important for a [rank] Scout to have this skill?" are valid, but don't retest skills.

If a Scout appears nervous or anxious about the Board of Review, it might be appropriate to ask one or two questions from the list for a lower rank, to make him more at ease. In general, in the following sections, within a rank, the questions are arranged from "easiest" to "Most difficult".

The questions are intended only to serve as a guide. The board should ask questions which are appropriate for the particular Scout and his experiences.

What Every Scout Should Know

Scout Oath:

On my honor, I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
And to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight.

Scout Law:

A Scout is
Trustworthy,

Loyal,
Helpful,
Friendly,
Courteous,
Kind,
Obedient,
Cheerful,
Thrifty,
Brave,
Clean,
Reverent.

Scout Motto:

Be Prepared

Scout Slogan:

Do a good turn daily

Outdoor Code:

As an American, I will do my best to –

Be clean in my outdoor manners,

Be careful with fire,

Be considerate in the outdoors, and

Be conservation-minded.

Non-advancement

If a Scout is not advancing or actively involved in Troop and patrol activities, a Board of Review can be an option for learning why. The meeting should be casual.

A purpose of a non-advancement Board of Review is to help the Scout. This type of board should only be held if there is commitment from the adults to take action. The action could be getting the Troop to improve communication, it could be providing transportation, or sometime else.

The chairman of the board should have the complete Scouts advancement record. It is possible that the Scout has just gotten busy with other activities and knowing what needs to be done to complete the next rank is all he really needs. Do not make the Scout feel like he is not achieving. Remember the aims of Scouting are citizenship, character, and fitness, not advancement.

Sample questions

- What do you like about Scouting?
- What do you like about the Troop?
- Tell us what would you like to see changed in the Troop?
 - These things should be captured and if appropriate, used to improve the Troop.
- What outings do you like?
- Does your patrol do patrol activities?
 - If yes, what are some recent activities? Do you participate?
- Tell us what would you like to see changed in your patrol?
 - These things should be captured and if appropriate, used to improve the patrol.
 - If things are serious, perhaps the Scout should change patrols.
- What activities are you doing in addition to Scouting?
- Do you need transportation to the meetings or outings?
 - If yes, the Chairperson should pass this information onto the Committee Chair and Scoutmaster so that action can be taken.
- What are your goals in Scouting?

Tenderfoot Rank

This is the Scout's first experience with a Board of Review. The process may require some explanation on the part of the Board of Review Chairperson.

The first few questions in the Board of Review should be simple. The Board of Review should try to gain a sense of how the Scout is filling in to the Troop, and the Scout's level of enjoyment of the Troop and the Patrol activities.

Encourage advancement to 2nd Class. Point out that the Scout may have already completed many of the requirements for 2nd Class.

The approximate time for this Board of Review is usually 15 – 20 minutes.

Sample questions

- When did you join the Troop?
 - What grade are you in? What school?
 - What hobbies do you have?
 - What hobbies do you have?
 - What patrol are you in? Does your patrol have a flag?
 - Why did you join Boy Scouts?
 - How many Troop meetings have you attended in the last two months?
 - What did you do at your last patrol meeting?
 - Tell us about your last Troop campout.
 - Have you taken part in any service projects? Pick one and tell us about it.
 - What has been your favorite Troop activity? Why?
 - If you were on a hike and got lost, what would you do?
 - Where did you learn how to fold the American flag? Tell us about your first experience with this skill.
 - What is the "Buddy System" that we use in Scouting? When do we use it?
 - Give us an example of how you obey the Scout Law at home or at school.
 - What is a good turn? What good turns have you done lately?
-
- What does "On My Honor" mean to you?
 - Is there anything you would like to see changed in your patrol or the troop?
 - How (or how not) has Scouting been what you thought it would be?
 - What are your plans for earning 2nd Class rank?

2nd Class Rank

This is the Scout's second Board of Review. The process should be familiar, unless it has been some time since the Board of Review for Tenderfoot.

Questions should focus on the use of the Scout skills learned for this rank, without retesting those skills. The Board of View should try to perceive how the Scout's patrol is functioning, and how this Scout is functioning within his patrol.

Encourage work on the remaining requirements for 1st Class; many of the easier ones may have already been completed.

The approximate time for this Board of Review is usually 15 – 20 minutes.

Sample questions

- How old are you?
- Do you have a hero"? If so, who and why?
- Does your patrol have patrol meetings? What has your patrol been doing lately? Do you find them helpful? Is there something the troop can do to help your patrol have productive patrol meetings?
- Is there any part of the patrol program that you would like changed? How would you make these changes? What is the benefit of these changes?
- Where did you go on your last Troop campout? Tell us about the trip. What did you like about the outing?
- What did you do for your service required for Second Class? What did you think of the project?
- Have you had a chance to cook outdoors? What did you like about it?
- What outdoor skills do you like best?
- What part of scouting interests you the most?
- Tell us about the flag ceremony in which you participated.
- Did you attend summer camp with our Troop next summer? If "Yes": What are you looking forward to doing at summer camp? If "No": Why not?
- Do you plan to attend summer camp with our Troop next summer? If "Yes": What are you looking forward to doing at summer camp? If "No": Why not?
- What requirement for this rank was the hardest? Easiest?
- Have you started earning any merit badges? Which one interest you, and why?
- In the Scout Oath, what does "I will do my best" mean to you?
- Do you ever do more than one Good Turn Daily? What kinds?
- How is it possible to live the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life?
- What does it mean to say, "A Scout is Trustworthy"?

- The Scout Motto is “Be Prepared”. What does it mean to you?
- What do you think it means to be a Second Class Scout? What should people expect of you?
- What are your plans for First Class?
- What is the first Leadership position you plan to run for?
- What suggestions do you have for improving our Troop?

1st Class Rank

By this point the Scout should be comfortable with the Board of Review process.

The Scout should be praised for his accomplishment in achieving 1st Class (particularly if he joined Boy Scouts less than a year ago). In achieving the rank of 1st Class, the Scout should feel an additional sense of responsibility to the troop and to his patrol.

The 1st Class rank will produce additional opportunities for the Scout (Order of the Arrow, leadership)

Merit badge will begin to play a role in future advancement to the Star and Life ranks. Encourage merit badge work if it has not already begun.

The approximate time for this Board of Review is usually 20 minutes.

Sample questions

- What grade are you in?
- What is your favorite subject in school?
- What do you tell your friends about the things you learn and do in Scouts?
- On average, how many Troop meetings do you attend each month?
- What part of Troop meetings do you like? Why?
- Tell us about your last campout with the Troop. Where did you go? How did you help with meal preparation? Did you have a good time? Why or why not?
- Why is it important for you to know how to transport a person who has a broken leg?
- Why is it important for you to be able to recognize local plant life?
- How does your Patrol function as a team? What part do you take in helping your Patrol?
- Have you had a chance to teach the younger Scouts any of your recently earned scout skills? What did you teach?
- For this rank you met with a civil employee and discussed your constitutional rights and obligations. Who did you meet with and why did you learn from your talk?
- Do you think that your first aid knowledge will actually help you? How? Have you had an opportunity to use any of it?
- Why are merit badges a part of Scouting?
- What merit badges do you have?
- Which merit badge was the most valuable to you? Why?
- Who was Lord Baden-Powell?
- How does a Scout fulfill his "Duty to Country"?
- How do you define "Scout Spirit"?

- What was the most challenging requirement?
- If you had the opportunity to add or delete one requirement for 1st Class, what would it be and why?
- What point of the Scout Law is the hardest for you to live up to?
- What more does “Be Prepared” mean to a First Class Scout, than to a Second Class Scout?
- What does “On my Honor” mean to you?
- What are your plans for your progress toward Star? Do you have a goal date when you would like to make Star by?
- What effect has Scouting had on your life?
- Do you have a long term goal for your Scouting career?

Star Rank

With the Star rank, emphasis is placed upon service to others, merit badges, and leadership. Scout skills remain an important element for the Star Scout; however, the emphasis should be on teaching other Scouts these skills.

Explore how the Star scout can assist with leading his patrol and troop. Attempt to understand how the Scouting philosophy is becoming part of the Scout's life.

Often the Star rank is a place where Scout "stall out". Encourage the Scout to remain active, and participate fully in his patrol and troop. If the Scout appears to be looking for additional opportunities, suggest leadership positions such as Den Chief or Troop Guide.

The approximate time for this Board of Review is usually 20 minutes.

Sample questions

- What do you do with your spare time?
- What other activities do you participate in? (i.e. Sports, music, etc.)
- Who makes sure your uniform is clean and the patches are all sewn on for you to wear?
- What responsibilities do you have at home?
- How have the Scout skills that you have learned helped you in a non-Scouting activity?
- How many merit badges have you earned? Which one was the most fun? Which one was the most challenging?
- What part do you take in the Troop meetings?
- What leadership positions have you held outside of your patrol? What challenges did they present? What are your personal leadership goals and objectives?
- What service project did you work on to earn your required hours for this rank? What was your job on the project?
- How do you feel your patrol functions as a team?
- Have you ever tried to change something (long or short term) in your patrol? What was it? Did you get the result you wanted?
- What does it mean for a Star Scout to "Be Prepared" on a daily basis?
- What should the statement, "A Scout is Trustworthy" mean to a Star Scout?
- What do you think the role of a Star Scout is in relationship to younger scouts?
- What is our "Duty to God"?
- What does it mean to say "A Scout is Loyal"?
- How are the Scout Oath and Load part of your daily life?
- What do others have a right to expect of a Star Scout?

- What point of the Scout Law is the most important to you? Why?
- How are the Scout Oath and Law part of your daily life?
- What is the Scout Slogan? What type of “Good Turns” do you do?
- What is the Outdoor Code? Why is it important?
- While working toward your Star did you learn anything that you would like to pass on to the younger Scouts? What?
- What have you learned that might help you as an adult?
- What is your goal for reaching Life Scout?
- What is your long term goal for Scouting?
- What do you feel the troop can do most to help the younger Scouts so they will make it to Start and beyond?
- If you could make one change in the merit badge program (i.e. Structure, format, add a badge), what would you do?
- What type of career interests you? Have you looked into earning a related merit badge?
- If an Order of the Arrow member
 - When did you complete your “Ordeal”?
 - What does membership in OA signify?
- Do you plan on achieving Life rank?

Life Rank

The Life rank is the final rank before Eagle. The Life Scout should be fully participating in the Troop, with emphasis being placed on leadership in the unit, as well as teaching skills and leadership to the younger Scouts.

Merit badge work should be a regular part of the Scout's career. Scouting values and concepts should be an integral part of the Scout's daily life.

At this point, the Scout is starting to "give back to Scouting" through leadership, training of other Scouts, recruiting, keeping Scouts active in the program, etc.

Explore suggestions for improving the program.

The approximate time for this Board of Review is usually 20 – 30 minutes.

Sample questions

- How does Scouting influence your interactions with people?
- Have you ever left you had to defend yourself because someone knew you are in Scouts?
- Outside of Scouting, tell me about a time when you have had to be a leader. How did it make you feel afterward?
- What are your hobbies?
- Other than you parents, who do you think has influence your life the most? Why? Whose life do you think you have the most influence over? Why?
- Name one think you don't like doing, but you do it anyway because you know it will please someone. How do you feel afterward?
- What has been your worst camping experience in Scouting?
- How many patrol meetings has your patrol held in the last three months? How many of them have you attended?
- What is your current (most recent) leadership position within the Troop? How long have you held that position? What particular challenges does it present? What is Leadership?
- Do you have any brothers or sisters who are in Scouts (any level)? What can you do to encourage them to continue with Scouts, and to move forward along the Scouting Trail?
- How do you choose between a school activity, a Scout activity, and a family activity?
- How many outings have you been on in the last year? Which did you like to most and why?
- Which scouting skill dodo you like the most? Why? Least? Why?

- Is the Troop's outdoor program adequate to develop skills and maintain the interest of the Scouts? What changes would you make?
- Why do you think that Star and Life Scouts are required to contribute so much time to service projects? What service projects are most rewarding to you? Why?
- Of the merit badges you have earned, which one do you think will be of greatest value to you as an adult? Why?
- Why do you think that the three "Citizenship" merit badges are required for the Eagle rank?
- What was the most difficult merit badge for you to earn? How often did you meet with your counselor on that one?
- Who helps you or coaches you in preparing for merit badges?
- Have you found any merit badges that you think are too hard for scouts to earn? Which ones? What makes them so difficult?
- What does "A Scout is Brave" mean to you?
- How can you personally help keep up the Scout Spirit in the Troop?
- What does "On My Honor" mean to you?
- What is the most difficult part of the Scout Oath and Law for you to live up to in your daily life? How do you overcome it?
- What have you done since becoming a Star Scout, in carrying out additional responsibilities in the Troop? Patrol?
- Which service projects did you work on for the rank of Life? What did you do?
- What do you like most about the Patrol Method? Least?
- What role do you play in your Patrol?
- What do you think is the most important skill for a leader? Why?
- What does it mean to say, "A Scout is Reverent"?
- The Scout Oath refers to "Duty to Self"; what duty do we have to ourselves?
- What do you think you can do to help younger Scouts?
- If an Order of the Arrow member
 - What role does OA play in Scouting?
 - What honor do you hold in OA?
 - What is the difference between Scout "ranks" and OA "honors"?
 - What do you think about the OA program?
- Have you thought about what you will need to do for Eagle? Have you begun to think about an Eagle Service Project? What are you thinking about doing?

Eagle Rank

The Board of Review for the Eagle Rank is different from the other Board of Reviews in which the Scout has participated. The members of the Board of Review are not all from his Troop Committee. Introductions are essential, and a few “break in” questions may be appropriate.

At this point, the goal is to understand the Scout's full Scouting experience, and how others can have similar meaningful Scouting experiences. Scouting principles and goals should be central to the Scout's life; look for evidence of this.

Although this is the final rank, this is not the end of the Scouting trail. “Once an Eagle, always an Eagle”. Explore how this Eagle Scout will continue with scouting activities, and continued service to his home, church, and community.

The approximate time for this Board of Review is usually 30 – 50 minutes.

Sample questions

- What do you do in your spare time outside of Scout?
- What would you suggest adding to the Scout Law (a 13th point)? Why?
- What one point could be removed from the Scout Law? Why?
- Why is it important to learn how to tie knots and lash together poles and logs?
- What is the difference between a “Hollywood hero” and a real hero?
- Can you give an example of someone who is a hero to you? (A real person, not a character in a book or movie)
- What do you consider the purpose of the merit badge program?
- What merit badge interested you the most and why?
- Why do you think that the Family Life merit badge is required for Eagle rank?
- Have any merit badges sparked an interest that might lead you towards a career?
- What camping experience have you had that you wish every Scout could have?
- What is the role of the Senior Patrol Leader at a troop meeting, campout, or summer camp?
- What do you do to help younger Scouts along the trail?
- Not counting your troop camping trips, what are the best things you have done as a Scout?
- What does the Scout “Good Turn” mean to you?
- What is an Eagle Scout's duty to his country?
- If you could change one thing to improve Scouting, what would you change?
- What do you believe our society expects from an Eagle Scout?
- The charge to the Eagle requires that you give back to scouting more than Scouting has given to you. How do you propose to do that?

- As an Eagle Scout, what can you personally do to improve your unit?
- What will you be doing in your unit, after receiving your Eagle Rank?
- Tell us how you selected your Eagle service project.
- From your Eagle service project, what did you learn about managing or leading people? What are the qualities of a good leader?
- What part of your Eagle service project was the most challenging? Why?
- Did you have any difficulty planning a service project? How did you choose your project?
- What help did you have in order to complete your project? Who?
- If you were to manage another project similar to your Eagle service project, what would you do differently to make the project better or easier?
- What are your future plans?
- What do you think is the single biggest issue facing Scouting in the future?
- How do your friends outside of Scouting react when they learn that you are a Boy Scout? How do you feel about that? How do you think they will react when they learn that you have become an Eagle Scout?
- Why do you think that belief in God is part of the Scout Oath?
- What one thing have you gained from your Scoutmaster's conferences over the years?
- How does an Eagle Scout continue to show Scout Spirit?
- Do you think that you will be able to remember the obligation of a Scout "to help others at all time" as you grow into an adult? What will help you remember this fundamental?
- If an Order of the Arrow member
 - What does OA membership mean to you?
 - How does OA help Scouting and your unit?
- Why should this board approve your request for the Eagle rank?

Eagle Palms

Eagle Palms are awarded for continued leadership and skills development (merit badges) after the Eagle Rank has been earned. The purpose of this Board of Review is to ensure that the Eagle Scout remains active within the unit, contributes to the leadership of the unit, and assists with the growth of the other Scouts within the unit.

The approximate time for this Board of Review is usually 15 minutes.

Sample questions

- As an eagle, have the Scout Oath and Law gained new meaning for you? How?
- Since earning your Eagle, what merit badges have you earned?
- Since your last Board of Review, in what service projects have you participated?
- How do you plan to continue your involvement with Scouting?
- What would you say to a Life Scout who is only minimally active within his unit, and who does not seem motivated to continue along the Scouting Trail?
- If a Life Scout was having difficulty selecting an Eagle service project, what would you suggest to him?
- What is the primary role of the Scoutmaster?
- How have you begun to "... give back to Scouting more than Scouting has given to you".