



TROOP ORIENTATION HANDBOOK

Dear Parents: Welcome to Troop 88! We look forward to a great time together. This handbook provides basic information we think will be helpful to you. If you have questions about scouting or Troop 88, please feel free to talk with any of the Adult Leaders.

Policy for all Troop 88 Activities To follow the aims of scouting
– building character, citizenship & fitness of the young men of our troop

Every activity in Boy Scouts is 'fun – with a purpose!' Hiking, backpacking, kayaking, swimming, bicycling and camping are the ways we teach values. The techniques we use are called the Methods of Scouting. Simply put, every activity must have a purpose. That purpose is to teach boys to follow the principles of the Scout Oath, Scout Law and to practice the Scout Slogan & Motto.

All troop activities will be attended and supervised by a minimum of 2 adults, at least one who has completed Adult Leader Training. Our outdoor activities conform to the Outdoor Code and follow the principles of "Leave No Trace" Camping. Visit www.t88sf.org – see calendar bottom right!

SCOUT INFO What it means to be a Boy Scout, a member of Troop 88, and where to get more information

A. THE PATROL METHOD

Who's in charge? ... The boys are! Yes, that's a little scary, but adults are there to help guide them and provide a safe environment. The Boy Scouts of America (BSA), as well as Troop 88, use the "patrol method" in organizing a troop. The Troop is divided into patrols of approximately 6-8 boys. Patrol Leaders are elected every six months. The Patrol Leader (PL) chooses an Assistant Patrol Leader to assist him.

An older scout is elected at the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), who works with his Assistant SPL (ASPL) and the patrol leaders (PL) to determine the program, and run the meetings and activities, with assistance from the adult leaders. There are other positions of leadership your son will be able to participate in helping him develop his leadership skills.

B. NEW SCOUTS

New Scouts are placed in an existing patrol. Their Patrol Leader will work with an assigned Troop Guide to help the new scouts during their first year.

C. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

All Scouts bring any issues, problems, or questions to the attention of the Patrol Leader, Troop Guide or Senior Patrol Leader. If the outcome is unsatisfactory, the Scout may ask the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster for assistance. **Parents are encouraged to attend events and are asked to remember this protocol and to encourage their son to follow this method to solve problems!**

D. TROOP MEETINGS

Troop 88 meets every Wednesday evening during the school year from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Forest Hill Association clubhouse. From 7:00-7:30 Scouts work on advancement and merit badges. They are responsible to ask older scouts to sign off advancement and for contacting Merit Badge counselors themselves. At 7:30-8:30 they gather for troop opening and troop/patrol activities, with the troop closing ceremony usually beginning at 8:20. Scouts are expected to arrive **on time, in uniform**, and with their **Scout Handbooks**, so they can work on advancement.

It is important to remember that we are guests of the Forest Hill Association and should respect the space and neighborhood. Scouts are expected to assist in the set up/clean up of Forest Hill Association parties during the year.)

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E. SCHEDULE CONFLICTS

The Troop holds schoolwork and family responsibilities of a high priority. Be reassured, there is no penalty for missing a meeting. If a Scout is unable to attend a troop meeting, or other troop function, it is expected that the Scout call his Patrol Leader. This is a responsibility of the scout and not of his parent.

The troop web site is a great way to keep up-to-date. Please check it often at www.T88SF.org. We also use Yahoo! groups for email communication. Go to groups.yahoo.com/group/T88/ and click "Join" to send a request to the Moderator.

F. SCOUT UNIFORM WHAT TO PURCHASE:

Scout pants, Scout short-sleeved shirt, with: SF Bay Area Council shoulder patch / purple World Crest / shoulder applets / "88" numeral strips

If you cannot afford to purchase a uniform, the troop may have recycled uniforms. Talk with Scoutmaster.

Uniforms can be purchased at 1001 Davis Street San Leandro, CA 94577-1514 - (510) 577-9000

Things T88 provides: 1150 Chess Drive, Foster City, CA 94404-1107 (650) 358-0588

- ✓ A Scout handbook to each new scout upon payment of dues. You may want to a book cover.
- ✓ Troop 88 T-shirt will be provided, serving as the Activity (or Class B) uniform shirt.
- ✓ Scouts are given their patrol patch.
- ✓ The red neckerchief will be provided when the Scout earns his Tenderfoot.

Scouts will be expected to wear their uniform with shirt tucked in to all Troop meetings, to and from select events (as announced), to Scoutmaster Conferences, to Boards of Review, Courts or Honor, and to all other Troop, district, council or national functions, unless otherwise specified.

Exact placement of patches are shown on the inside front and back cover of the Boy Scout handbook

G. ADVANCEMENT (FROM SCOUT TO EAGLE)

Scout Rank As soon as a boy is registered with the Troop, he begins his advancement. Rank requirements are listed in the Scout Handbook. At any time, when he is ready a scout can demonstrate his knowledge to his Patrol Leader, or another scout who has attained the rank of Star to get his book signed. When he has completed a rank's requirements, he will participate in a Scoutmaster conference followed by a Board of Review. He has earned his rank then, and will receive his patch at the next Court of Honor to be sewn on the left pocket of his uniform.

Overview: Boy Scout Levels of Rank There are six levels of scouting a scout can attain:

Rank	Typical Time Period	Skill Emphasis
Scout	1st week or so	Meaning of scouting
Tenderfoot	1st 3-4 Months	Camping Skills
2nd Class	6-12 Months	Camping Skills
1st Class	1st Year	Camping Skills
Star Scout	12-24 Months	Merit Badge Work
Life Scout	24-36 Months	Merit Badge Work

Trail to First Class Advancement is not necessarily earned in sequential order (a scout can complete requirements in First Class while working on Tenderfoot). Regular attendance at meetings, outdoor activities and Summer Boy Scout Camp make this goal more achievable. The scouts work at an individual pace, and can complete the first three ranks in approximately one year. It is not meant to be a competition and the emphasis is not on speed or who gets there first. The emphasis is on "process", not simply earning a patch. Boys get a sense of achievement through this process and learn goal setting important later in life. *Note: the Scout needs to monitor his own advancement!*

Merit Badges and the Trail to Eagle After a Scout earns his First Class rank, he is eligible for many new things. He will hold various positions of responsibility that help the troop and he devotes his attention to earning merit badges to advance in rank by doing the following:

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1. Choose a merit badge.
2. Ask the Merit Badge Advisor or Scoutmaster for the name of a merit badge counselor.
3. Fill out a blue merit badge card.
4. Notify the merit badge counselor of intent to work on the badge, have the counselor start a blue card.
5. Work with the counselor who signs requirements as they are completed.
6. When completed, the scout retains the applicant's portion and the counselor keep's his portion. He then turns in the remaining portion to the Advancement Chairman.

Congratulations! The badge will be presented at the next Troop Court of Honor.

Special Needs A scout may have special circumstances that prevent him from attempting some or all the requirements of advancement, such as physical or developmental challenges. The BSA provides alternative requirements in such cases – if you think this may apply, please speak to the Scoutmaster and he will set up a program of alternate requirements, using BSA guidelines.

Scoutmaster Conference & Board of Review A Scout who is ready to complete his final requirements for advancement requests a Scoutmaster Conference (SMC) and a Board of Review (BoR), which is a meeting with 3-4 adults (usually other parents) to talk about earning his rank. A BoR is a conversation about his experience in the troop, not a re-test of skills, though the scout should be familiar with what was done for that rank and must be in complete scout uniform.

When ready, the scout should:

1. Make sure all requirements have been completed and signed
2. Ask the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster for a "Scoutmaster Conference"
3. Ask the Advancement Chair to schedule a Board of Review

Requirements for a Scout appearing before an SMC and BoR are as follows:

1. Be in proper and complete Official Scout Uniform.
2. Bring Boy Scout Handbook with completed addendum.
3. Bring completed merit badge "blue cards" required for the rank being applied for.
4. Bring any merit badge written work or project documentation where applicable.

Court of honor The event to formally recognize rank achievements, merit badge, and other awards. The Court of Honor is on a Wednesday night in lieu of the regular Troop meeting. This is the scouts' night; the Court of Honor is planned and executed by the boys. For the Court of Honor, we need families to bring food or refreshments and help serve. Troop Court of Honor Hospitality Coordinator arranges this. All scouts and parents are encouraged to attend the Court of Honor to support all the scouts in the Troop and to recognize their accomplishments.

H. LEADERSHIP TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Boy Scouts has a strong commitment to leadership training. Troop Youth Leader Training provides an excellent introduction to leadership skills. District and Council courses provide additional detail in some areas, and more intense development in weeklong courses. Visit <http://www.sfbac.org/training/youth> and check with our troop Training Chair.

Dues paid once a year, \$100 in October. If not paid in October, the scout is considered "inactive." If not paid by the end of November, as we re-charter, a scout's membership is dropped from the rolls. Scouts who join mid-year may pay a prorated amount of \$50 if after February. Scholarships available.

Health Forms Complete and return Class I and/or Class II medical forms. The Class I is an annual medical form used by the Troop for all excursions and regular weekend campouts. It provides medical authorization to treat. The Class II is the required medical form for long-term camping or backpacking. This form is valid for three years and is the only one that requires a doctor's signature. Adults who are under age 40 will complete a Class II form for long-term camping and that form is good for three years or until age 40, whichever comes first. At age 40, each adult completes an annual Class III

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A. Campouts The Troop goes camping about once a month and regularly attends Summer Camp and the winter Klondike Derby. The campout calendar is posted on the web site. Activity Poop Sheets are emailed to the T88 distribution list.

Campouts are the backbone of the scouting program. It is here that bonding, friendship and the patrol spirit are nurtured. Campouts are where new skills are learned, old skills are practiced and leadership skills are developed.

Parents are welcome on camping trips as adult leaders. This is a great way to get to know other parents in the Troop and to contribute to the good of the program. Adults, unlike scouts, bring their own tents, plates, utensils and food. Stoves and cooking utensils are provided.

Payment for food usually runs \$6 along with a transportation fee, which varies by distance. Scouts and adults will be responsible for paying the food buyer for their portion of the food.

We need to know in advance of a Scout's and an adult's commitment to attend, in order to plan: (1) how many will attend, (2) how many drivers are available and needed, (3) how many adults will need food, and (4) how much equipment will be needed. Commitments are important for planning purposes and planning is necessary for a successful campout!

Planning: The scouts plan their campout menus by patrol. One member of the patrol is designated as the food buyer for his entire patrol. Scouts do this on a volunteer and rotating basis. Also the boys decide who will cook which meals and how they want to handle clean up. Each Patrol Leader is ultimately responsible for making sure everyone is included in the food count, that the food buyer has his patrol box on menu-planning night, and that the food buyer is notified of any changes prior to shopping for food. It is the responsibility of each scout to take care of Troop Equipment and to return it in good, clean condition.

Cancellations

If a scout becomes ill, or some other event precludes attendance at the campout, he must call his Patrol Leader, the food buyers and the adult leader. If a scout or adult does not attend a campout after his patrol's food buyer has purchased the food, the scout or adult is still responsible for paying for his share of the food costs.

B. Hikes The troop has an active hiking schedule to help scouts spend time together discovering the diversity and richness of outdoor wonders. The troop tries to schedule a hike at least once a month on alternating Saturdays or Sundays. For most scouts this activity can contribute to the Tenderfoot/Second Class/First Class Ranks, and earning such Merit Badges as Backpacking, Camping, Hiking, Forester, Geologist, and Outdoorsman.

C. Service Projects Integral to scouting and to the troop's commitment to the Scout oath is service to others. Troop 88 volunteer service opportunities will be presented throughout the year, including Eagle projects by members of the troop. Any service project must be approved by the Scoutmaster in order for the scout to get credit for it. The ideal Scoutmaster approved service project will meet several criteria, such as

- The recipient of the service truly values the effort.
- The scout sees the work as being a valuable contribution in which he can take pride.
- The work should be appealing and be something the scout wants to do.
- The project should stretch the scout's abilities but not beyond his ability to do the work.
- And of course, it should be done with no thought of reward.

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D. SUMMER CAMP

Summer camp is a week-long activity usually in late July. Adults may be invited to attend part of the week. We camp at a Scout Camp, participating with other scout troops. Camp usually costs around \$325-\$350 for the week, which includes meals. Summer Camp is one of the highlights of the year, is universally loved by all scouts, and provides significant opportunities to advance and achieve merit badges.

Equipment

The Troop owns its own tents, cooking equipment, lanterns, etc. Each scout will need to obtain the following for camping trips:

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|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Backpack (loaners available) | 6. Lightweight rain coat | 10. Compass |
| 2. Sleeping bag | 7. Hiking shoes | 11. Water |
| 3. Sleeping pad | 8. Mess kit: plastic bowl works | 12. Trail snacks |
| 4. Flashlight with extra batteries | 9. Cup, knife, fork, spoon (or spork) | 13. Troop 88 Class B T-Shirt |
| 5. Individual first-aid & toiletries | | 14. Avoid cotton pants |

Clearly mark items with the scout's name, including clothing, socks, underwear, etc. Pack clothing in plastic bags inside the backpack. It is important that each scout pack his own gear so he knows what he has packed. The troop's web site lists recommended types of equipment and suppliers. The troop may have loaner equipment. Check with the Scoutmaster.

Troop Info

Troop leadership positions and support for both the boys and adults are as follows:

A. SCOUT LEADERSHIP

What makes scouting special is that the boys make the decisions! All troop leadership positions have a hand in making the Troop run. As a troop leader the boys will:

- Plan and run troop meetings,
- Pick troop outings, where to camp, what to do,
- Plan advancement opportunities for all troop members
- Select High-Adventure programs
- Help other scouts along the trail to Eagle.

The youth leadership consists of many positions of responsibility, though the main ones are:

Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) elected by the scouts to represent them as troop leader. One of the major parts of the SPL's job is to help plan each month's program activities, which he does with other youth leaders during the monthly Patrol Leader's Council PLC (see below).

Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL) is selected by the SPL and acts in his place in his absence or when called upon. He also provides leadership to other youth leaders in the troop.

Patrol Leader (PL) is the elected leader of his patrol. He represents his patrol on the PLC.

Assistant Patrol Leader (APL) appointed by the Patrol Leader and leads in his absence.

Troop Guide works with new scouts and is selected by the Scoutmaster and SPL. He acts as their PL and helps them earn their First Class rank in their first year.

The Patrol Leaders' Council

The Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) is responsible for planning and conducting the troop's activities. The PLC is composed of: Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leaders, Troop Guide, Instructor, and Scribe. The PLC organizes and assigns activity responsibilities for the weekly troop meetings. The troop committee interacts with the PLC through the Scoutmaster.

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B. ADULT LEADERS (HOW THEY HELP)

The Scoutmaster is the adult responsible for the image and program of the troop. The Scoutmaster and the **Assistant Scoutmasters** work directly with the scouts. The importance of the Scoutmaster's job is reflected in the fact that the quality of his/her guidance will affect every youth and adult involved in the troop.

Troop Committee (participation and roles)

The Troop Committee's primary responsibilities are supporting the delivery of a quality troop program and handling troop administration. The Troop Committee is the troop's board of directors and supports the troop program. All parents are encouraged to join the Troop Committee in order to ensure a rich and vital troop. The troop committee does the following:

- Advises the Scoutmaster on policies relating to Boy scouting and the chartered organization
- Carries out the policies and regulations of the Boy Scouts of America
- Supports leaders in carrying out the program
- Is responsible for finances and disbursements in line with the approved budget
- Obtains, maintains, and properly cares for troop property
- Serves on Boards of Review
- Supports the Scoutmaster in working with problems that may affect the troop program
- Helps with the Friends of Scouting campaign

Adult Training

The Boy Scouts of America organization offers adult training to help prepare and support adults in the leading of the troop and of the scouts in all of a troop's activities. These include what a troop committee is, what a Scoutmaster/Assistant Scoutmaster does and what other adult leaders need to know to ensure a safe successful program.

Parent Participation in Troop 88

Troop 88 not only welcomes adult participation, but encourages it. Participation can range from a position of leadership on the Troop Committee, performing the role of an Assistant Scoutmaster, acting as a merit badge counselor, driving to/from or attending campouts, attending weekly meetings, or just assisting the Troop when called upon.

Each individual needs to decide how much time he or she would like to give to the program but please know that even though there may be lots of involved parents, adult assistance is beneficial to the Troop and one's son. For the most part, the scouts who stay with the program and advance the furthest are the ones whose parents show an interest in the Troop and give time to the program.

Come and share the fun.

The memories that you make with your son today will last a lifetime!