

Advancement : An Explanation

Following is information intended to supplement the Boy Scout Handbook. Our goal for Scouts in Troop 7 is for them to complete requirements for Scout, Tenderfoot, 2nd Class and 1st Class within 12 to 18 months of joining the Troop.

Strategy : Part of the Boy Scout program is teaching motivation and self-reliance. In Troop 7 we use the advancement program to build these qualities. When a boy joins the Troop he will be part of a New Scout Patrol. This Patrol will have assigned to it older Scouts, Assistant Scoutmaster/s and volunteer parents who will offer help with advancement requirements for the lower Scout Ranks. Scouts receive very close supervision on Scout and Tenderfoot ranks, slightly less help on the 2nd Class Rank and even less help on the 1st Class Rank. This strategy is intended to prepare the boy for the level of dedication required on later ranks (Star, Life, Eagle) where leadership and service are stressed.

Advancement Process : Boys may work on any of the requirements for ranks through 1st Class in any sequence that is convenient. That is, boys need not complete a rank before working on requirements for subsequent ranks. However, the ranks can only be awarded in order. The Scout Handbook has a section explaining requirements for each rank with an accompanying check list that the Scout can use to track his own progress. Once a Scout (and his parents) are confident that a Scout has completed a requirement, he must have a **Troop 7 Scoutmaster** confirm completion and check that requirement as completed on the checklist toward the back of the Scout Handbook. The Scoutmaster will then record the completion in the Troop 7 permanent record. After a Scout has fulfilled all requirements for a particular rank, he will have a short Scoutmaster Conference where the Scout has a chance to talk about his progress within Troop 7. Finally, the Scout will appear before a Board of Review conducted by 3 or 4 Adult members of the Troop. This Board makes the final decision in awarding Ranks. The review process is not intended as a test of the Scout's ability. Instead, it is meant to check the Scout's progress and identify areas where the boy may need additional help. Scouts must present themselves at the Board of Review in Uniform with their Scout Handbook.

Advancement Opportunities : Troop 7 strives to offer the variety of opportunities needed for a Scout to reach 1st Class rank within the first 18 months. Many requirements for the lower ranks can be studied and completed at home and then checked off at a Monday meeting. Other requirements will be taught and checked off during regular meetings. Some requirements can only be completed on Troop 7 outings such as hikes, campouts or service opportunities. In addition, each year in March the Council offers an Advancement/Merit Badge Workshop where many rank requirements can be completed. At this workshop it is important that the Scout keep track of the requirements (with signatures) that he has completed. Summer resident camp also offers daily workshops on advancement requirements. For this reason Summer Camp is probably the most important experience that your Scout can have and is highly recommended for every Scout.

Merit Badges : Merit Badges can be earned at any time in a Scout's career. However, some Merit Badges are more appropriate for older Scouts than others. As your Scout moves toward the upper ranks, he should be concentrating on Merit Badges which are required for the Eagle Rank.

Eagle Award : The advancement process is a thrilling journey for your Scout and one which will teach him about service and leadership, build character and expose him to new skills which may help him discover hidden talents. If your Scout's goal is the Eagle Award, we highly recommend (from experience) that you and your boy consider age 15 or 16 as a target for completion of the requirements for that award. The Trail to Eagle is long and exciting and few Scouts complete the journey. But many of the benefits of Scouting cannot be found anywhere else.