

Forming Patrols

Scout Troops are made up of patrols. The Scout Programme should be based around patrols. At the beginning of each year, Scout troops make new patrols. Here is some advice on forming patrols in your troop:

Step 1	Decide on Patrol Leaders and Assistant Patrol Leaders
Step 2	Assign existing and new Members to Patrols
Step 3	A role for Each Patrol Member
Step 4	Run Patrol Corners
Step 5	Run a Patrol Activity

Step 1: Decide on Patrol Leaders and Assistant Patrol Leaders
Different troops have different ways of choosing which scouts would make the best PLs and APLs. In some troops, they are elected with all scouts and scouters participating in the vote, or in others the current/outgoing PLs and Scouters decide. When matching PLs and APLs consider their capabilities/circumstances (eg. a new APL with a more experienced PL, or a having a gender mix).

Personal progression is also important in this system, allowing for scouts in their first year to participate in the programme, scouts in their second year take an active involvement with some leadership roles, and scouts in their third/final year tend to lead as PLs, APLs, or activity leaders.

Before taking up a role the incoming PLs/APLs should discuss it and commit to fulfilling it as best they can. Leadership and programme training should be provided as soon as possible; although it is advisable for scouts to have undertaken this training as APLs or as active scouts.

Step 2: Assign existing and new Members to Patrols

The Patrol Leaders Council (PLs, APLs, and Scouters) can work together on dividing the troop in patrols. You should consider scouting experience, existing members of patrols, and friendship groups. Patrols should have scouts at different stages of their Crean Awards.

Step 3: A role for Each Patrol Member

It is important that everyone in the patrol has a role. This ensures that each scout plays an active part and contributes to the patrol. Common roles, besides PL and APL, are: quartermaster, first aider, treasurer, photographer/scribe, cook, and Leave No Trace officer.

Step 4: Run Patrol Corners

These are a short patrol meetings within your troop meetings. Typically, these should be 20mins. During these meetings patrols will: plan programme, review activities, and assess progress in Crean Awards and Adventure Skills. By participating in these meetings, scouts will begin to appreciate how they are a part of a team and will think about scouting in terms of their patrol. For more information on Patrol Corners, check out this other resource: goo.gl/OFx2tO

Step 5: Run a Patrol Activity

Next, try to get the Patrols to do activities in their patrols. Initially, run games and other activities during weekly meetings using patrols. Then, encourage troop activities where each Patrol operates independently – such as a series of bases they rotate through, or each patrol could light and cook on their own fire.