

Structuring Colony Meetings

This resource aims to equip Scouter teams with ideas as to how to structure weekly Colony meetings.

Starting with a bang!

You may wish to begin your weekly meeting with a roll-call, prayer, call-and-response and/ or promise recital. Good routines get Beaver Scouts into the swing of things straight away!



Beaver Scouts have lots of energy so it is a good idea to then continue your meeting with an energy-release game.

Games in which Beaver Scouts are not 'knocked out' (for example, build-up chasing and Stuck in the Mud) will allow everyone to play and get the maximum enjoyment from the activity.

Why not have the Conn Beaver Scouts draw up a list of the Colony's favourite games? The list can then be used at the start of every meeting- a 'game picker' (a different Beaver Scout each week) can pick two options from the list and the Beaver Scouts can vote on which one they would rather play.

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Getting down to business

Weekly Beaver meetings are the perfect place to practise and hone certain skills, plan outings and activities and review what the Colony has done.

You may wish to arrange your 'learning time' after the warm-up game in a variety of ways. Remember, Beaver Scouts are at a young age and activities that require concentrated effort longer than a few minutes should be avoided. Activities should be active, inclusive and meaningful.



The content of each meeting should be shaped by the Colony itself through Log Chews and Lodge Discussions in the previous week(s), and it thus the job of the Scouter team to put a structure to this content.

What follows are some suggestions as to how to structure your meeting, with suggested timings.

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Lodge Learning

Suggested time: 4 x 10 minutes

Ideal for: Covering a lot of content and giving Beaver Scouts attention in a small group setting.

Beaver Scouts in their Lodges will travel around their Den/ meeting space in a clockwise direction every ten minutes. In each corner, a Scouter will be there with an activity for the Lodge (some might call it a 'base' or 'station').

Each mini-activity can be different, for example, one base will be revising tying reef knots, another will be writing a thank you card to the fire station after your visit, another will be a review of that visit and the final one could be planning the menu for the upcoming camp. Each mini-activity could also be tied with a similar theme, for example, each of the four bases will cover a particular aspect of first aid.



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Circle Time / Log Chew

Suggested time: 5 minutes

Ideal for: Getting quick feedback and ideas from Beaver Scouts.

Beaver Scouts sit in a circle and take it in turns to give feedback to the Scouter team on whatever topic needs to be discussed. For example, the Colony may be asked to review their recent hike in the forest and name things they enjoyed about it. This could also be a Log Chew that will decide the content of future meetings.

Bree-Ruarc-Conn Time

Suggested time: 10 minutes

Ideal for: Adapting parts of the programme to suit the stage the Beaver Scouts are at.

Beaver Scouts sometimes learn as much, if not more, from more experienced Conn Beavers than they do from Scouters, but it may be handy to split the Colony into the three stages in order to learn a tricky concept, etc. One or two Scouters could take a stage each. While the Bree and Ruarc are practising their skills, the Conn could be planning the next sleepover! Remember not to split up the Colony like this too often, otherwise the opportunities for Beaver Scouts to learn from their peers will be limited.

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Whole Colony Time

Suggested time: No more than 15 minutes

Ideal for: Covering 'easy' content in a big setting.

Learning campfire songs is so much more fun in a large group! Whole Colony time will allow Beaver Scouts to have fun with their friends while they learn.



Buddy Up

Suggested time: 5 minutes

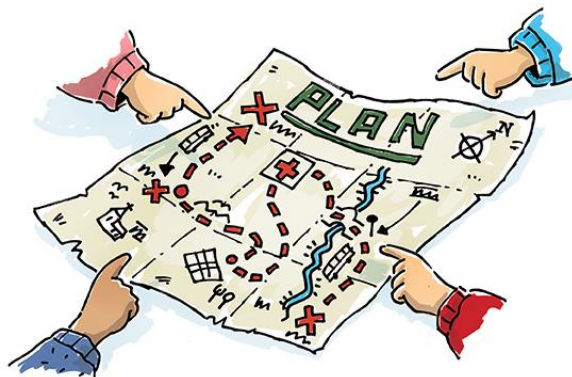
Ideal for: Encouraging Beaver Scouts to learn from each other.

Match an experienced Conn Beaver Scout with two to three Bree and Ruarc Beaver Scouts. The Conn Beaver must teach a simple skill, such as packing a day bag, to the younger Beaver Scouts!

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Tying it all together

There should be ample time after the core activities to do the Colony's end-of-meeting routine and remind the Beaver Scouts of any upcoming activities. A key objective of weekly meetings is to ensure that Beaver Scouts get maximum enjoyment out of their interactions with the out-of-doors, and Beaver Scouts should be excited for their next weekend adventure!



Remember, it is essential to keep your meetings fresh and exciting with new activities and content, but good routine with the different learning methods will allow each meeting to run as smoothly as possible.

A sample plan follows that you may find useful to replicate amongst your Scouter team. This plan pertains to a Colony that has meetings lasting for 75 minutes- feel free to adjust for the timings of your Colony and of course always bear in mind resource and Scouter availability when structuring your meetings!

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SAMPLE WEEKLY MEETING PLAN

- 18.00** Open Den. Beaver Scouts can play with soft balls while they wait for the meeting to begin. Subs collected by Scouter A.
- 18.05** Conn Beaver Scout to do roll call. Beaver yell.
- 18.10** ‘Game Picker’ to choose two options for warm-up game. Two rounds of chosen game.
- 18.20** 4 x Lodge Learning
Scouter A’s base: Reef knot tying revision
Scouter B’s base: Thank you card for fire station
Scouter C’s base: Review fire station trip
Scouter D’s base: Plan menu for camp
- 19.00** Scouters A & B to take Bree, Ruarc and non-C.S.A. Conn to practise campfire songs. Scouters C & D to discuss Chief Scout Award progress with participants (focus on Special Interests plans today).
- 19.10** Beaver yell and salute. Remind Beaver Scouts of camp in two weeks’ time.
- 19.15** Home time. Share Beaver treats to be given out.