

Troop Visitation Check List

Troop 753

Which Boy Scout Troop you join is a personal decision, each Scout needs to decide which one to join. It is ok, if all the Scouts join different troops as long as they feel the troop is right for them.

Each Boy Scout Troop has it's own personality, each one is different. The only way to discover which one is right for you is to visit as many as practical, (2-4) and then narrow down the list to finalists and then choose. A second or even third visit may be required.

A lot can be learned about a troop simply by observing. Some things to look for include:

- Location** Just like in real estate, location is important as Troop meetings are usually held weekly. If the location is convenient for you family, your son will be more likely to attend regularly. Remember, however, that the closest may not be the best suited.
- Activity Level** Review the Troop's Schedule of Events and get a feel how active the Troop is. Talk to scouts to find out what outings they liked best and why? What trips have they taken? Do they have a central theme? Do they offer varied experiences?
- Scout Led** (perhaps the most important) A Boy Scout troop should be "Boy Led". The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) should be in charge of the meetings. The chain of command should run through the patrol leaders. Adults should be there as resources, NOT LEADERS. The only time they should get involved in making decisions is as a reality check (done by the SM and PLC). Quick check ? Where is the scoutmaster standing ? Front of the room or in the back? To determine this, watch a meeting. Ask who plans the annual troop calendar. Ask about the Patrol Leaders Council and how it works. The concept of a "boy run unit" is very hard for us as parents and Cub Leaders to understand, but it is the way Boy Scout troops are designed to run...this is how the boys get the most out of the program.
- Outdoor Program** Does the troop maintain an active outdoor program ? Review the troop calendar and see if they keep going back to the same places or try new things?
- Range of ages** Does the troop consist of only older or younger boys or is there a good mixture of all ages?
- Progression** Do the higher ranking boys (Star, Life) have positions of leadership? Do they appear more mature in behavior? Do they seem more comfortable with their knowledge? Do they interact with the younger boys or stay to themselves?
- Size** Smaller Troops offer a personal touch. Larger\ troops may offer a wide range of activities. Troops should be broken down into 6-8 boy patrols.
- Fun** Do the scouts appear to be having fun? Without the meeting being chaotic? THIS IS IMPORTANT!!
- Ceremonies** Is there a respectful flag ceremony to start/end the meeting? Is there a prayer or a Scoutmaster's Minute (where the Scoutmaster presents a thought provoking lesson)?

Troop Visit Checklist

Troop # _____ Sponsor: _____

Meeting Place: _____ Meeting Day: _____ Meeting Time: _____

How many boys are in the troop ? _____ How many patrols? _____

Is there an upper limit to the size of the troop ? Yes / No _____ What is it? _____

Age breakout:

10 1/2 - 12	13-14	15 - 16	17 - 18

How long has the troop been in existence ? _____ yrs

Is the troop a Quality Unit (look for the patch on their uniform shirtsleeve) Yes / No _____

Who is the Senior Patrol Leader ? _____

Who is the Scoutmaster ? _____

Was the Scoutmaster a Scout as a youth ? Yes / No _____

Was the Scoutmaster an Eagle Scout ? Yes / No _____

How often does the troop go camping ? _____

Do all of the boys get to go on outings ? Yes / No _____

Are there any age restrictions ? Yes / No _____ If so, what: _____

What type of camping does the troop normally do?

	Yes / No	Where ?
Summer Camp		
Out of Council		
Camporees		
Webelos Woods		
Troop Camping		
Patrol Camping		
Backpacking		
High Adventure		
Other		
Other		

Uniform Required:

	Required	Optional
Cap		
Shirt		
Official BSA Pants		
Belt		
Official BSA shorts		
Socks		
Neckerchief		
Shoes		
Bolo		
Book		

How many uniforms required ? _____

Does the troop have a Class B uniform ? Yes / No _____

If so, what is it ? _____

Has the troop ever visited Philmont, Sea Base or Northern Tier ? Yes / No _____

When does the troop plan to go again ? _____

Has the troop attended a National Jamboree ? Yes / No _____ When? _____

Are you planning to attend the next one ? Yes / No _____

Does the troop have a Patrol Leaders Council ? Yes / No _____

If yes, how often do they meet ? _____

Where are new Scouts placed upon joining the troop ? Yes / No _____ A dedicated new boy patrol _____ Dispersed to existing patrols _____

Is a Troop Guide (older scout) assigned to the New Boy patrol to help them out ? Yes / No _____

Can parents of new scouts be assigned to help with the new boy patrol ? Yes / No _____

On average in this troop, how long does it take for boys to earn:

Are there any age restrictions ? Yes / No _____

Rank	Time
Scout	
Tenderfoot	
2nd Class	
First Class	
Star	
Life	

What percentage of boys make Eagle ? _____ %

How many Eagles has this troop graduated in the past 5 years ? _____

Are Eagles still active in the troop ? Yes / No _____

Average age of boy attaining Eagle ? _____ yrs old

Who can sign off my achievements ?

	Yes / No
Scoutmaster	
Asst. Scoutmaster	
Advancement Chair	
Junior Asst. Scoutmaster	
Senior Patrol Leader	
Patrol Leader	
Troop Guides	
Scout Instructors	
Other Adult Leader	
Parents	
Myself	

How often are Scoutmasters Conferences held ? _____

How often are Courts of Honor held ? _____

What is the average time for a scout to assume a leadership position ? _____

How often does the Troop hold elections ? _____

How is the boy leadership decided ? Elected by boys ? _____ Appointed by adults ? _____

How many scouts in the Troop are members of the Order of the Arrow ? _____

How many scouts are elected to the OA each year ? _____

Does the Troop have a religious awards coordinator ? Yes / No _____

Does the Troop have a published set of bylaws ? Yes / No _____

Does the Troop have a published code of conduct ? Yes / No _____

Does the Troop have a Troop Handbook ? Yes / No _____

Does the Troop have a Troop Calendar ? Yes / No _____

Does the Troop Calendar change from year to year ? Yes / No _____

Service Projects:

Does the Troop participate in service Projects ? Yes / No _____

if yes, what in: _____

Leadership:

Who runs the troop meetings?

Senior PL	Patrol Leaders	Scoutmaster	Other Scouts	Asst SM's	Other Adults

Was the meeting organized? Yes / No _____

Does the Troop have an active boy leadership corps ? Yes / No _____

Were the Scouts in Uniform ? Yes / No _____

Older Scouts:

Does the Troop have a program specifically for older scouts ? Yes / No _____

If so, describe:

Is there a Venture Crew associated with the Troop ? Yes / No _____

If not, is one planned ? _____

Do scouts participate in Junior Leader Training ? Yes / No _____

Does the Troop have Junior Asst. Scoutmasters ? Yes / No _____

Does the troop provide Den Chiefs to local Packs ? Yes / No _____

Adult Leadership:

Are leaders required to take training ?

Basic + SM specific	Youth Prot'n	Woodbadge	Philmont	CPR/1st Aid	Safe Swim

Are leaders encouraged to attend Roundtables ? Yes / No _____

Does at least one leader from the troop attend RT's regularly ? Yes / No _____

Do any of the leaders serve in a District or Council capacity ? Yes / No _____
(trainer, roundtable staff, camporee staff, etc.)

How many registered leaders are with the Troop ? _____

Were the Adults in Uniform ? Yes / No _____

How many adult leaders were in uniform ? _____

How many Assistant Scoutmasters are there ? _____

Were there parents at the Troop meeting ? Yes / No _____

Do parent volunteers help organize events within the Troop ? Yes / No _____

Are parents invited to be on the Committee ? Yes / No _____

How many are there on the Troop Committee ? _____

Is there a leader that is assigned to new Scouts for trail to First Class ? _____

_____ %

Financials:

Is there a registration fee: Yes / No _____
 How much are the annual Troop dues? _____
 Are there Patrol Dues ? Yes / No _____
 When is it collected? _____

How much is it? \$ _____
 When is it collected? _____
 How much is it? \$ _____

Are there any other additional fees ? Yes / No _____ Yes _____

if so, what are they:

Type	Amount	When collected
Summer Camp		
Winter Camp		
Special Events		

Does the Troop have a fundraiser(s) ? Yes / No _____

If so, are they:

Popcorn		
Wreaths		
Car Wash		
Scout Show		
Garage Sales		
Bake Sale		
Fertilizer		What are they?
Other		
Other		
Other		
Other		

Do Scouts wind up having
 to solicit door - to - door?
 Yes / No _____

Does part of the fundraising go into individual Scouts accounts ? Yes / No _____
 If so, how much ? _____ %

Parent Roles and Responsibilities:

Can parents attend campouts or summer camp ? Yes / No _____
 Are parents required to take on helper responsibilities (driving, etc.) ? Yes / No _____
 Are parents encouraged to become troop leaders (ASM's, Committee members) ? Yes / No _____
 Are parents advised as to parent behavior, responsibilities, etc. when around the boys ? Yes / No _____
 Are parents advised as to their scouts behavior, responsibilities, etc.? Yes / No _____
 What special equipment will I need to purchase for my new Scout ? _____
