Session One
Course Overview

Time Allowed

15 minutes

Teaching Objectives

- Provide an overview of Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training.
- Explain the importance of attending Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills training and announce the times and places of upcoming courses.
- Establish the importance of *The Scoutmaster Handbook* and *The Boy Scout Handbook* as the texts for this training and as the primary sources of information for all Scoutmasters.
- Continue to build participants' enthusiasm for becoming Scoutmasters and to increase their confidence in their abilities to succeed as troop leaders.

Materials Needed

- Copies of the course schedule for this Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training (one per participant)
- *The Boy Scout Handbook*, No. 33105 (One copy per instructor. Participants in this training should have brought their own copies.)
- *The Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009C (One copy per instructor. Participants in this training need to have brought their own copies.)
- PowerPoint® slides or overheads from CD, if desired
- Flip chart or other means of writing discussion notes
- Wall posters
Recommended Facility Layout

- Session meeting area. Participants should have comfortable places to sit at their patrol tables. That setting most often consists of tables accommodating six to eight participants forming a patrol.

Delivery Method

- Instructor-led presentation and discussion

Presentation Procedure

Open this presentation by asking one of the participants to read aloud the first page of *The Boy Scout Handbook*:

WELCOME TO THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA!

Millions of boys have been Scouts. They joined because they liked what the BSA had to offer. Now, Scouting welcomes you.

Scouting promises you the great outdoors. As a Scout, you can learn how to camp and hike without leaving a trace, and how to take care of the land. You’ll study wildlife up close and learn about nature all around you. There are plenty of skills for you to master, and you can teach others what you know. Everybody helping everyone else—that’s part of Scouting, too.

Scouting promises you friendship. Members of the troop you join may be boys you already know, and you will meet many other Scouts along the way. Some may become lifelong friends.

Scouting promises you opportunities to work toward the Eagle rank. Set positive goals for yourself and then follow clear routes to accomplish them.

Scouting promises you tools to make the most of your family, your community, and your nation. The good deeds you perform every day will improve the lives of those around you. You will be prepared to aid others in time of need.

Scouting promises you experiences and duties that will help you mature into a strong, wise adult. The Scout Oath and the Scout Law can guide you while you are a Scout and throughout your life.
Adventure, learning, challenge, responsibility—the promise of Scouting is all this and more. Are you ready for the adventure to begin? Then turn the page and let’s get started.

— The Boy Scout Handbook

Lead participants in a discussion that brings out these key ideas:

- The intent of Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training
- The continuum of training for new Scoutmasters
- An overview of the three sessions of Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training
- Written resources for Scoutmasters

**The Intent of Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training**

"Adventure, learning, challenge, responsibility—the promise of Scouting is all this and more..." This is a big, big promise. It is a promise to boys that we will help you keep by teaching you the things you must know, be, and do. Boys are looking for all of these, as well as opportunities to make friends, to lead, to be of service, to do the right thing, and to learn how to make ethical decisions.

Delivering the promise of Scouting—that’s why we are here.

Thousands of volunteers have been in your position before—setting out on the fresh adventure of leading a Scout troop. And thousands before you have succeeded. Some of them struggled along the way, and to be perfectly truthful, there will be times ahead that will challenge you, as well. But your satisfaction will be tremendous when you see what value there is in bringing the Scouting program to life for the boys in your community.

Over the next several hours, we will explore what it takes to be a Scoutmaster. We’ll talk about what is expected of you and what you can expect from the Boy Scouts of America. We’ll also talk about concerns you may have, and we’ll address your questions and doubts.

By the time we are done, you will be confident of your ability to succeed as the leader of a Scout troop. The very fact that you are here is evidence that you are willing to make your best effort. You have your own experiences to draw upon and your own sets of skills. Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training will build on your strengths by providing you with the additional skills and strategies to see you through the first months of troop leadership. You will also gain the knowledge to utilize BSA
resources to ensure that your troop continues to deliver the promise of Scouting.

**The Continuum of Training for New Scoutmasters**

Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training is the second of three training opportunities in Basic Leader Training designed to bring new Scoutmasters quickly up to speed on the skills and concepts that will help them succeed. Fast Start Orientation is available for leaders to complete prior to meeting with Scouts for the first time.

**Training Continuum for Adult Leaders**

- Fast Start → Basic Leader Training (New Leader Essentials, Position Specific Training, and Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills) → Wood Badge

Everyone here will have already attended New Leader Essentials. Information presented during that session included a look at youth development, an overview of the basic structure and funding of BSA programs, a survey of a few of the resources available to unit leaders, and a brief review of the importance of ensuring that the Scouting experience is safe.

At some point, Scoutmasters will have the opportunity to attend Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills training. During those enjoyable sessions, unit leaders will review all of the outdoor skills that the BSA expects have been mastered by a First Class Scout. For Scoutmasters new to outdoor adventures, this will be a terrific opportunity to develop sufficient skill to help make outdoor program an essential aspect of their troops’ activities. New Scout leaders experienced in various aspects of camping, hiking, and other outdoor skills can use this training to refine their knowledge, to learn how best to adapt their skills to support their troops’ boy leaders, and to share what they know with others taking part in Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills training.
Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills Training

- The course is an important and enjoyable part of the basic preparations to be a Scoutmaster.
- It covers the outdoor skills expected of a First Class Scout.
- Adult leaders who already know some of the skills may pass that section of the course by demonstrating their abilities to an instructor.
- Adult leaders who have already completed Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills will not need to repeat the training.

After completing New Leader Essentials, Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training, and Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills, Scoutmasters and assistant Scoutmasters are considered trained and may wear the "Trained" patch on the uniform sleeve. Of course, training in the BSA never stops. All BSA leaders will discover that there are many supplemental opportunities for learning. For example, each leader is encouraged to attend a Wood Badge course on leadership within two years of joining the organization.

SCOUTMASTER AND ASSISTANT SCOUTMASTER LEADER SPECIFIC TRAINING

Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training lies between New Leader Essentials and Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills. Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training presents the skills and methods Scoutmasters can use to organize a Boy Scout troop and support its boy leaders in developing and delivering an effective, exciting Scouting program.

Instructors' Note

Distribute copies of the following schedule for Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training. Adjust the sample to fit the needs of the current training sessions.

Session 1, slide 3

Session One—Getting Started: The Role of the Scoutmaster in a Boy-Led Troop

Preopening Activity

Welcome and Participant Introductions
Course Overview
The Role of the Scoutmaster
Troop Organization
Troop Meetings
Working With Boy Leaders/The Patrol Method
Patrol Leaders’ Council

Session Two—Lighting the Fire: The Outdoor Program and the Advancement Program
Preopening Activity
Introduction
Sizzle of the Outdoor Program
Nuts and Bolts of the Outdoor Program
Outdoor Program Patrol/Group Activity
Reflection
Advancement Program

Session Three—Keeping It Going: Program Planning and Troop Administration
Preopening Activity
Introduction
Program Planning
Membership
Paperwork
Finances
The Uniform
Other Training Opportunities
Summary and Closing
Instructors’ Note

- An important quality of BSA leadership development is that participants are not kept in the dark about any aspect of their training. Whenever appropriate, they should receive all the information and resources that will help them succeed. Providing them with copies of the schedule for this training is a perfect example.

- The course schedule to be distributed should be correctly formatted either for a training that occupies three evenings or for a session conducted during one day of a weekend. In either case, the first item on the schedule should be the New Leader Essentials training that immediately precedes this Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training.

- At the discretion of the instructor for this presentation, the course schedule could be mailed to participants before training begins. This will allow them to familiarize themselves with the course well in advance.

Overview of the Three Sessions of Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training

Take a look at the schedule and you can see that Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training is divided into three sessions, each focusing on several of the eight methods of Scouting:

Session One—Getting Started: The Role of the Scoutmaster in a Boy-Led Troop
- Ideals
- Patrol Method
- Association With Adults
- Personal Growth
- Leadership Development
- Uniform

Session Two—Lighting the Fire: The Outdoor Program and the Advancement Program
- Ideals
- Outdoors
- Advancement
- Association With Adults
- Personal Growth
Session Three—Keeping It Going: Program Planning and Troop Administration

- Ideals
- Association With Adults
- Personal Growth
- Leadership Development
- Uniform

Written Resources for Scoutmasters

THE SCOUTMASTER HANDBOOK

Nearly everything you need to know about being a Scoutmaster can be found in The Scoutmaster Handbook. We will reference it many times during Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training. In fact, one way to think about this training is that it teaches you to find the answers you need in The Scoutmaster Handbook.

THE BOY SCOUT HANDBOOK

As you can gather from the opening passages we read about the promise of Scouting, The Boy Scout Handbook reflects the heart and soul of Boy Scouting. It is the book that each Scout in your troop will have, both as a guidebook and a manual of possibilities. Between its covers you can find the lore of Scouting that has evolved from 1910 to the present. The Boy Scout Handbook is a guide to outdoor skills, to the values of Scouting, and to ways in which the Scouting program can be delivered.

OTHER BSA LITERATURE

Beyond the handbooks for Scoutmasters and for Boy Scouts, the BSA offers a host of written resources such as Troop Program Resources and Guide to Safe Scouting. We will discuss those during this training when their importance arises.

Summary

Being a good Scoutmaster is all about delivering the promise of Scouting to boys. This training will provide the skills you need to lead a troop successfully. The resources of the BSA will give you the background information to help you succeed.

We do not expect you to remember every word that is said here. However, you should remember where you can look for the answers you need.
For example, during the New Leader Essentials training, you were presented with the values and methods of Scouting. Can you remember them all? Perhaps not from memory, but you can certainly list them if you turn to Chapter 2, “The Adventure of Scouting,” in The Scoutmaster Handbook.

These are the aims of Scouting:

- Character development
- Citizenship training
- Mental and physical fitness

The methods of how you can deliver on those aims and on the promise of Scouting are listed on the pages that follow. They are the core of our discussions in this course.

Open the discussion to questions and comments relating specifically to the material covered in this presentation.

(In large groups, it may be most efficient to assign each instructor to answer the questions of one or two patrols rather than having one instructor attempt to facilitate the questions of all the participants at once.)

Move directly into the next presentation—“The Role of the Scoutmaster.”