**How Is the Scout Troop Different from The Cub Scout Pack?**

The primary difference lies in the leadership structure. The Pack is led by the adult leaders including the Cubmaster and the Pack Committee. Each Den within the Pack is led by an adult Den Leader, and the Cubmaster, Den Leaders, and Committee make all of the decisions for the Pack regarding outings, advancement, fundraising, community service, and anything else the Pack may choose to do. Therefore, everything that the Pack does reflects the wishes, interests, and motivation of the adult leadership.

A Scout Troop, on the other hand, is designed to be led by the Scouts themselves. Therefore, they choose which activities they would like the Troop or the Patrol to participate in. The adults are there to guide them in their decision-making and planning, to assist with funding and logistics, and to ensure the safety of all of the Scouts and other participants.

**How a Scout Troop Works**

A Scout Troop is meant to be a youth-led unit. Within that Troop, there are one or more Patrols, each of which is also led by its Patrol members. Troop leaders and Patrol leaders are elected every six months, so that each Scout may have the opportunity to take on a leadership role.

While the Troop and Patrols are led by Scouts, adults are always involved to provide guidance, keep the Troop on track, exemplify a level of discipline and decorum, ensure the safety of the Scouts, and help with finances and logistics. Adult leadership includes the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters, the Chartered Organization Representative, and the Committee Chair along with the Troop Committee itself.

If a Scout has a question or concern, the Scout should not go directly to a parent or adult leader. While that will be the natural tendency at first; part of the Patrol Method and the Scouts BSA philosophy is to foster a spirit of independence, self-sufficiency, and self-confidence in each Scout. Therefore, the Scout should follow the chain of command with questions or concerns.

The chain of command in a Troop is as follows (in ascending order):

**Scout-held positions:**

*Assistant Patrol Leader (APL):* Assists the Patrol Leader and steps in when the Patrol Leader is unavailable.

*Patrol Leader (PL):* Leads the Patrol and represents the Patrol at Patrol Leader Conference meetings.

*Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL):* Assists the Senior Patrol Leader and steps in when the Senior Patrol Leader is unavailable.

*Senior Patrol Leader (SPL):* Leads the Troop through the Patrol Leaders and runs Troop and meetings. They also run the Patrol Leader Conferences (PLCs) where the SPL, ASPL, PL, and APL set the schedule for the future meetings and Troop events.

**Adult leaders:**

*Assistant Scoutmaster (ASM):* Assists the Scoutmaster and steps in when the Scoutmaster is not available.

*Scoutmaster (SM):* Guides the SPL in leading the Troop, suggests ideas that the Scouts might consider, and provides adult leadership for the Troop.

*Troop Committee:* Primarily organizes the schedule, event logistics, fundraising, and handles finances.

*Chartered Organization Representative (COR):* The liaison between the Troop and the organization that charters the Troop.

**What Your Troop Expects of You and Your Scout**

*Parents:*

*Please consider participating in the Troop.* We ask that at least one parent holds a leadership position of some sort. The Troop *is* Scout-led, but it doesn’t work without adult involvement.

*Help and encourage your Scout.*  Allow your Scout the freedom to have their own new experiences and adventures, but also help them to remain focused and to continue advancing.

*Be a good role model.* Try to live the ideals of the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life and remind your Scout to do the same.

*Scouts:*

*Regularly attend Troop and Patrol Meetings as well as outings and activities.* Be an active member of your Troop and Patrol! No one expects you to attend *everything*, but the more you participate, the more fun and rewarding your Scouting experience will be.

*Share your ideas!* The Troop is always interested in hearing your idea for the next activity or outing. You might not think your idea is a big deal, but it could be a new experience for some of your fellow Scouts.

*Be Prepared!* This is the Scouting BSA Motto, and it means that you should show up to all Scouting events prepared with the appropriate attire and equipment for the event. It also means that you should come with an open mind, prepared to learn new things, to share new experiences, to make new friends, and to have fun!

1. Who runs the Troop meetings?

Senior Patrol Leader (SPL)

1. How many ranks are there in Scout BSA?

7: Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle.

1. If a Scout has a question, who should they ask?

A Scout should follow the chain of command.

1. Do I need to worry about Merit Badges?

No and Yes.

Your Scout will start off the first 4 ranks not requiring merit badges so there is time to get to that. Your Scout should be going to summer camp and can start learning about and earning them then.

1. How many Merit Badges does my Scout need to earn?

As many as they want to earn, but if going for Eagle a Minimum 21 Merit Badges must be earned of which 14 are Eagle Required.

1. How often does a Troop meet?

Scouts meet once each week at their Troop meeting. Beyond that, it depends on the Patrol and Troop.

1. What is a Patrol?

A Scout patrol is a small team of 6-8 Scouts where they learn scout skills together, share responsibilities and take on leadership roles.

1. Who plans the meetings and activities?

The Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) made up of the SPL, who presides over the meetings, the ASPL(s), all PLs, and the APLs.