



Advancing Through the Ranks – Introduction

The advancement program for Boy Scouts is symbolized by the earning of seven badges, six of which are considered **ranks**. The [advancement program](#) is often considered to be divided into two phases. The first phase from joining to First Class is designed to teach [Scoutcraft](#) skills. The Scout badge is awarded when the Scout demonstrates a rudimentary knowledge of the Scouting ideals and program. Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class have progressively harder requirements in the areas of Scoutcraft, physical fitness, citizenship, personal growth and [Scout Spirit](#).

The second phase is the “honor ranks” of Star, Life, and Eagle, designed to develop leadership skills and allow Scouts to explore potential careers and hobbies through the [merit badge](#) program. The Star and Life ranks require that the boy serve in a position of responsibility (see *Leadership Positions* doc posted on the Troop website) and perform community service. Except for Scout rank, all ranks as well as Eagle Palms require that the candidate pass a Scoutmaster Conference and a Board of Review.

Unlike Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts are fully responsible for their plan and pace as it relates to rank advancement which does not coincide with school grade. What rank you aspire to is completely up to you!

Active Scout participation and advancement go together. Be at the Troop meeting when overnight duties are being worked on so you can volunteer knowing what tasks you need for your requirements. Come to Troop meetings with a requirement or two in mind each week to work on and make sure to get them done that week. Bottom line, if you want to advance, first and foremost, take part in all the activities of the troop. When you do, you’ll pick up most of the Scoutcraft skills you need for your advancement. Consider working with other Scouts your age on requirements, that makes it more fun. To help you on your way, make use of the resources available to you.

Boy Scout Handbook

Requirements for scout rank advancement can be found in the Boy Scout Handbook along with almost any answer you’re looking for can be found in the Boy Scout Handbook. Consider this your instruction manual to Scouting. Until you’re a First Class Scout, you should always have your book at Troop meetings and overnights. This way as you finish requirements, you can get them signed off on right then and there. Only active Troop 436 registered Scouts with the rank of Star Scout or above may sign off requirements in another Scout’s BSA handbook as may the Scout’s Patrol Leader and Troop Guide.

Troop Guide

When you first bridge over, you'll be in a New Scout Patrol for the first four months. This is the time of "basic training". Your Troop Guide is a senior Scout who will be your Patrol Leader during this time. Once you finish the basic training period, you'll be assigned to one of the Troop patrols. Your Troop Guide will help you learn the skills you need to advance from Tenderfoot to First Class up to your 1-year anniversary in the Troop.

Patrol Leader

Once the basic training period ends, new Scouts will get divided amongst the Troop's existing Patrols. From that point on, your Patrol Leader is available for assistance with advancement along with your Troop Guide. Grab one of them at a meeting to do requirements. But you have to ask.

Senior Scouts & Leaders

Senior boys that have achieved the ranks of Star, Life or Eagle, as well as the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters are available to help with rank advancement. It's up to you to ask though.

Bridge-Over Binder and Thumb Drive

You got a really helpful binder and a thumb drive when you bridged over. Both these resources packed with all sorts of information about the Troop and how it works. Use these tools as you begin to understand how rank advancement and the troop work together.

Early Rank Requirement Help

Scouts working on their Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks might want to check out the early rank requirements videos from the BSA which give step by step instructions for all of the requirements for these first four ranks. These videos should not serve as a replacement for instruction within the troop, but they will help a Scout prepare ahead of time or give additional help if he is having difficulty learning a skill. See the videos here:

<http://boyslife.org/about-scouts/large-width/450/early-rank-requirement-videos/>.