



Board of Review Guidelines

The purpose of a Board of Review is to determine the quality of the Scout's experience and decide whether the requirements for the rank have been fulfilled. If so, the board not only approves the Scout's advancement but also provides encouragement to continue the quest for the next rank.

Boards of Review shall become neither a retest or "examination," nor a challenge of the Scout's knowledge. In most cases it should, instead, be a celebration of accomplishment.

Scouts can sometimes lose focus or interest in weekly or monthly troop activities. Boards of Review for each rank should include information and encouragement on older youth programs such as the Order of the Arrow, Venturing, Sea Scouts, and Exploring. These programs should not be thought of as a threat to the functioning of the troop, but as other opportunities to remain involved in Scouting.

It is preferred a Scout be in full field uniform for any board of review. As much of the uniform as the Scout owns should be worn. If wearing all or part of the uniform is impractical for whatever reason, the candidate should be clean and neat in appearance and dressed appropriately, according to the Scout's means.

The unit leader may remain in the room, but only to observe, not to participate unless called upon.

The Scout's parents, relatives, or guardians should not be in attendance in any capacity—not as members of the board, as observers, or even as the unit leader. In cases where parents or guardians insist on attending a board of review, they should be counseled that their presence can change how their child addresses questions, and that the opportunity to further self-reliance and courage may be lessened. However, if parents or guardians still insist on being present, they must be permitted to attend as observers.

In situations where—before a board is held—one or more members are of an opinion the Scout should be rejected, they should discuss their reasoning with the unit leader or others who know the Scout. Board members who cannot be fair and impartial should recuse themselves.

The board is made up of three to six unit committee members—no more and no less. The review should take approximately 15 minutes, but not longer than 30 minutes.

During the review, board members may refer to the *Scouts BSA Handbook*, *Scouts BSA Requirements* book, *Troop Leader Guidebook*, *Guide to Advancement*, and other such references. Board members may ask where skills were learned by the Scout, who the Scout's teachers were, and what was gained from fulfilling selected requirements. Discussion of how the Scout has lived the Scout Oath and Scout Law at home, at school, in the unit, and in the community should be included. Remember, we do not insist on perfection. A positive attitude is most important, and that a youth accepts Scouting's ideals and sets and meets good standards in daily life.

After the board of review the Scout is asked to wait outside the room or out of hearing range while the board deliberates. To approve awarding a rank, the board must agree unanimously. If the members agree a Scout is ready to advance, the Scout is called in and congratulated. If a board does not approve, the candidate must be so informed and told what can be done to improve.

Remember, it is more about the journey. A badge recognizes what a Scout has done toward achieving the primary goal of personal growth.

Note: Boards of review may also be held for Scouts who are **not** advancing. Reminding those Scouts of the opportunities and benefits of our program may help re-energize their interest. Much can be learned from those Scouts, as well.



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Questions that require a narrative answer may help Scouts to verbalize their feelings. You may refer to specific rank requirements to determine if the intent was achieved without retesting.

Asking Scouts about their family, school, community and religious activities are great ways for them to relax and feel at ease.

Sample Board of Review questions:

(For Eagle rank, additional questions dealing with character and leadership may be included)

- What are your goals in Scouting?
- Why is being a Scout important to you?
- How do you live the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life?
- What does it mean to say, "A Scout is Courteous"?
- How will fulfilling requirement number ____ help you?
- Why is it important to keep up-to-date on your first aid skills?
- Do you think the _____ merit badge you just earned, will help you throughout your life?
- What new things did you do and learn on your latest campout, service project, or at your troop meetings?
- What do you like most at troop outdoor activities?
- What do you like least at troop outdoor activities?
- What would you like the troop to do differently to make outings more fun and engaging?
- What leadership positions have you held or would like to hold?
- What are you looking forward to doing at summer camp?
- Do you have a fun memory from a Scout outing?
- What do you like most and least at troop meetings?
- Is there anything you would like to see changed at troop meetings?
- What would you change to make meetings more fun and engaging?
- How do you define "Scout spirit"?
- What can we (the adults) do to make our troop more fun and engaging for you?

When leaving a Board of Review, Scouts should feel proud of their accomplishments and excited for the new adventure to come.

Additional information on Boards of Review can be found in the Guide to Advancement, section 8.0.0.0.

