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## **FACT SHEET**

# **BOY SCOUT LEADER WOOD BADGE**

### **HISTORY OF WOOD BADGE**

In 1911, four years after Scouting began in Great Britain, Lord Baden-Powell began training Scouters through a series of lectures. This led to the first Wood Badge training course for scoutmasters held eight years later at Gilwell Park near London. In 1936, an experimental Wood Badge course was conducted in the United States at the Schiff Scout Reservation. Then In 1948, the first American Wood Badge course was introduced in the United States as advanced training for trainers of Boy Scout leaders. Later, the program was extended to include troop committee members, commissioners, and Explorer leaders

Experiments began in the late 1960s with a leadership development Wood Badge course emphasizing eleven leadership skills or "competencies." This program was launched in 1972 in support of a major revision of the Boy Scout phase of the program. In 1978, an evaluation of the Boy Scout Leader Wood Badge course revealed a need for greater emphasis on the practical aspects of good troop operation. The course now provides a blend of Scoutcraft skills and practical troop operation, mixed with a variety of leadership exercises. The course is under constant review for possible areas of further refinement.

The first experimental Cub Scout Trainer Wood Badge course was field-tested in 1976 and has now been established as the official advanced training program in Cub Scouting.

The Boy Scout Leader Wood Badge course is administered nationally by the Boy Scout Division; the Cub Scout Trainer Wood Badge course is administered nationally by the Cub Scout Division.

### **PURPOSE**

The Boy Scout Leader Wood Badge course is the advanced training program for Boy Scout troop leaders. It is designed to train Scoutmasters, assistant Scoutmasters, and other Scouters directly related to Boy Scout troop operation. Its purpose is to aid experienced Boy Scout troop leaders in providing a quality program that will enable each Scout to grow to his greatest potential.

### **CURRICULUM**

The Boy Scout Leader Wood Badge course may be conducted as a weeklong experience, or on a series of three weekends with patrol meetings between each session. Experience shows that either format produces satisfactory results. Separate staff guides are provided for each. A guidebook, Administration of Practical Training, outlines the procedures for administering the program.

The Wood Badge program consists of two parts-practical training and application. The practical leadership experience is gained in a training troop camp setting where Scoutcraft skills can be learned and practiced as a part of life in the troop. At the conclusion of the practical training, each participant has a minimum of six months from ticket acceptance and two years following practical training to complete the application phase and meet all of the goals that have been established.

The Wood Badge course involves the Boy Scout troop leader in the application of training in situations likely to be found in a typical Boy Scout troop. The training is applied in a variety of Scoutcraft activities as well as in an in-depth exploration of the role of the adult leader in developing youth through Boy Scouting.

**QUALIFICATIONS** Each Scouter invited to participate in Boy Scout Leader Wood Badge training must have completed Boy Scout Leader Fast Start and the current Boy Scout leader basic training, *Scoutmastership Fundamentals*, and should have at least two years' tenure in active troop leadership or in a position directly related to troop operation. Because of the advanced nature of the training, these requirements may not be waived.

Scouters attend the Boy Scout Leader Wood Badge course by invitation of the president of the council in which they are registered, on the recommendation of the district training chairman, district commissioner, and district executive, and with the approval of the council Scout executive.

## **CONDUCTING THE TRAINING**

Boy Scout Leader Wood Badge courses are authorized by each regional service center. When a local council feels it can guarantee enough participants from its own ranks, it may apply to the region to conduct a local council Wood Badge course. In a local council course, all participants, staff, and support come from the local council.

Two or more local councils may cooperate in conducting a cluster-council Wood Badge course. With regional approval, one of the participating councils acts as the host council. The host council normally coordinates the advance preparation, invitation procedure, staff selection, and provides a site and basic equipment. The course director will participate in the selection of staff from the participating councils.

A minimum of thirty-two course members must be registered, with full fees paid, thirty days before the opening day of the course. This will assure good patrol operation, full participation, and financial success. For efficiency of operation, there should not be more than eight patrols.

## **GOALS**

Boy Scout Leader Wood Badge course participants learn and put their training to use to improve the quality of the program of the troops they lead or serve. A part of the practical training is the development of a "ticket." This ticket is a written agreement, approved by the local council, to apply the knowledge gained during the course in specific ways by fulfilling a commitment to continued service to Boy Scouting. The first part of the ticket involves service to others; specific goals and objectives are involved in the second part; the third part identifies areas of personal growth and specific plans to attain this growth. A "ticket counselor" is appointed from the Scouter's local council to provide assistance and guidance as the three parts of the ticket are worked.

## **RECOGNITION**

Upon successful completion of the ticket, the participant is entitled to receive the Wood Badge recognition. This consists of a parchment certificate, the Wood Badge beads (two wooden beads on a leather thong), a tan neckerchief with a swatch of MacLaren tartan, and a leather woggle or neckerchief slide.

The Wood Badge recognition not only identifies a Scouter who has completed advanced training, but reminds the wearer of an ongoing commitment to continued service to Scouting.

## **SUMMARY**

Since 1948, the Boy Scout Leader Wood Badge course has served as a source of training and inspiration to thousands of troop leaders. These Scouters have affected the lives of millions of America's youth in a quality Boy Scout program of citizenship training, character development, and fitness.