



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®
NATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE ON SCOUTING

HOW TO MAKE A NEW UNIT SUCCESSFUL

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How to Make a New Unit Successful

The First Six Months

The first six months of a unit's life are critical. Boys will respond to trained leaders who provide them with an organized adventure in Scouting. The unit needs to have a plan for what programs it will carry out during these critical six months. The leaders need to take the new unit leader training available to them online so they are prepared. Program ideas can be found on the website of the National Jewish Committee on Scouting, www.Jewishscouting.org, to help.

Sustainability

Membership studies tell us that for your new unit to be a success you should ideally have

- a minimum of 10 youth members
- 5 adults, a unit Key 3
- a new-unit commissioner and
- an engaged chartered organization.

Not many new units boast all of these elements and you can still be successful without all of them. If you train your leaders immediately, plan carefully and follow the carefully chosen path suggested by the Boy Scouts of America you can build the minimum elements over time.

Preparing for Successful Unit Activities

1. The First Unit Meeting

a. Planning

The new-unit organizer assists the new leaders in planning the first month of meetings using age-appropriate unit meeting planning materials. The plan makes clear the responsibilities of each member of the team. The plan should include set up of the meeting room, necessary supplies or equipment and starting times of each activity. Assign someone responsibility for meeting with those who did not attend the recruitment meeting to distribute the necessary applications, forms, calendars and other documents. Ideally, have a run-through of the meeting

so the unit leaders can become comfortable and tweak the plan as necessary. Make sure you have name tags to give everyone to wear during the first meeting.

b. Guaranteeing success

The unit committee, with the new-unit commissioner serving as a mentor, helps plan and support the first meeting. The presence of the new-unit commissioner will provide support to the new leadership. The second most frequently stated reason boys leave Cub Scouting and Boy Scouting is unorganized leadership. New-unit commissioner assistance with this meeting will help the unit committee make a good first impression.

c. Holding the meeting

The new unit conducts its first meeting as developed in the organization process. The new-unit organizer and the new-unit commissioner should attend the first meeting to make sure the unit gets off to a good start. Be sure the new leader is congratulated on the meeting and the next meeting is scheduled and planned. Conduct a debriefing session with the unit leaders at the conclusion of the first meeting to review what they have learned and celebrate their success. Assign a member of the organizing team or district committee who is trained and has expertise in the annual program planning process. This person should set a date and time to hold the unit's annual programming conference. Use online or DVD-based pack, troop or crew program planning conference guides. When complete, ensure the unit committee prints and shares the annual plan with all of the unit's families. The plan should include a budget and calendar of events. Having an annual program plan and budget is a common element of high-performing units.

2. Cultivate Your Chartered Partner

a. Arrange to present an annual report to the Board of Directors

Bring your unit leaders and your committee chairman to the meeting. The leaders should attend in uniform. Bring several Scouts. Ask to do a flag ceremony at the start of the meeting. Present the board with your unit charter. Present the unit program to the Board.

b. Do a service project for your chartered partner

Take pictures of the project if it is not during Shabbat and present them to the head of the chartered partner. Make sure they form a part of your report to the Board of Directors.

- c. Conduct a Shabbat service led by members of the unit.

A service will be available for you to download on the website.

3. Get Planning Help

- a. Use the programs available to you on the web at www.jewishscouting.org.
- b. Find out what programs have worked for other units and use their plans.
- c. Ask parents what activities they would like to see their children involved in.
- d. Ask your chartered organization to suggest youth programs for your unit.
- e. View the information available to you on Scoutingwire.org.

