

Answers to your questions about the Cub Scout modifications

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The BSA announced this week that some Cub Scout adventure requirements that previously were mandatory will become optional, in a move intended to give Cub Scouters more control over their den program.

On Facebook, on this blog and elsewhere, Cub Scouters have shared questions about how these modifications will affect their pack and den.

The National Cub Scouting Committee has supplied the following answers:

Q1. Why were these modifications made?

A1. Extensive feedback from the field indicated that many dens were finding it difficult or impossible to complete the adventures required for advancement. In a survey conducted in September 2016, only 36 percent of the dens with eight boys in a den completed the adventures required to advance in rank by the end of the 2015-2016 program year.

Q2. Do dens have a choice about whether to use the modifications during this program year?

A2. Yes. A den may choose to continue with the previous adventure requirements or to use the modifications for some or all of its adventures.

Q3. Will the modifications be used with the current handbooks?

A3. Yes. The current handbooks provide a wealth of resource ideas to support each adventure. The detailed how-to information in the handbooks should continue to guide the “nuts and bolts” of den activities.

Q4. Will the National Service Center provide any additional new resources for advancement tracking?

A4. Yes. Downloadable revisions of “paw prints” and den tracking documents will be posted on the website, and a link will be provided soon at scouting.org/programupdates.

Q5. Will Cub Scouts still receive credit for work they have previously completed?

A5. Yes. Any completed requirements should be recognized and will count toward the rank advancement. No requirements need to be redone.

Q6. Do the modifications retain an emphasis on Scouting's outdoor program?

A6. Yes. Outdoor program continues to be the focus of at least one required adventure at each level as well as several elective adventures. Options for day programs rather than overnight camping are now extended to all, rather than only those packs whose chartered organizations do not permit Cub Scout camping.

Q7. Do age/grade level guidelines and tenure requirements continue?

A7. Yes. Program levels correspond to school grades: Tigers for first grade, Wolves for second grade, Bears for third grade, Webelos for fourth grade, Arrow of Light for fifth grade. Tenure continues as in the recent past for Webelos ("Be an active member of your Webelos den for three months.") and Arrow of Light ("Be active in your Webelos den for at least six months since completing the fourth grade or at least six months since becoming ten years old.").

Q8. Have the number of adventures required for Webelos and Arrow of Light been reduced?

A8. Yes. In addition to the five Webelos required adventures and the four Arrow of Light required adventures, at least one elective adventure must be completed at each level.

Q9: Have the names of any adventures been changed?

A9: Yes. A few adventure names have changed, including "Outdoorsman" replacing "Camper" and "Getaway" replacing "Castaway" in Arrow of Light. The adventure loops have not changed.

Q10: Have any required adventures been changed to electives or vice versa?

A10: Yes. There has been one such change. At the Bear level, "Baloo the Builder" is now required, and "Grin and Bear It" has become an elective. The change was the result of survey results and feedback from den leaders.

Q11. Have changes been made to allow participation by boys from a variety of sociocultural backgrounds?

Q11. Yes. Several changes in wording reflect the varied family, economic, geographic and cultural situations of today's youth.

Q12. Do the modifications continue to foster an effective transition into Boy Scouting?

A12. Yes. The age/grade level requirements remain the same. The Arrow of Light "Scouting Adventure" activities continue to prepare boys for the Boy Scout troop experience.

Q13. Will Scoutbook be updated to reflect these changes?

A13. Yes. Developers received the updates immediately after the Executive Committee's decision and have begun working on the modifications. Additional staff were reassigned to make the updates as quickly as possible.

See all of the modified requirements and more details at scouting.org/programupdates.