

Adventure Scouts USA team meetings are designed to appeal everybody, including those who hate meetings. In our meetings, we get things done, and we have FUN doing it. The following guidelines will help your Team get the most out of its meetings.

Our Scouts Choose, Organize, and Lead Their Own Meeting

One of the unique qualities of the Adventure Scouts USA Scout Programs is that our Scouts

choose, organize, and lead their own programs. The consequence is our Scouts strengthen their critical thinking skills and their ability to work with others. We consider our Scouts a part of the present rather than just a part of the future, therefore our Scouts take on the responsibility of governing their own meetings. If in doubt, it's done by a Scout!

When to Schedule a Team Meeting

We recommend Team Meetings be scheduled to start at either a few minutes before or a few minutes after the half hour or hour mark. For instance, meetings should either be scheduled to begin at either 7:27 or 7:33. Scheduling meeting start times using this type of format encourages our Scouts and Members to appreciate the special quality of attending our meetings and that they should arrive prior to or on time. Since the Scouts themselves decide what activities to include in each meeting, every minute of every meeting counts – a Scout arriving just a few minutes late or leaving just a bit early will miss out on important information and FUN activities with their friends.

How Long the Team Meetings Should Be

The ideal meeting length is an hour and a half. This time



frame allows Scouts to get things done and have FUN, yet leaves time for homework, family outings, or other extracurricular activities in which Scouts participate. Teams can and should schedule time for additional meetings and brainstorming sessions.

Parliamentary Procedure

The Congress of United States uses a form of the parliamentary procedure for its meetings, and Adventure Scouts USA follows this example for certain portions of the meeting. Using the parliamentary model minimizes interruptions and inefficient use of time. Scouts respect the opinions and ideas of their fellow Scouts by taking on the roles of both speaker and listener. Parliamentary procedure is used during portions of the meeting in which decisions are made; it is meant to make the meeting orderly, but not to interfere with democracy, every vote counting, brainstorming, consensus or FUN.

Room Requirements

Arranging Seats

During our Team meetings our seats are nearly always arranged in the form of a circle. This invokes the legend of Camelot and of King Arthur's round table. Forming the chairs into a circle, at our team meetings, supports the principle that all within the Adventure Scouts USA Scout Programs are equally valued. Our Scouts organize, create, and lead

their own programs. Since they have the opportunity to choose their own programs, it is important every Scout is motivated to participate. Democratic participation, with each having one vote, encourages meaningful participation. The level of participation of our Scouts increases because the Scouts in the Adventure Scouts USA Scout Programs are the ones who vote on their activities and also because they play a role in leading the activities.

Other Requirements

There should an American Flag in the room.



Scouts do not wear name tags, to give them the opportunity to learn each other's names.

When Guests are Present

When guests are present, they need to be introduced to the Scout Programs of Adventure Scouts USA and given an idea of what we are and what we do. In the case of a potential

new Scout, siblings, parents, or other young people attending the meeting, a full orientation to our Scout Programs should be made. Our Scouts go over the Scout Promises, Scout Code, Scout Motto and Scout Spirit, along with What Adventure Scouts USA Is, and the Scout Movement. Scouts then go around and comment on what those words mean to them.

We want those who are or may become a permanent part of a team to understand exactly what they are joining and why others have joined. Scouts can also ask the guests what they would like to get out of their possible participation.

When Guests are present for the Activity Buffet, they too should receive information about our Scout Programs, however an abbreviated version is fine. Scouts can briefly go over the Scout Promise, Scout Code, Scout Motto, Scout Spirit, and a brief history of Adventure Scouts USA so our Guests who interact with our Scouts can understand the importance of it.

All-Meeting Activities

Occasionally Scouts will vote to participate in an activity which will take up the entire meeting. On those occasions, most of the meeting will be skipped, but the two portions of a meeting which must always take place are Best of America and the announcements. Examples of activities which will take up the time of an entire meeting can be found on the Meeting Activities document, included in your starter kit.

Theme Dinners

Scouts generally hold a theme dinner every 4-6 weeks, but they are free to hold a themed dinner at any meeting they choose. Examples of possible theme dinners are listed on the Theme Dinner Document.

Dinners

All dinners do not have to be themed dinners. Themed dinners will take up a large amount of time as Scouts and families are costumed and the meeting place is decorated according to the theme. If our Scouts just want to have dinner with their meeting, that is also possible.

Special Instructions for Rising Star Scout Teams

Rising Star Scouts also have a “Good Time” candle. The candle burns as long as the meeting is orderly and everyone is having FUN. It is blown out if things get out of hand. If the candle burns out completely during a meeting, the Scouts receive a reward at the end of the meeting.

Rising Star Scouts will also need refreshments to be served during the meeting. Because we healthy choices, carrot and celery sticks, trail mix, granola bars, etc. are good choices along with 100% fruit juices. Scouts take on the responsibility of bringing refreshments after the first meeting.

The First Few Meetings

For the first several meetings, there be no team officers, so adult Team Counselors will need to make the decisions. Please remember, however our Scout Programs are by and for our Scouts and Team Counselors should elect team officers and allow Scouts to run their team meetings as quickly as possible. Our Scouts choose, organize, and leader their own meetings, programs, and activities. If in doubt, it's done by a Scout!

Materials should be prepared ahead of time and brought to the meeting. Scouts should receive copies of What Adventure Scouts USA Is, the Scout Movement, the requirements for the first Personal Achievement Award, the Scout Code, Scout Motto, Scout Spirit, and Rising or North Star Scout Promise, and information forms they need to fill out. Scouts should also recieve a Team Sheet. On the Team Sheet is the contact name, their phone number, email address, where the team meets and a map to the location. Also included is the basic feel of the team, what the Scouts like to concetrate on (i.e.: video games or camping), and where other

teams in the area are located. Bring these items to the first five meetings as more Scouts will be joining.

In order to get Scouts into the groove, if possible, they should have an Activity Buffet section from their first meeting. This will require Team Counselors to choose the Guests for the Activity Buffet ahead of time. The number of Guests can vary according to the number of Scouts, but there should be no fewer than two Guests because it is essential the Scouts get the opportunity to choose. Detailed instructions can be found in the document “How-To Hold an Activity Buffet”, included in your starter kit.

Scouts should also have a Did and Do section of the team meeting. This portion of team meetings is intended for Scouts to demonstrate the Challenges they have achieved. During initial meetings at the beginning of a team, Team Counselors can use this time for Scouts to achieve some Challenges. Anything needed for Did and Do should be on hand. Examples of Challenges which can be accomplished during this time are found in your Weekly Planner. Scouts will be encouraged that

they have already finished a Challenge!

A New Scout

When a new Scout comes to the meeting, there are certain protocols to follow. First, they need to be given a full orientation, as does any new member or when a parent, sibling or other family member of a Scout attends. Secondly, there is a meet and greet in which our Scouts can get to know the new Scout. A handful of Scouts are chosen, 5-10 depending upon the size of the team, to learn more about the new Scout. Each asks the new Scout a few questions, whatever they want, such as “What’s your name?” “Do you have any pets?” “What kind of sports do you like?”, etc. This is to help get to know the new Scout. A couple of the Scouts who spoke to the new Scout should also call a couple of days after the meeting to see if they enjoyed themselves and if they have any comments or

suggestions. The Scout who asks the questions should be rotated, so eventually everyone on the team gets a turn.

Participation of All

Each and every Scout participates in team meetings. If accommodations need to be made to ensure full participation, the Team Leader should strive to meet those needs. For example, if our Scouts are involved with sports or any other organized activities, we make an effort to accommodate them such as finding a convenient meeting time. In another example, we embrace diversity within the group and a Scout who uses sign language for example could share that information with the group for the benefit of all. He or she may simply share an example of signing, prepare a presentation or performance in sign, or teach

the entire Team how to sign a few simple words or phrases.

Activities Which Encourage Scouts to Come Back

Meetings that begin and end on a high note, will contribute to our Scouts wanting to come back. Scouts can encourage full attendance by beginning and ending each meeting with a FUN activity that creates energy and enthusiasm.