

BOY SCOUT TROOP 13

CHESTER, CONNECTICUT

Serving Chester and Deep River



TROOP GUIDELINES

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TROOP GUIDELINES

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1. GREETING

a. Introduction

WELCOME TO TROOP 13 OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT SERVING BOTH CHESTER AND DEEP RIVER RESIDENTS.

The broad purpose of the Boy Scouts of America is to help young men develop their character. There is much emphasis placed on assisting these young men to develop into strong healthy citizens who will lead our communities and country in the years ahead. Our methods help to promote these ideals through the challenge of putting them into practice with the Troop Program. This is done in a way that is both challenging and fun.

To provide opportunities for young men to practice leadership, citizenship, and confident independence, we use the outdoor program of Scouting. This program allows us to remove the boys from their familiar surroundings and place them in situations where they will have to rely on their skills and the cooperation of their fellow Scouts!

This brings us to your role in Troop 13. You've come for fun, adventure, and a chance to see what you can accomplish, but this will only happen if you do your part! You must be active in the Troop activities, learn the skills necessary to make you feel at home in the outdoors, contribute your time and talents towards planning and carrying out the Troop program.

During your first year in the program, the older boy leaders and the adults of the Troop will help to teach you the skills required to live comfortably in the outdoors. The goal is to have you reach First Class Rank within two years. Through this program you will learn first aid, camping, hiking, physical fitness, map and compass, cooking, nature, citizenship, and service to others.

While you are learning these skills you will also be encouraged to learn and adopt the ideals of Scouting, represented by the Scout Oath and Law. Duty to God, Country, others and oneself is achieved by following the Scout Law. Please read over the introduction in your Scout Handbook along with the Oath and Laws. Show this to your parents so they will also understand what Scouting is all about.

As you follow your trail to Eagle, you will also be challenged to take on a leadership role in the Troop. It is very important for you to understand that the goal is to have the troop program planned and run by the Scouts. Our adult leadership is there primarily to guide and assist them in this task. The program is what you as Scouts make of it.

In addition to the traditional activities of most Scout Troops, Troop 13 offers a unique opportunity to learn and participate in some more advanced outdoor activities. This Troop has a long history of far-flung high adventure trips, and many of the alumni are available to assist in teaching the skills required to enjoy these programs safely!



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So if you are willing to take up the challenge, to master the skills, to accept the responsibility of leadership, to strive for Scouting's highest honor, and have the courage to adopt the ideals of Scouting as your own... then come and join the Scouts of Troop 13.

2. TROOP ORGANIZATION

a. Purpose of The Troop

Troop 13 is chartered to pursue the purpose of the Boy Scouts of America. This purpose as incorporated in 1910 and chartered by Congress in 1916, is to provide for boys and young adults an effective educational program designed to build character, to train in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and to develop physical, mental, and emotional fitness.

The Boy Scouts of America cannot, itself, operate a Scouting unit. Because of the wording of its charter from Congress, it is required to work "...through organization, and cooperation with other agencies in promoting the Scouting program." All Scout Troops are owned and operated by community organizations desiring to use the Scouting program to serve youth.

The Boy Scouts of America makes available an educational resource program based on a duty to God and country through a local council for use of any local organization whose aims and purpose are in harmony with Scouting's aims. This may be a religious institution, club, PTA, lodge, civic group, or group of citizens who get together just for the purpose of Scouting. The Boy Scouts of America makes its program available by issuing a charter for each unit (Cub Scout Pack, Boy Scout Troop, etc.) an organization operates.

Thus, the organization has one or more charters from the Boy Scouts of America for one or more Scouting units. This charter authorizes the organization to make use of the Scouting program as a part of its total program, under leadership it has selected, for all youth who want to join. Troop 13 is chartered to the Rotary Club of Chester, Inc.

b. The Troop Meeting

The Troop meets weekly every Wednesday night during the school year and other times as scheduled. The Scout is to attend each meeting wearing his Class A uniform and should have his book, a notepad and a pen or pencil. The weekly meetings consist of a two-part program with an opening and closing. After opening, patrols move to their respective program areas. During this time the Scouts work on skills or merit badges. The evening ends with the entire Troop coming together for a game and closing.





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3. TROOP STRUCTURE

The organization of Troop 13 begins with our sponsor, the Rotary Club of Chester, Inc. The organization's representative to the Troop works between the Troop Committee and the sponsoring organization to oversee the operations of the Troop. The administration of the Troop is in the hands of the Troop Committee led by the Chairman. Several of the committee members also serve as unit leaders.

a. The Scoutmaster (SM)

The Scoutmaster is the adult leader of your Troop. He is dedicated to bringing learning, adventure, and good times to you and other Scouts. He guides and advises the Patrol Leaders Council as they run the Troop Program.



b. The Assistant Scoutmasters (ASM)

The Assistant Scoutmasters are adults who help your Scoutmaster, sometimes filling in when the Scoutmaster is not available. The ASMs are also assigned to advise the Patrols and their leaders. They are also there to answer your questions, see that your program fits your needs, and keep an eye on your advancement progress.

c. Patrol Leaders Council (PLC)

The PLC is responsible for choosing, planning the necessary details, and overseeing each event in the Troop Program.

The **Senior Patrol Leader (SPL)** heads the PLC. It is his job to insure that the patrols are working together for the good of the Troop. The SPL is responsible for the communication of information between the Patrols and the Troop Committee. The SPL also runs the Troop and PLC meetings.

The **Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL)** is required to fill in for the SPL as necessary, and to carry out various special assignments that may vary from heading up a service project, to taking charge of a Troop outing, or organizing a Court of Honor.

The **Patrol Leader (PL)** holds a key position in the Troop. It is his job to represent his Patrol as a member of the PLC. It is also up to him to see that the Patrol is working together to be the best they possibly can. He is responsible for passing on all information from the PLC meetings to the members of his Patrol. He will be the one that you go to when you have any questions or problems. In order to do his job, he needs your full cooperation. You must do your part by completing whatever assignments you may be given, and participating in the activities of the Troop and your Patrol. When your Patrol Leader asks you to do something, to help him or your Patrol,



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remember that you someday will advance to be a Patrol Leader. We request that you show the same respect to your Patrol Leader that you would expect of your Patrol members.

d. Patrols

Every Boy Scout troop is composed of patrols, groupings of eight to ten boys who work together as a team. A small troop may have only two patrols, a larger troop up to half a dozen or more. Whatever the number, each patrol has its own name and its own sense of identity. These things help to reinforce a Scout's feeling that he belongs to his own special group - and that it matters.

Each patrol also has its own leader, the "patrol leader." His fellow patrol members elect him, perhaps the first experience they will have exercising their democratic right to vote.

A troop's patrol leaders form the Patrol Leaders Council, headed by the Senior Patrol Leader. It is this council with whom the Scoutmaster works in planning and carrying out the troop's program.

Sooner or later every Scout in a Patrol, including the new Scout patrols, will have his chance to share in the responsibilities, which of course is how boys learn the skills of leadership and why the patrol system is one of the most strategic of the methods of Scouting.

4. ADVANCEMENT

Rank advancement is the process by which youth member's progress through ranks in the Scouting program by the gradual mastery of Scouting skills and personal growth. By advancing, the interest of the Scout in the program is maintained and he experiences personal growth and a feeling of accomplishment. There are six ranks of Boy Scouting: Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life and Eagle. The Troop Advancement Chairman maintains all advancement records in a Patrol Book, with a page for each boy spelling out requirements for his next rank, and dates he met those requirements. The Scout is responsible to check to make sure all requirements are completed and entered in the book before he seeks a Scoutmaster Conference.

a. Scout to First Class

Scouts can progress at their own pace for rank advancement to First Class. You can work on the requirements for several ranks at the same time. However, you must earn the badges of rank in the proper order. So take some time to look over the requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class Scout to plan your progress.

There are two time bound activities that you need to know about. Under the Tenderfoot rank there is a physical fitness activity that must be retested after a 30-day period. Once tested you should be working on these exercises and then retest in 30 days to show some improvement. Remember a Scout is physically strong! Emphasis on participation in outdoor activities and citizenship through service are required for rank advancement. In order to achieve the Tenderfoot rank you must



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participate in an overnight camp out. Second Class requires a service project, a hike, two more overnight camp outs, and a total of five activities, plus swimming 50 feet, and a demonstrated proficiency in both orienteering and first aid. In order to advance to First Class you must show additional first aid knowledge as well as completing an orienteering course and other requirements.

Opportunities for advancement are provided by the Troop program and advancement time during the regular meeting. All rank requirements must be completed and then approved by a member of the PLC, (above the rank of First Class) an ASM or a member of the Troop Committee. Once this is done you must sign up for a Scoutmaster's conference. You should notify your Scoutmaster at the start of the meeting when you are ready for a Scoutmaster Conference or a Board of Review.

b. Scoutmaster Conference

The Scoutmaster's conference is a review performed by either the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster to be sure that all requirements have been met. While specific questions may be asked concerning these skills, the real emphasis is in discussing your progress and to help you set goals to achieve your next rank. The Scoutmaster will take the time to discuss your positive aspects, along with any problems that you may be having. He will also talk about your adherence to the Scout Laws and Oath.

c. Board of Review

Upon completion of the Scoutmaster's conference, you will sign up for a Board of Review. All reviews will be conducted by the Troop Committee, as required by the Boy Scouts of America. Reviews will be scheduled as soon as possible. The Board will consist of at least three (3) members, who will examine your personal accomplishments and growth as a Scout. This Review is not intended to retest the Scout concerning your skill requirements; however, as with the conference some specific questions may pertain to the skills that have been completed. Upon successful review by the Board, you are considered to have attained your new rank. Badges will usually be presented to you at the next Court of Honor. Court of Honors are usually scheduled three or four times throughout the year.

d. Star to Eagle

Once First Class rank is achieved you will begin to work more independently on the Merit Badge program. While certain badges are required to attain the rank of Eagle Scout you may now choose from over 100 subjects for your optional badges. You will be working with adults from our Troop Committee as well as outside counselors that are approved by our Local Boy Scout Council. You will have the chance to explore topics ranging from American Business to Woodworking. Additional requirements for the ranks of Star, Life and Eagle include not only Merit Badges but also service projects and position of leadership within the Troop. Service Project applications are available from your Scoutmaster for ranks of Star and above.



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Only four percent (4%) of all boys who join Scouting ever achieve the rank of Eagle Scout. The goal at Troop 13 is to provide the opportunity for every member to reach for this highest pinnacle of Scouting.

e. How You Complete a Requirement

First the skill must be learned. This is accomplished during the program time at Troop meetings, while participating in an outdoor event, or during summer camp. Then you must demonstrate your knowledge of the skill for an Assistant Scoutmaster or other adult on the Troop Committee. This being successfully done the Leader will sign and date your Scout Handbook.

f. Attendance Requirement

To be considered “active” in order to advance, a Scout must attend at least 50% of all Scout activities, including weekly meetings and campouts, unless excused by the Scoutmaster in consultation with the Troop Committee.

g. Merit Badges

Merit Badges are an important part of scouting. Merit Badges signify the mastery of certain Scoutcraft skills as well as serving to increase skill in various areas of personal interest. Of the numerous Merit Badges available, 21 must be earned to qualify for Eagle. There are twelve that are specifically required. When a Scout chooses a Merit Badge to work on, whether it is required one or one in his particular area of interest, he must obtain a Merit Badge Card authorizing him to work on that badge. It is the National Boy Scouts of America policy that a Scout works only with an approved Merit Badge Counselor. Each Counselor must be registered with the Council office.

The Scout, along with a buddy, makes an appointment with the counselor, and works on the merit badge with him/her during one or more visits. When the counselor approves the merit badge he/she will sign the application, which the Scout returns to the Scoutmaster for processing.

Any registered Scout, regardless of rank, may work on a merit badge. However, it is recommended that New Scouts, those who are below First Class rank should concentrate on the requirements for those ranks.

5. OUTDOOR PROGRAM

During the course of the year, Troop 13 plans a variety of activities beyond the normal meetings. We try to have at least one activity a month, sometimes more. Activities we have done include Council sponsored Camporees, service projects, historical trail hikes, summer camp, backpacking trips, canoe trips, rock climbing, cycling, and of





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course camping. We encourage you to participate in all of our Troop programs. If you don't take advantage of these events you are missing out on a great part of the Scouting program. We do not expect you to be an experienced backpacker or white water canoeist; but we do expect you to be mentally awake and ready to learn. There will be times you find yourself feeling that you have reached your limit. This only means that you have to sit down, catch your breath, and look deep inside yourself to find that little extra push needed to get going again. These times of personal trial are what will help you to grow both physically and emotionally into a young man.

a. Environment

There are several requirements necessary to run a program of this type. First, all outdoor programs are according to the points of the Outdoor Code found in your Boy Scout Handbook. All Scouts will be clean in their outdoor manners. Littering is strictly forbidden. We will always leave an area as clean if not cleaner than when we arrived. We will try to work to eliminate carrying litter into the wilderness.

We pack food in paper wrappers that may be burned, and will use some freeze-dried foods (they are not really that bad!). Any foil that we may use can be easily stuffed back in your pack to be carried out. In theory, Troop 13 packs no litter except for maybe that candy wrapper in your pocket, so be sure that you either burn it or carry it out! A Scout is always considerate of private property and the rights of others to enjoy and use the same area he was just in. Conservation of our resources is the job of every Scout. Care for plants, wildlife and clean water, must be considered in all our activities. The balance of nature is very frail; it takes hundreds of years to grow a tree, thousands of years to build a shoreline, millions of years to develop a species, hundreds of millions of years to produce a geological formation... only a second to ruin all of them! For us to abuse or deform any of these natural wonders goes against all that Scouting stands for and all that we believe in. So... Take nothing but pictures... Leave nothing but footprints... and kill nothing but time.

b. Your Responsibilities During Activities

We want to impress upon you something that we feel is extremely important. You are part of something that is very special. You are a member of the Boy Scouts of America. With this special honor also comes an enormous responsibility. While on an event, you are part of Troop 13. Whatever you say or do reflects not only on you and your family, but also on your Troop and the Boy Scouts in general. While on some of our trips you may meet people of great mental capacity and some that nature did not shine so well on. What we require of you is to be able to meet all people with the same respect, friendship, and understanding. We do not want it said that our Scouts hurt someone's feelings or worse, caused them to feel insulted.





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A Scout is many things besides an outdoorsman. There are many hiking clubs, but what makes Scouting special are things like the Scout Oath and Laws. Now some people don't take all this serious, but we can say that your Committee takes all this Very Seriously. The last thing we need on a trip is one of our Scouts giving everyone a hard time. Good manners and attention to the Scout Oath and Laws are required not only when we are in public, but also when you are with your fellows Scouts!!

I-pods, portable video games and other electronics may be permitted in the transport vehicle you may travel in but that is up to the Adult driver. I-pods, portable video games, other electronics, fireworks, weapons (including paint ball guns), laser pointers, butane lighters, inappropriate reading material, Air Soft guns or similar, fixed blade knives and glass containers are prohibited on troop outings. Outing leaders will confiscate those items if they are found on an outing, to be returned to the parents when the Scout returns from the trip. Scouts also must have a Totin' Chip in order to carry a pocketknife or handle other wood tools. This card is earned when the Scout demonstrates that he can safely handle wood tools safely, as spelled out in the Boy Scout Handbook. If he shows irresponsible behavior or does not handle the tools safely, the Totin' Chip may be revoked and he will not be allowed to handle the tools until he demonstrate he can handle wood tools safely.

Whenever possible, patrols camp as individual units and practice the patrol method. Scouts cannot leave a campsite without the permission of the Scoutmaster, even if parents pick them up during the campout. The buddy system is used on all camping trips; a buddy will accompany any Scout leaving the campsite. All Scouts share the work and duties of their individual campsites. Patrol Leaders or equivalents establish rotating schedules to assure that work such as cooking, cleaning and wood gathering is done by all in a fair manner. All Scouts of Troop 13 will leave a campsite better than found.

6. YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS A SCOUT

It is easy to join Scouting, but; it is not easy to become a Boy Scout. To be a good Scout you need guts and the determination to stick with it. Scouting, like any other organization, has rules you must follow to be a member of the team. The rules of Scouting are found in the Scout Oath or Promise, Scout Laws, Scout motto, and Scout slogan. It is by following these rules that you become a true Scout.

a. Uniforms

Uniforms are part of the thrill of being a Scout. It shows that you belong. You are part of the largest youth movement the free world has ever seen. It stands for the spirit of true democracy. It puts everyone on an equal basis in the spirit of brotherhood. It also helps build team spirit in your patrol and your troop.



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The official uniform (Class A) of Troop 13 is the short or long sleeve uniform shirt (tucked in) with proper insignia in the correct positions on the uniform; Khaki pants (shorts in summer) and Troop 13 neckerchief. All Scouts appearing before a Board of Review must wear the official Troop uniform and carry their book. The Class A uniform as well as Merit Badge sash and medals, is worn at all Court of Honors.

During the summer the Troop may use their Class B uniform, which consists of: red Troop tee shirt and shorts. When the time is appropriate to use the summer uniform, an announcement will be made.

The Troop maintains a small collection of previously owned uniforms, so don't be shy, just ask one of the leaders and they'll get you fixed up.

b. Your Scout Handbook

All Scouts must have a Boy Scout Handbook. This handbook is full of valuable information along with the requirements for each rank. It is in this book that leaders will be signing off those requirements. Although the Troop maintains a computer database of advancement requirements for each scout, it may not be up to date. If you lose your book you may lose those completed requirements also. Bring your book to the weekly meeting and your Scoutmaster Conference.

c. You and the Public

Dealing with the public is an important part of your Scouting involvement. On all of our trips we spend some time with the people of the area we are visiting. Always be sure that you are a pleasant guest and that the areas you have used are in better condition than when you arrived.

Community involvement is always news. Troop 13 tries to supply Scouts for such community projects in areas that we feel can help make a difference.

Our Scouts try to set not only a good example, but also the best example. Remember, how you behave with us and all the things you learn while with us tend to spill over into everything else you do. This is the reason we want you to be a nice guy; it's a nice reflection on your family and the Troop.

d. Health and Safety

Health and Safety are necessary to participate fully in the program. The Boy Scouts of America has an outstanding record in providing for the physical well being of its members. Fitness is one of our key objectives. All Boy Scout outdoor activities must meet rigorous standards of health, safety, and program. As a Scout you owe it to yourself to take care of your body. Protect it and develop it so that it will serve you well throughout your life.



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e. Medical Examinations

Medical Examinations are important in a number of the Troop's activities. It is the responsibility of the Scout's parent or guardian to inform the unit leaders of any limitations that may be imposed on the Scout. When requested, a medical form signed by a doctor, the parent/guardian, and the Scout must be presented to the unit leader to participate in the activity.

f. Religious Obligations

Religious obligations are learned from the family and your religious leader. They teach you about your faith. By following these teachings in your daily life, by taking part in the practices of your faith, by using your leadership ability in your religious activities, you perform your duty to God. As a Scout, living in close contact with nature, you learn to know God's handiwork more deeply. Show your gratefulness to God by using your gifts and talents in your daily activities. One way to express your thankfulness to God is to help others. This, too, is a part of your Scout Oath.

g. Respect for Property

As a Scout in Troop 13 you also have an obligation to observe the rules that are agreed upon between Board of Trustees and the Troop regarding the use of the Scout Shack on Cedar Lake Road.



h. Discipline

Any Scout causing a disruption or discipline problem at a meeting or event may be asked to go home. If a problem arises during a camping or other overnight trip, the Scouts' parents may be called to come pick up their son. Any Scout so disciplined will not be allowed to participate in any further Troop activities until his parents have talked with the Scoutmaster.

The person authorized to send a Scout home is the senior adult leader in charge of the activity or event. This responsibility would normally be that of the Scoutmaster but in his absence an Assistant Scoutmaster or other adult leader who is in charge of the activity or event may discipline a disruptive Scout in this manner. The authorized person must advise the Troop Committee Chairman as soon as possible of such disciplinary action taken. If a Scout continues to misbehave, the Scoutmaster shall discuss the situation with the Troop Committee. The Troop Committee shall decide what additional action shall be taken to include temporary or permanent suspension of the affected Scout from the troop.



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7. EQUIPMENT

a. Troop Equipment

Troop 13 has a large amount of camping equipment that has been purchased over the years. The total amount invested is counted in the thousands of dollars. The reason we have been able to continue increasing this inventory is because we have had to replace very little of it. It doesn't get lost or broken. Our Scouts take excellent care of all Troop property and treat it as their own. When you are using any of the Troop's equipment, please care for it properly as we expect it to last for many more years. When a piece of equipment is issued to a Scout or Patrol, it is expected to be returned in the same condition as when it was issued. Should something become lost or broken it will be the responsibility of the patrol or Scout who borrowed the equipment to repair or replace the item.

b. Personal Equipment

Over time you will want to build your inventory of personal gear. Some of the things you will need in order to participate in certain outings are: sturdy hiking shoes (preferably ankle high), sleeping bag (lightweight 3 season rating) and backpack (either internal or external frame with a good padded hip belt). Your next purchase, if you decide to stick with the program, should be a lightweight 2-man backpack tent. Your last purchase should include a good backpack stove and cook kit. We do not want you running out to buy everything all at once, unless you have some money to burn. We would rather see you add quality equipment slowly. Unfortunately quality is expensive; the good part is that it works!! There is nothing worse, than to carry something for days only to find out that it won't do what you expected when you need it!! Please discuss your purchases with your Troop Leaders; they can help you make your decision.

c. Don't Give Up The Trip

If you don't have any camping gear at all don't give up the trip. There are many people in the Troop that have spare equipment and through our Scouting alumni we have access too much more. So Please ... Before you decide not to go on a trip speak to the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster.

8. CLOSING

a. Note to Parents

The success of Scouting is dependent on parent support. Parents are needed to provide the adult support as Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters as well as to provide Troop support through participation as members of the Troop Committee. Also, parents, your participation is critical in the areas of direct support and encouragement of your son. It is important that you are aware of his



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scouting activities and the reason behind them and support and encourage his participation and advancement.

We are always in need of parents who would be willing to assist with organizing a fund raising project. Many of these projects have been done previously, so the basic plan is in place, but we still need someone to take charge. Please let a member of the Troop Committee know if you are interested.

b. Note to Scouts

What kind of a person do you want to be? You owe it to yourself, your country, and your God to develop your body, to train your mind, to strive to be a young man of the highest character. Scouting will help you get there.

Now you have read a lot of do's and don'ts but they will all fall into place quite naturally. By taking part enthusiastically in all of your patrol and troop activities, by learning the skills that Scouting has to offer, by living up to the ideals of Scouting you will become the man you want to be. We know that you are about to start having the time of your life and experiencing things that you will talk about to your children in years to come.

We would like to welcome you once more to Troop 13 of Chester, Connecticut serving both the Chester and Deep River community. We are proud to have you as part of our Brotherhood in the Boy Scouts of America.

