



Here Come the Boys!!! Are You Ready?

- Have you taken Fast Start and Youth Protection training?
- Are you familiar with your responsibilities?
- Are you prepared for the meeting?

This section will get you on your way.

DEN MEETING PLANS



Den Meeting Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to be a den leader, filling one of the most important roles in Cub Scouting and helping a den thrive and grow. Without your help and leadership, the den cannot exist, the boy cannot be served, and the pack cannot be sustained.

Den Leader Responsibilities

In addition to the leader's responsibility to the boys in Cub Scouting generally, the den leader has certain other leadership responsibilities which may be summarized as follows:

- ▶ Work directly with other den and pack leaders to ensure that their den is an active and successful part of the pack.
- ▶ Plan, prepare for, and conduct den meetings with the assistant den leader and den chief (if Wolf, Bear or Webelos den leaders) or adult partners (if Tiger Cub den leaders).
- ▶ Attend the pack leaders' meetings.
- ▶ Lead the den at the monthly pack activity.
- ▶ Ensure the transition of their Cub Scouts to a den of the next rank (or to a Boy Scout troop if Webelos) at the end of the year.

Getting Your Den Started

If you are starting your program in June, invite the boys and their adult partners to participate in your pack's summertime activities, such as marching in parades, going to a ball game, having a campfire and marshmallow roast, and participating in Cub Scout day camp. Boys may be able to earn the National Summertime Pack Award pin by participating in events.

Den Meetings

Along with the Cub Scout's family, the den meeting is critical to the Cub Scout's success and enjoyment of Cub Scouting. It is in and through the den that the boy makes social connections, has fun, completes his advancement, and bonds with the pack. Den meetings that are fun, organized, and interesting make a great environment for the boys. Planning and delivering such meetings is the goal of this section of the *Den & Pack Meeting Resource Guide*.

What Is a Den Meeting Plan and How Do I Use Them?

There are two types of den meeting plans.

Den Meeting Plans: These plans, modeled to support a school-year program, will, if followed, result in all boys in the den advancing in rank. The plans are developed around the following:

- ▶ Two den meetings per month in addition to the pack meeting and other outings or activities
- ▶ Beginning the Scouting year in September
- ▶ Resulting rank advancement by the blue and gold banquet, usually in February
- ▶ Continuing den and pack meetings through the school year and summer
- ▶ The plans support other start dates. However, if starting later than September, it may be necessary to have more than two den meetings per month if rank advancement by blue and gold is the objective.

Supplemental Den Meeting Plans: Plans are provided for dens that meet more than twice per month during the school year or for dens that meet year-round. These may also be used after rank advancement is achieved to continue working toward electives, Academics and Sports belt loops/pins, and other individual and group awards.



The den meeting plans for each rank are designed to be conducted in sequential order. Certain activities are partially completed in one meeting and finished in another. Other activities or skills are natural prerequisites for things that come later in the den's year.

Local conditions (weather, events, etc.) or your den's schedule may make altering the order of the den meetings attractive. As a den leader, you may change the order so long as you make sure the change does not jeopardize the boys' opportunity to earn their rank in the allotted time or disrupt the logical order of the activities and achievements. When there is any doubt, the planned order should be used. Discuss with your Cubmaster any changes, as they may also affect pack activities.

Do, Home Assignment, and Verify

At the beginning of each rank section and throughout the den meeting plans, you will find the terms "do," "home assignment," and "verify." These will guide you, your boys, and their parents.

- ▶ Do: Activities to be done during den meetings
- ▶ Home assignments: Activities that boys and/or their parents must do outside den meetings but that you should assign (usually during the closing)
- ▶ Verify: A reminder, usually during the business items section of the den meeting, for you to confirm completion of a home assignment



Simple ceremonies serve to congratulate boys on their accomplishments.



Helpful Hints for Den Leaders

The following are some hints that will help you better plan and execute your den meetings.

Plan Your Meetings in Advance: Plan your meetings ahead of time with emphasis on the flow of activities. Pay special attention to “After the Meeting” sections of den meeting plans for preparation and materials needed for the next meeting. Alternate between quiet and more vigorous activities. Boys have a lot of energy to expend, so be sure you have an active game or other activity to help channel some of that energy.

Den Rules and Code of Conduct: At the beginning of the year, establish the rules that the den will follow and the consequences for breaking those rules. Boys should participate in the decision-making process. By helping decide what can and can’t happen in the den, boys will feel a sense of responsibility toward how the den is run. They will feel that the den is “theirs.”

Have them sign a poster on which the code of conduct is written and display it at your meeting place. Or make two copies: one that boys can keep at home and one to be displayed at the den meeting after both the boy and his parent have signed it.

Ceremonies: Ceremonies are important for marking the beginning and end of each meeting. They are also a time for reinforcing the aims and purposes of Scouting and bringing the boys together. As boys finish achievements toward their badges, simple ceremonies during the den meeting will serve to congratulate them on their accomplishments.

Immediate Recognition Kits: Use of the immediate recognition kits for Tiger Cubs and Cub Scouts is a method of encouragement along the advancement trail. Set aside time in den meetings to award beads representing completion of achievements. Congratulate boys enthusiastically for their efforts.

A den doodle is an object for the boys to use to show off their accomplishments and achievements. The *Cub Scout Leader How-To Book* has many ideas for den doodles. Your den of boys can design and create their own den doodle as a den meeting activity at the start of the year. Use the den doodle to keep a visual reminder of activities the den has completed and shared.

Treats: Boys love goodies! Simple nutritious refreshments add a finishing touch. Give everyone a chance to share his favorite treats with the den. Discuss food allergies with families and share the information with the den if appropriate.

Den Scrapbook: Fill the scrapbook with sample artwork boys do as den activities, stories about their adventures, and pictures taken of boys with their completed projects. The den scrapbook will be a treasured memento proudly displayed at the boys’ Eagle Scout court of honor in just a few years!

Your First Den Meeting

The tone you set at the first meeting will determine, to a large extent, the success of your year. Key to setting the right tone is to consider the following:

- ▶ Wear your adult uniform to all meetings and remind boys to wear their uniforms.
- ▶ Be completely organized before the start of the meeting.
- ▶ Explain clearly to the boys the behavioral expectations. You may wish to use the “good conduct candle” approach (*Cub Scout Leader How-To Book*). Be friendly but firm with the boys.

Ask the host team (Tiger Cub and adult partner who will assist at the meeting, your parents helping and assistant den leader(s)) to arrive at least 15 minutes before the starting time of the meeting. They can help you with final preparations before the rest of the boys arrive.

A snack at den meetings is optional. Set the example with healthy, nutritious snacks. Be aware of any food allergies of den members and communicate these to adult partners who may be assisting with the snacks.

Open each den meeting by saluting the U.S. flag and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Then, while showing the Cub Scout sign, recite the Cub Scout Promise and Law of the Pack. See *Cub Scout Ceremonies for Dens and Packs*, No. 33212, for detailed guidelines and ceremony examples.

One best practice to facilitate communications and involvement is to distribute a family information letter at the conclusion of each meeting. The letter tells families what was completed at each meeting and provides information on upcoming den and pack meetings and activities. A sample family information letter can be found at www.scouting.org/CubScouts/Resources and in the Resources folder.



Field trips are an important part of the Cub Scout experience. They are a time not only for fun but for learning. And they are critical steps in your boys earning their badge of rank. It is important that you plan in advance for these field trips. Planning should include the following, at a minimum, for each field trip:

- ▶ Arrange for the visit with the place you will be going (if needed).
- ▶ Work with the adult partners in the den to arrange transportation or get an adult to do the planning for this.
- ▶ A local tour permit should be filed with the council service center. (MANDATORY)

A field trip as a first meeting over the summer can be a good way to break the ice for a new den.

You could, as a den, have an outing to complete **Elective 22: Picnic Fun**; **Elective 29: Safety in the Sun**; and **Elective 35: Fun Outdoors**. (See the *Tiger Cub Handbook*, No. 34713.) Have a den family picnic, use sunscreen, and play an outdoor game at the picnic. This is a great way for the Tiger Cub families to get to know one another. It is also an optimal time to recruit new Cub Scout adult volunteers.

Distribute the Family Talent Survey Sheet to the parents, asking them to complete it and return it to you at the next meeting. (The Family Talent Survey Sheet can be found at www.scouting.org/CubScouts/CubScoutingForms/forms and in the Resources folder.) The survey serves as a useful tool for you to identify family resources within your den.

Beyond the Basics

- ▶ Encourage the boys to earn the religious emblem of their faith. This emblem is both an important part of the boy's (and family's) faith journey, but is also considered a premier award within the Scouting community.
- ▶ Talk with your boys and their adult partners about earning the National Summertime Pack Award and the Cub Scout Outdoor Activity Award. These are important group awards that build a sense of team for your boys.
- ▶ Cub Scouting's Leave No Trace Awareness Award defines the standards of behavior for Scouts during outdoor activities. Distribute and review the Leave No Trace frontcountry guidelines before any field trip to a park, playground, or other outing. The guidelines can be found at www.scouting.org/CubScouts/Resources/leavenotrace and on the CD in the Resources folder on the main menu.

Pledge of Allegiance

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America
and to the republic for which it stands,
one nation under God, indivisible,
with liberty and justice for all.

Cub Scout Promise

I, (name), promise to do my best
To do my duty to God and my country,
To help other people, and
To obey the Law of the Pack.