

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

<WOULD PREFER TROOP 219 LOGO
HERE – DO WE HAVE ONE?>

TROOP 219 HANDBOOK

FOR SCOUTS AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Last Revised July 8, 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION TO TROOP 219	4
2. ELIGIBILITY	4
3. COMMUNICATION	4
4. WEEKLY MEETINGS	5
5. PATROL METHOD	5
6. ADVANCEMENT	6
7. YOUTH LEADERSHIP	7
8. MERIT BADGES	7
9. TYPICAL CALENDAR YEAR OF EVENTS	8
10. UNIFORM & EQUIPMENT	9
11. BEHAVIOR & DISCIPLINE.....	10
12. CAMPING & OUTINGS.....	12
13. FUNDRAISING & INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ACCOUNTS	14
14. TROOP FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS & OTHER COSTS.....	15
15. SCOUT HEALTH & SAFETY	15
16. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT & VOLUNTEERING.....	16
17. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES.....	17
17.1 Grubmaster's Instructions	17
17.2 Equipment List.....	18
17.3 A Scout Parent's Guide to Backpacking Gear	19

BSA Mission Statement

The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

Aims of Scouting

“Every Scouting activity moves boys toward three basic aims: character development, citizenship training, and mental and physical fitness.”
—Scoutmaster Handbook

1. INTRODUCTION TO TROOP 219

Welcome to the Boy Scouts of America and Troop 219! We are extremely happy that you have decided to join our Troop and hope that you will fully participate in the Scouting experience. Scouting is a great opportunity for boys to learn leadership skills. It is our intention to provide a fun, exciting, and educational program for both you and your son.

This handbook has been developed to assist you in learning about our Troop, its operating procedures and its expectations of each member. It is designed to be a quick reference for both parents and boys. The Official Boy Scout Handbook provided to each Scout is also an invaluable source of information.

Established in 2005, Boy Scouts of America Troop 219 is sponsored by St. Philip Neri Church, located at 292 Munn Road in Fort Mill, South Carolina, 29715. We are part of the York District of the Palmetto Council. As an active troop, we stress the ideals of Scouting with a focus on regular outdoor adventures, development of personal life skills, and service to the community.

Troop 219 has a natural feed from Cub Scout Pack 219, which is also chartered by St. Philip Neri Catholic Church. Unlike Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting is a youth-led organization. The boys learn how to organize and lead the troop. After training, and with supervision from the adult leaders, the boys run the show.

More information on Troop 219, including upcoming activities, photos from past events, and the troop roster, can be found on the troop's website:

www.fortmill219.mytroop.us

2. ELIGIBILITY

Troop 219 is open to all boys 11-17 years old. Boys completing Cub Scout Arrow of Light can join at 10 years old, and those completed the fifth grade can join at 10 ½ years. Once the Scout reaches 18 years of age, he officially ages out of the troop as a Scout but can continue involvement through an adult leadership position.

All eligible boys are welcome to join Troop 219 regardless of religious affiliation, race, or creed. A Scout does not need to be Catholic or a member of Saint Philip Neri parish or of any other Catholic parish to join Troop 219.

Troop 219 recognizes that boys and their families have many competing priorities in their lives. It also recognizes that boys enjoy different aspects of Scouting – some enjoy the camping trips, some enjoy earning merit badges or rank advancements, some enjoy the leadership opportunities, and some enjoy all of it. Attendance at troop events and meetings is never required, though it is encouraged. Once registered with the troop, the only requirement to maintain membership is the payment of annual dues.

3. COMMUNICATION

The troop website provides the most complete source of information regarding the troop. Log in information to the troop website is provided upon registering with the troop.

Scouts are informed of troop activities, schedules, etc., at the weekly troop meeting. Additionally, weekly eBlast emails are sent out to Scouts and parents with upcoming events and important reminders. Emails from the troop website will end in the following:

XXXXXXXXX@fortmill219.mytroop.us

Troop email and the troop website are to be used solely for the purposes of communicating and coordinating BSA-related activities and messages. Scouts and families are not to use them for personal gain or business purposes.

4. WEEKLY MEETINGS

The troop meets each Monday night at St. Philip Neri Catholic Church from 7:00pm-8:30pm, except on major holidays (such as Christmas, New Year's, and Independence Day). The meeting is usually held in the Activity building, which is the middle building of the three buildings that make a horseshoe around the church's central parking lot. On the last Monday of the month, the troop meets in the shed behind the Activity building.

In the event of a meeting change, it will be communicated to all members of Troop 219 via website and email.

Patrols may elect to hold additional meetings or activities outside of the troop schedule. These will be subject to the same guidelines as Troop activities/meetings in accordance with the *Guide to Safe Scouting*. Note that two-deep leadership is not required for a Patrol event.

Each Scout is expected to come to each meeting prepared. This includes their Boy Scout Handbook, applicable merit badge books, paper for notes, pen or pencil, and any other materials needed for that evening's meeting. Each Scout should arrive at the troop meeting properly dressed (shirt tucked in – even when wearing troop t-shirt during summer) and ready to begin sharply at 7pm.

While participation in the weekly meeting is not mandatory, it is a critical component of the Scouting experience. In the weekly troop meeting, Scouts receive important information from both the adult and Scout leaders, they prepare for upcoming outings, they work on advancement requirements, they learn new skills, and most importantly they have fun. Scouts who do not regularly attend this meeting will fall behind the rest of the troop and have a less fulfilling Scouting experience. The weekly troop meeting is also the best opportunity for prospective Scouts and their families to get a taste for the troop and interface with troop leaders.

5. PATROL METHOD

The Scouts in a troop are organized into patrols. A patrol resembles a Cub Scout den in that it is a group of 10-12 boys, and just as several dens make up a pack, several Patrols make up a troop. But there are also some important differences. The most enlightening difference is that, while a Den Leader is an adult, appointed to the job by other adults, a Patrol Leader is a boy, elected by his fellow Scouts.

The Patrol Method is one of our most useful tools for achieving the Citizenship Aim. The boys in a patrol have the opportunity to practice democracy, teamwork and problem resolution. The patrol may not always function as smoothly as some adults would like, but even the rough spots provide opportunities for the boys to learn from their challenges. Many activities at the weekly troop meeting and at outings are carried out at the patrol level, which builds camaraderie within each patrol and creates some healthy competition among the patrols. The patrol members work together as a team, sharing the responsibility of making the patrol a success.

6. ADVANCEMENT

Advancement is a method that is used to focus and motivate boys in acquiring useful skills. Boys advance through the ranks (Recruit, Scout, Tenderfoot, . . . , Eagle) on an individual basis as quickly or slowly as they want and are able. Instruction may be by anyone who has the needed expertise - Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, parent, or (preferably) a more experienced Scout. The troop's program is designed to make training and demonstration opportunities available to boys who need them at a time appropriate to their advancement. Nearly every weekly troop meeting and campout will include opportunities for Scouts to learn, to practice skills, and to discuss their advancement requirements. Taking advantage of these opportunities remains the responsibility of the Scout. While Troop 219 tries to be flexible when possible, some activities by their nature are hard to schedule as "make up" sessions. Some requirements can only be done on campouts, for example. If a boy misses an opportunity to receive training on a skill, he may have to wait a while until it is offered again.

Advancement goes hand-in-hand with attendance: Boys who come to troop meetings and outings will advance quickly; those who don't, won't. Boys who participate fully should be able to finish the rank of Eagle before aging out of the troop. Even though some requirements for the various ranks can be worked on at any time, advancement through the ranks is always in the specific order spelled out in the Boy Scout Handbook. The requirements for each rank are also detailed in the Boy Scout Handbook.

All rank advancements require a minimum number of community service hours. Special community, district, and troop projects are held throughout the year with all Scouts expected to attend and participate. These projects vary from Scout Expositions to participation in community functions (such as drives to collect food), conservation projects, manning a first aid station during a marathon, highway clean-up, etc.

As the Scout meets a rank advancement requirement, he should proactively seek out and request sign-off on the requirement; a Scout should not wait for a leader to approach him about sign-off on requirements. Advancement sign-off can only be done by certain individuals: Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, or other registered adult leaders. Sign-off on the requirements for rank advancement must be recorded in the Scout's Boy Scout Handbook.

Once a Scout has received sign-off on all requirements for a particular rank, the Scout can begin the rank advancement process by requesting a conference with the Scoutmaster. The Scoutmaster conference is a forum for discussing topics such as ambitions and life purpose, goals for future achievement, and obtaining feedback on the troop's program. The conference can be requested at any time in person, via phone, or via email. The Scoutmaster will schedule the conference in a timely manner at his earliest convenience. The Scoutmaster may appoint another adult leader to conduct the conference, particularly for the earlier ranks or when the Scoutmaster and the Scout have conflicting schedules. The Scoutmaster conference can occur at a troop meeting, campout or other troop activity at the discretion of the Scoutmaster. The Scout must have his Boy Scout Handbook with him at the conference.

For all ranks other than the rank of Scout, the Scout who has completed the Scoutmaster conference will then need to pass a Board of Review. In the Board of Review, a panel of adult leaders will interview the Scout in order to determine the quality of his experience and decide whether he has fulfilled the requirements for the rank. Once the Scout has completed the Scoutmaster conference, he should request that the Advancement Chair schedule a Board of Review. Boards of Review are usually scheduled for a Monday evening concurrent with the Troop meeting.

Once the Scout has passed the Board of Review, the Scout will receive recognition as soon as possible, typically at the next troop meeting. Also, each Scout advancing at least one rank will be recognized at

the next Court of Honor.

7. YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Troop 219 is led by the boys under the guidance of the adult leaders; Boy Scout troops are boy-led, adult-run organizations. Scouts are trained to be leaders thru instruction and experience in leadership positions. One of the Scoutmaster's most important responsibilities is to provide direction, coaching, and training that empowers the boy with the skills he will need to lead his troop.

The Senior Patrol Leader is the youth head of the troop. He runs all troop meetings, events, and activities, as well as the Patrol Leader Council (PLC) meetings. The PLC consists of the Senior Patrol Leader, the Patrol Leaders, and other youth staff. In their monthly meetings the PLC organizes and assigns activity responsibilities for weekly troop meeting.

Senior Patrol Leader is just one of many youth leadership positions that make the troop run smoothly. Some others are Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leader, Assistant Patrol Leader, Bugler, Patrol Cheermaster, Chaplain, Den Chief, Patrol Quartermaster, Patrol Scribe, and Troop Guide. Serving as a youth leader is required as part of the rank advancement process.

Youth leadership elections and appointments occur roughly every six months. Each Patrol Leader is elected from his patrol by his patrol members. The Senior Patrol Leader is elected by all youth members of the troop. Other positions of responsibility are appointed by the Patrol Leaders and the Senior Patrol Leader to serve a term of six months or more.

8. MERIT BADGES

Merit badges are about learning new skills, being introduced to potential lifetime hobbies and being exposed to different possible careers. The process of earning merit badges gives a Scout the confidence achieved through overcoming obstacles. The merit badge process allows the Scout to explore fields of study and areas of interest beyond the limits of the school classroom.

Earning merit badges is a major part of the Scout learning process. A Scout must earn at least 21 merit badges to qualify to become an Eagle Scout, of which 13 are referred to as "Eagle required" (refer to the Boy Scout Handbook for more information). A Scout may begin working on a merit badge as soon as he becomes a registered member of Troop 219.

Merit badges are earned as follows:

- Pick a subject – Generally the Scout should proactively initiate the merit badge process by reading about merit badges in the Boy Scout Handbook, online, or elsewhere, and choosing one to earn. There are other opportunities throughout the year where merit badge subjects are offered to the Scouts. The troop may become aware of a merit badge being offered locally and inform the Scouts of the opportunity. Troop 219 typically holds a Merit Badge College (or University) in December of each year where several merit badge subjects are offered by certified Merit Badge Counselors on one day. Summer Camp provides the opportunity for Scouts to earn several merit badges in one week.
- Identify a Merit Badge Counselor (MBC) - These counselors have special knowledge in their merit badge subjects and are interested in helping Scouts. If the Scout is not familiar with a Merit Badge Counselor for the particular merit badge that he wants to pursue, he should reach

out to the Scoutmaster or Advancement Chair for guidance. Once the Scout has identified a MBC, he should reach out to the MBC to ensure that he/she is willing and available to lead the merit badge subject.

- Fill out a Merit Badge Card – The Scout should request a merit badge application (blue card) from the Scoutmaster or Advancement Coordinator, complete the Scout information section and have the blue card signed by the Scoutmaster.
- Contact the MBC – It is up to the Scout to set up the required meetings and activities with the MBC. The Scout should give the MBC the filled-out blue card to keep track of the Scout’s progress. All meetings for merit badge work must have at least two adults or two Scouts present in accordance with the *Guide to Safe Scouting*.
- Complete all merit badge requirements – The Scout should work with the MBC to ensure that all the requirements for the merit badge are met.
- Have the MBC sign the card – Once all merit badge requirements have been met, the Scout should have the MBC sign the blue card indicating as such. The MBC will keep one part of the merit badge application.
- Have the Scoutmaster sign the card – The Scout should then have the Scoutmaster sign the blue card.
- Turn in the card – The Scout should then turn in the completed blue card to the Advancement Chair.
- Receive the Merit Badge – At the next Court of Honor, the Scout will receive all merit badges that have been earned since the last Court of Honor.

Merit Badge Books are used to assist the Scouts in completing merit badges and are highly recommended. They are published by the BSA and available at the nearest Scout shop and online at www.scoutstuff.org.

9. TYPICAL CALENDAR YEAR OF EVENTS

Troop 219 typically schedules one camping trip and one other activity each month. Other events are scheduled throughout the calendar year. The below calendar lays out the regularly scheduled events of Troop 219 according to when they are generally held. Year-to-year exceptions may be made. Descriptions of some of these events are found below.

February	Court of Honor
March	Troop Elections
April	Crossover Ceremony, Scouting for Food Drive
July	Summer Camp, Court of Honor
September	Troop Elections
September-November	Popcorn sale and distribution

November-December	See's Candy sale
December	Merit Badge College
December-January	Camp Card sale

Troop camping trips are usually not scheduled in July (due to Summer Camp) and December (due to Merit Badge College). For more details on camping trips, please see the Camping & Outings section of this handbook.

- Court of Honor – Semi-annual ceremony usually held during the weekly troop meeting in which Scouts receive recognition for any ranks and merit badges earned since the previous Court of Honor. During the Court of Honor, the Scout's mother pins the merit badge(s) onto the Scout's merit badge sash. The Advancement Chair schedules the next Court of Honor well in advance of the date it is held. A special, separate Court of Honor is held to award the rank of Eagle.
- Troop Elections – See details in the Youth Leadership section
- Crossover Ceremony – Annual ceremony held jointly with Cub Scout Pack 219 in which Cub Scouts transition (or “cross over”) to Boy Scout Troop 219
- Scouting for Food Drive – Annual community service project in which Scouts distribute paper bags to assigned neighborhoods one weekend and then pick up the bags (filled with non-perishable food items) the next weekend to donate to a local food bank
- Summer Camp – See details in the Camping & Outings section of this handbook
- Popcorn sale, See's Candy sale and Camp Card sale – see the Fundraising section of this handbook
- Merit Badge College – see the “Merit Badges” section of this handbook

10. UNIFORM & EQUIPMENT

Uniforms are an integral part of Scouting. It helps the boys identify with their unit and promotes a sense of belonging within the Troop and the Scouting community. All Scouts and adult leaders of Troop 219 are expected to wear a uniform appropriate for each particular occasion as described in this section.

The Field Uniform, also known as the Dress Uniform or “Class A,” refers to the regular Boy Scout uniform, including BSA-approved field uniform shirt (the khaki, button up shirt with the BSA wording over the right pocket), Scout pants or shorts, Scout belt, troop neckerchief with slide, Scout socks, name tag, and closed-toed shoes. All insignia should be worn in the proper position on shirt. General guidelines can be found on the inside cover of the Boy Scout Handbook—if in doubt, ask.

The Activity Uniform or “Class B” refers to the Troop 219 T-shirt (or other Scout-related T-shirt), belt, socks, and closed-toed shoes.

The full Class A uniform is encouraged and sometimes even required to be worn on special occasions such as Court of Honor, Board of Review, Scoutmaster Conference, Scout Sunday, flag ceremonies, and parts of Summer Camp. For most other activities such as the weekly troop meeting, when traveling to and from outings, and when fundraising, only the Class A shirt is required with Scout neckerchief

and name tag. At these other activities, Scout pants/shorts are to be worn if available (jeans or appropriate shorts are acceptable).

Merit badge sashes, Order of the Arrow sashes and medals such as religious awards should be worn on formal occasions such as Boards of Review and Courts of Honor but are not worn on most other occasions. The Merit Badge Sash, when worn, is to be draped over the right shoulder.

The Class B uniform is worn for most camping and hiking activities and for the weekly troop meetings between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Hiking boots are the most appropriate footwear for camping and hiking. Shorts are acceptable in warm weather as long as they are appropriate in color, style, and condition (no holes, no athletic shorts, no patterns or plaids).

Only BSA- and Troop 219-approved recognition, awards, patches, pins or other adornments are to be worn on the BSA uniform (includes troop T-shirt). Socks and closed-toed shoes are generally always required with any uniform. Hats are optional but generally discouraged at formal events.

Adult leaders are expected to set a good example by wearing the uniform correctly. Non-uniformed adult leaders should wear a Troop 219 T-shirt.

Every Scout should always bring his handbook, labeled with his name, to every meeting and on camping trips when appropriate.

Each Scout is expected to obtain at a minimum the "Class A" shirt. The troop will provide a troop neckerchief, name tag, patrol emblem, and troop numerals for the field shirt. BSA uniform pants/shorts, hat, socks and belt are recommended, but not necessary for participation. Some youth leadership positions may require the full uniform. The troop will supply each Scout with a troop T-shirt ("Class B" shirt).

The Troop has a 'swap closet' with a limited number of used uniforms and other gear that the boys may use at no charge. Because boys this age typically grow at such a fast rate, parents are encouraged to check there first before purchasing a new uniform and to donate used items. The Scout uniform, the Scout Handbook and other personal items are available for purchase at the Scout Store on Westinghouse Boulevard in Charlotte, by mail order through the BSA Catalog, or on the BSA website at <http://www.scoutstuff.org/>.

11. BEHAVIOR & DISCIPLINE

Scouts and adults are expected to behave during all scouting activities. Each Scout is required to sign a conduct agreement when registering with Troop 219. This agreement is to remind the Scout that he is to behave in accordance with the Scout Law and Scout Oath.

Scouting does not condone or permit any form of hazing or initiation rites at a youth or adult level. Such conduct is viewed as a form of bullying and dealt with accordingly.

Any Scout demonstrating unsafe or inappropriate behavior will be provided counseling appropriate to the behavior by the youth and/or adult leadership groups. If the Scoutmaster feels that the behavior is of significant magnitude or is not being sufficiently corrected by the Scout, he may request a Disciplinary Board of Review to be convened by the Troop Committee. The Troop Committee will have final say on the consequences of the Scout's conduct, including potential suspension or dismissal of the Scout from the troop.

A Scout who demonstrates inappropriate behavior may be removed from the activity at the discretion of the adult leaders supervising the activity. Parent(s) will need to pick up a Scout who is sent home

due to inappropriate behavior immediately when requested to do so. A Scout who is dismissed from an activity due to inappropriate behavior may incur other disciplinary measures up to and including expulsion from the troop.

The Boy Scouts of America is an alcohol- and drug-free program. Troop 219 fully supports this national policy and prohibits the use of alcohol and illicit drugs during any troop function by any registered BSA member (adult or youth) and/or any other persons in attendance. An event includes, but is not limited to any scouting-related meeting, Court of Honor, campout, day trip or other BSA-sanctioned function/activity.

Tobacco use is strictly prohibited by any Scout. Adult usage is strongly discouraged at scouting events; however, if an adult must use tobacco products (including e-cigarettes), he/she is required to remove him/herself from the activity and not to use these products in sight of the Scouts. Use of tobacco products shall only be done when there are adequate adults to maintain the two-deep leadership at all times.

Electronic devices are not permitted at ANY scout function including meetings, campouts, or trips. If scout is observed with these devices, they will be confiscated and returned to the parent at the end of the event/activity. Repeated offenders will be required to be picked up from the event, regardless of location. "Electronic device" includes (but is not limited to) any AM/FM/satellite radio, music recording/playback device, mobile phone, video players and game system. Cameras are allowed and encouraged to capture their experience, though cameras in cell phones are not allowed. An exception to the electronic device rule is during travel to and from a scouting event. Electronic devices may be allowed at the driver's discretion. All electronic devices are to remain in the vehicle during the event. Adult leaders are not liable for the theft, damage, or any other mishap involving any Scout's electronic device.

Scouts are NOT allowed to carry any knife or other woodworking tools until they have passed and obtained the required BSA Totin' Chip. Knife carrying is considered a privilege, not a right at scouting events. The Totin' Chip is required for the Scout to carry a folding pocket knife (max – 3" blade) to ANY scouting event, including meetings. All other knives, including those with blades that exceed 3" long (folding or not) or having fixed blades (such as hunting, boot, throwing), are not permitted at scouting events.

Adult leaders reserve the right to confiscate any knife that is improper for scouting or being used in an unsafe manner. All confiscated knives will be returned to a parent following the event. The Totin' Chip may also be revoked and privileges removed if the Scout fails to follow knife safety rules.

Scouts are NOT allowed to carry any fire-starting tools until they have earned and obtained the required BSA Firem'n Chit. The carrying and use of fire-starting tools/equipment is a privilege, not a right at scouting events. In Troop 219, a Scout may only carry matches, hot sparks or other non-fluid/gas filled fire starters. A Scout may not carry any liquid/gas filled lighters, or flares. Adult leaders reserve the right to confiscate any fire-starting tools that are improper to scouting or observed to be used inappropriately. All confiscated materials will be returned to a parent following the event. The Scout's Firem'n Chit may also be revoked and privileges removed if the Scout fails to follow fire safety rules.

All fireworks, explosives, weapons, and firearms are prohibited from scouting events and may lead to expulsion from the scouting event, the troop, etc. "Weapons" includes but is not limited to: guns, brass knuckles, martial arts weapons, bows and arrows, maces, spears, or other devices classified as a weapon. It also includes anything that represents a weapon and could be used to injure, intimidate and/or harass another individual. Troop disciplinary measures may be required to prevent recurrence. If

a weapon (e.g., gun, bow/arrows) is to be used as part of an approved BSA activity, all requirements under the BSA's Safe Guide to Scouting SHALL be followed without exception. These weapons will only be handled by authorized adult leaders and must be kept unloaded and secured when not in use. Scouts may not handle such weapons except during approved activity time under supervision of approved range conditions and supervision.

Adult leaders of Troop 219 are representatives of the troop and the troop's chartered organization. They set the bar of behavior and dress not only for the Scouts, but also in the observations of others inside and outside the Troop. Their behavior and dress should be exemplary to the Scouts. The adult leaders model how they want the Scouts to behave and dress at all times. Adult leaders must avoid improprieties or the appearance of questionable intentions.

All activities are conducted in accordance with the BSA's Guide to Safe Scouting and other BSA official guidelines. Troop 219 leadership reserves the right to place more stringent requirements on activities, equipment use, and/or other facets of the Troop 219 Boy Scout Program.

12. CAMPING & OUTINGS

Boy Scouting requires both indoor and outdoor activities. The troop tries to perform at least one camping activity per month and one non-camping activity per month. Non-camping activities can be hikes, day trips, museums or other activities. Age and rank requirements may apply to some trips that require a Scout to have certain skills.

As with any outdoor activity, weather is a factor. The troop will generally conduct campouts and other outdoor activities regardless of basic weather (i.e., wind, rain, snow, etc.). However, severe weather may develop while the troop is on an activity. Leaders are trained in weather hazards and will take necessary steps to protect the Scouts at all times.

Successful outings require advance registrations. Registration cut-off dates are shown on the troop website activity calendar entry and may be several weeks to months ahead of the activity. Scouts are expected to register as early as they can for all activities, regardless of whether they are registering as 'attending' or 'not attending'. This is necessary for making appropriate reservations and trip planning by the troop leadership.

Fees for activities, including the cost of food reimbursement, are due prior to departure. Certain activities/trips/camps may require payments in advance or at registration. Fees from these activities will be the responsibility of the Scout and his family. Fees will vary depending on the activity. A typical weekend campout costs about \$10-20. Scouts failing to attend an activity after signing up will be held responsible for all activity/outing fees and costs unless cancellation is made prior to fee submission/event registration.

The troop meets at a common location for departure to events (usually the St. Philip Neri church parking lot, by the shed) and departs together with no unplanned stops. Return from activities is addressed in the same manner. Scouts are not permitted (unless pre-authorized by the Scoutmaster, or due to family or medical emergency) to arrive at or depart from an activity separate from the troop. Scouts are required to report per the designated departure schedule or a Scout may be left behind. Parents are required to pick up their Scout(s) in a timely manner upon the troop's return. Adult leaders will be available during the each trip via cell phone in the event of emergency. These phone numbers will be made available to the parents of Scouts on the trip as well as being available on the troop roster located on the website.

A current BSA medical form must be on file with the troop or provided prior to departure. Any Scout without medical forms on file and updated within the past 12 months will not be allowed to attend campouts. All medications a Scout needs during an event must be left in the charge of an adult leader on the activity. Medication must be in a sealable bag and must contain the Scout's name and dosing directions. The Scout's original medication container is strongly preferred in order to avoid confusion and mix-up of medications. Adult leaders are not responsible for ensuring that a Scout takes any required medications. Adult leaders will not dispense any medication (OTC, prescription, etc) to a Scout unless parental permission is given at the time of need or permission is given on their BSA medical form.

The troop is fully supplied with tents, dining flies, stoves, lanterns, saws, axes, and other equipment for troop activities. The troop is continually making significant investments in camping gear to support our active outdoor program. The troop replaces equipment as it becomes worn out thru typical wear and tear of scouting. If a Scout negligently or intentionally damages equipment, other than normal wear and tear, the Scout will be responsible for the repair or replacement cost. This includes equipment of host facilities (summer camps, parks, etc.).

Each Scout is to supply his own personal gear, such as a sleeping bag, backpack, mess kit, folding stool/chair, toiletries, rain gear, sturdy shoes, flashlight, and extra batteries. All personal gear should be marked with Scout's full name in permanent marker, engraved or other permanent method.

The Troop provides all meal preparation knives, saws and axes needed for safe camping. Therefore, Scouts do not need to bring such equipment. Special exceptions (i.e., fish filet knives, hatchets, etc.) may be granted by the Scoutmaster depending on the activity. Permission granted may be to the entire group or to a select individual.

Anatomy of a Campout

Each patrol leader will select a Grubmaster from among the patrol's members who are attending the campout. The Grubmaster is responsible for helping the patrol reach consensus on a menu, pricing the menu so that each Scout knows how much money to contribute for shopping, collecting the money for the food, purchasing the food for the campout, and transporting the food to the troop shed for packing up. The Grubmaster should sign out the patrol's food box and cooler to take with him shopping. The Grubmaster should also provide recipes for the items being cooked for each meal so that the patrol cook for each meal knows what ingredients to pull out. See the separate "Grubmaster's Instructions" section at the end of this handbook for more details.

An "Equipment List" is provided at the end of this handbook and in the Boy Scout Handbook. Each Scout, not a parent/guardian, is expected to pack his own gear. After a couple of times the Scout will know very well what he really needs. Scouts should pack neatly: one backpack or duffle bag, with a sleeping bag tied securely to it. Loose gear is liable to get lost along the way. Scouts should not use black garbage bags, as gear may be mistaken for trash. In most cases, Scouts should meet at 5:45pm Friday evening at the church's shed for a 6:30pm departure. Boys should be in their Class A uniform for the trip. Seating is pre-assigned. Usually a truck or trailer is available for the overflow gear. Scouts should bring money in the event we stop along the way for food. The troop normally arrives at the campsite late, pitch tents and go to bed. Each Scout will generally share a tent with another member of their patrol. Adults sleep in a separate area nearby, and Scouts have to ask for permission to enter.

On Saturday the troop rises early, has breakfast and has a full day of planned activities. Scouts should spend any free time with their patrols, not hanging out with the adults or wandering alone. The troop generally has dinner early enough so clean-up can be completed before dark. Afterward there may be

some planned evening activities, including a group campfire. On Sunday, the troop eats breakfast, may have a limited program, then strikes camp, loads the cars and departs before noon. Parents are typically notified of an expected return time via text once the troop has begun its return trip. Everyone, both Scouts and adults, are responsible for helping to clean up the campsite and load the gear. The troop usually meets back at the church's shed to sort out gear before leaving for home. Each Scout is expected to stay until all troop gear has been unloaded and put away in the shed.

Summer Camp

Considered the “Super Bowl” of the year’s camping trips, Summer Camp is a week-long overnight camp (Sunday through Saturday) with several other troops during which Scouts have the opportunity to work on several merit badges and satisfy some of the requirements for rank advancement. Our troop encourages every Scout to attend summer camp his first year. Experience has shown that new Scouts who do not attend summer camp do not bond as successfully with their patrol and troop, nearly always fall behind their peers in advancement and are at high risk to drop out of Scouting after their first year. Cost varies but is typically around \$250 to \$300, plus some merit badge-specific costs. Scouts sleep in tents provided by the camp and eat in a camp dining hall. First year Scouts will spend three or four hours each day participating in a “Nighthawk” program where they will be taught basic skills. There may be time to work on one or two easy merit badges. Older Scouts may work on three or sometimes more merit badges. Free-time activities usually include swimming, canoeing, rifle shooting, archery, hiking, fishing and crafts; some camps also offer sailing, horseback riding, rock climbing, golf and other activities.

High Adventure Camping??? – If we want this section, I’ll need someone else to populate it

13. FUNDRAISING & INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ACCOUNTS

The troop does not receive any funding from the United Way or any other source. The money given to organizations such as the United Way for distribution to the BSA is used at the council and district levels. This requires the troop to collect a fundraising fee (FRF) from each Scout in order to operate the troop, replenish equipment, and provide supplies.

The Troop Fundraising Committee, under the direction of the Troop Committee Chair, offers several fundraisers during the calendar year. The funds raised are apportioned between the troop and the Scout, with the apportionment determined by the troop's adult leadership. The funds provided to the Scout are directed to the Scout's Individual Scout Account (ISA). The Scout's ISA is money that the Scout can use for any Scouting-related expense, including but not limited to:

- Annual FRF
- Summer Camp fee
- Outdoor and camping gear (boots, packs, tents, etc)
- Uniform and other Scouting-related clothing
- Weekend camping food costs

The Scout's ISA can be funded through participation in fundraisers, and it can also be funded directly by the Scout's family if they choose to do so. The Scout's ISA balance does not expire; that is, any

positive balance is rolled forward from year to year. Should the Scout age out of Scouting or choose to leave the troop, any positive balance that remains in the Scout's ISA will be refunded to the Scout. A positive ISA balance for a Scout who is expelled from the troop reverts to the troop.

It is the expectation that all troop members participate in fundraising events. Annual fundraising opportunities include:

- Boy Scouts' of America Annual Popcorn sale
- See's Candies Annual sale
- Camp Cards (retail discount cards)
- Other activities as determined by the Fundraising Committee

All monetary donations to the troop may be tax-deductible and the troop can provide a printed receipt on troop letterhead for such upon request. Anyone who makes a monetary donation to the troop should consult with a tax advisor for complete rules on whether the donation is actually tax-deductible.

14. TROOP FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS & OTHER COSTS

Troop 219 will not limit a Scout's participation due to financial hardship. If financial hardship is a concern, the Scout's parents/guardians are to contact the Troop Committee Chair to discuss options for assistance.

Troop 219 has a New Scout Fee of \$100 due at the time of registration. This fee covers full BSA registration (includes national registration, BSA insurance & Boy's Life magazine subscription). The fee also provides a new Scout with a current BSA Handbook, name tag, troop neckerchief, troop numerals patch, patrol emblem, troop carry bag, and troop t-shirt. The New Scout Fee is waived for Cub Scouts who transfer into Troop 219 and for Boy Scouts who transfer in from another troop. The New Scout Fee is non-refundable.

Troop 219 also collects an annual fundraising fee (FRF) for all returning Scouts due by Dec 1st of each year. This fee varies based on the yearly budget and operating expenses but is typically in the range of \$200-\$300 per Scout. For new Scouts, the FRF is pro-rated for the remainder of the year and is due at the time of registration.

Each activity may have a separate fee associated with it. This fee may include admission fees, food, and any other associated charges for the activity. The cost for a typical weekend campout is \$10-\$20.

The troop's annual budget / financial report is available upon request from the Troop Committee Chair.

15. SCOUT HEALTH & SAFETY

Each Scout's health and safety is the primary concern of Troop 219 adult leaders. All the activities are all done with the Scouts' health and safety in mind. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that Troop 219 has accurate information on his/her son. Should something happen to a Scout, the adult leadership uses medical forms, membership applications, and other approved resources to provide the best care for the Scout. If any change in a Scout's medical or medication profile occurs, it is vitally important that the parent/guardian keeps the troop updated on these changes by filling out new medical forms including medication approvals and changes. BSA medical forms are required to be updated and resubmitted to Troop 219 by parents/guardians at least annually. Scouts without a current BSA Part B

Medical form on file with Troop 219 will not be allowed to participate in any troop camping trips and basic Scouting activities. Scouts without a current BSA Part C Medical form on file will not be allowed to participate in resident camps (e.g., Summer Camp) and Scouting events that last longer than 72 hours. Scouts who wish to participate in high adventure camps may be required to furnish a more detailed BSA Part D Medical form - some camps have their own forms required for participation.

The adult leadership of Troop 219 reserves the right to require a parent or guardian to accompany their child on any particular troop outing or campout, as deemed necessary. This will be dependent on the severity of the medical circumstances and/or the special needs of the youth. It is also kindly requested that any youth taking a prescription medication regarding any behavioral matters, continues to receive that medication while attending any troop overnight activity or outing.

All activities are conducted in accordance with the BSA's Guide to Safe Scouting or other BSA official guidelines. Troop 219 leadership reserves the right to place more stringent requirements on activities, equipment use, and/or other facets of the Troop 219 Boy Scout Program.

Troop leadership practices two-deep leadership for all scouting activities including meetings. Per this principle, no event has fewer than 2 adult leaders in attendance.

16. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT & VOLUNTEERING

Parental involvement is critical to the benefit each Scout receives from the Scouting program. Without parents/guardians, the Scouts will be limited in the activities and advancement available. Scout meetings are always open to all family members as long as they are not disruptive to the meeting. Parents are strongly encouraged to be VERY active in their son's Scouting path. It is heavily recommended that at least one parent volunteer to help the troop in some form, whether it be as an Assistant Scoutmaster helping to plan the next outing, a Committee Member working behind the scenes to keep the troop functioning smoothly, a Merit Badge Counselor assisting the Scouts with advancement, or in one of many other roles needed to provide a quality program for the Scouts. For any adults joining in a volunteer capacity, training and guidance is provided to ensure that volunteers have a strong foundation and support system in whatever capacity they wish to serve. There may be a small cost associated with this training. Parents may be needed to transport Scouts to activities and to chaperone at campouts and other activities. This is to maintain the BSA "two deep adult leadership" requirements. Some volunteer positions require more time commitment and others require less. Some require direct interaction with the Scouts, while others are more behind the scenes. There are many ways to participate, and all are rewarding. If you're interested in helping to keep our troop great, ask any adult leader!

All adult leaders are required to take the BSA Youth Protection class to educate leaders on protecting the Scouts from sexual predators and abuse. This is available online at the national BSA website. In addition to the BSA program, our charter sponsor, Saint Philip Neri Catholic Church, requires that all adults who work directly with children complete the Catholic Safe Haven training for youth protection. Troop leadership practices two-deep leadership for all scouting activities including meetings. Per this principle, no event has fewer than two adult leaders in attendance.

17. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

17.1 Grubmaster's Instructions

Being assigned to be Grubmaster for a patrol may seem annoying or burdensome at first glance, but every Scout is required to perform these duties as part of his First Class advancement requirements. Note, however, that simply “being Grubmaster” in itself doesn’t meet the requirements; there are a number of very specific tasks that he must perform and have each step approved by an Assistant Scoutmaster (ASM) or designated senior Scout. This is a good opportunity for the parent/guardian to get involved in helping to teach his/her son some important life skills (food planning, portion control, budgeting, shopping), but it’s ultimately the Scout’s job: The parent can help, but should not do it for him. The following instructions should be followed by the Grubmaster:

- Follow the menu that the patrol planned. Good or bad, it’s what the group agreed to. The menu SHOULD have been checked and approved by a senior Scout or ASM. If the Grubmaster feels strongly that there’s something wrong with the menu, he should go back to his Patrol Leader and if necessary talk to a Troop Guide, the SPL or an ASM about the problem. He should not make changes without checking first; there may be a reason why things were done a certain way.
- The Grubmaster should have a firm attendance count by the Wednesday prior to the outing. If he doesn’t know he should call his Patrol Leader first to get the information; if that doesn’t work, he should try the Senior Patrol Leader who will have a copy of the roster; as a last resort he can call the ASM in charge of the outing to get an accurate count.
- Boys often have trouble with quantities. Presented with excess food, most boys will eat the junk (cookies, chips) and throw away the healthy stuff. The Grubmaster should have enough to feed everyone but no leftovers.
- The Grubmaster doesn’t always need to buy the most expensive brands. If he buys large quantities, he might want to try Costco or Sam’s Club.
- It is often better to buy things like cookies or chips in single-serving packages. This makes portion control easy and cuts down on squabbles over who got the most cookies – everyone just gets one package.
- Stay away from Coke and other sodas. They get the kids amped up and contribute to dehydration.
- Powdered drink mixes with sweetener already in them (Gatorade, Country Time, etc.) are better and less expensive. Instant cocoa or hot cider mix is good for cold weather, especially at breakfast. Milk and juice (not the frozen kind) are good for weekend trips if there is a cooler to keep them in. Again, be realistic about how much the boys will drink so there’s no waste.
- Save your receipts; add them up and divide by the number of people from the Patrol who are going on the outing to determine the cost per person.
- Show the menu, shopping list, and receipts to an ASM or Troop Guide to be signed off on this part of the First Class cooking requirement.
- For most campouts, the Troop will collect food money with other campout fees and reimburse the Grubmaster when he turns in his receipts.
- Pack perishables in an ice chest with ice.

- Pack non-perishable food neatly in cardboard boxes or plastic storage bins. Do not bring a bunch of grocery bags. Everything is going to get crammed into a trailer and bags are likely to get lost, spilled or smashed.
- Troop Quartermaster (with the adult Quartermaster) maintain patrol boxes with cook stoves and utensils for each patrol.
- The Grubmaster is also responsible for water if needed. The Troop provides propane tanks for cook stoves. Two canisters of propane are usually enough for a weekend. Sometimes some gallon jugs of drinking water will also be required. This will be announced at the weekly troop meeting.
- Talk to your Patrol Leader about what pots, pans, etc., will be needed. The Patrol Leader needs to give his equipment request to the Troop Quartermaster or the SPL. Do not assume that needed gear will just magically appear. If you have questions ask your Troop Guide or the ASM in charge of the outing.
- It is not the Grubmaster's job to do all the cooking unless he needs it for First Class cooking requirements or Cooking Merit Badge. He should do his share along with everyone else. Disagreements about cooking and cleanup will be minimized if the Patrol follows its duty roster.
- All Patrol cooking gear needs to be returned to storage clean, neat and in good repair. Report any loss or breakage to the quartermaster in writing. Leftover food should not be stored in the patrol box. Perishable leftovers can be distributed to patrol members or taken home by the Grubmaster.

17.2 Equipment List

The following list is the minimum required camping/outdoor activity equipment list for each Troop 219 Scout. Additional gear may be required on any particular outing.

- Mess kit (does not have to be BSA, could be any plastic bowl, plate & utensils)
- Flashlight w/spare bulb and spare batteries
- Sleeping bag or bed roll appropriate to weather conditions
- Backpack, duffle bag, etc. for camping gear. (troop has loaners)
- Daypack (old school backpack, large hip pouch, etc.)
- Rain gear (poncho, 2-pc suit, etc.)
- Personal hygiene kit (soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothbrush & paste, etc.)
- Towel (microfiber pack towel preferred) & washcloth
- Personal first aid kit (see hand book for details)
- Insect repellent, sunscreen
- Proper footwear for activities (no open toed/heel shoes, sandals, "cros", etc.)
- Whistle
- Water Bottle (at least 1 liter, any reusable water bottle, preferably wide mouth.)

- Clothing appropriate for activities and weather.
- Watch
- Trash bags for wet gear (1-3)

Other recommended gear, depending on the activity:

- Hat
- Camera (not in cell phone)
- Hiking pole(s)
- Fishing equipment
- Book / Card games
- Compass
- Maps of area

For more information review section on camping inside the BSA Handbook.

17.3 A Scout Parent's Guide to Backpacking Gear

This section discusses gear choices used for backpacking outings and not necessarily for car camping. All backpacking gear can be used for car camping, but car camping gear is usually too heavy and bulky for use on backpacking trips.

The main takeaway to note about buying equipment for your Scout is to not rush out and buy a lot of the wrong types of equipment. Important goals in buying equipment are:

1. Buying the right equipment, so that the parent doesn't have to turn around and buy another piece of equipment unnecessarily. The goal is to buy the right gear the first time. Inexpensive gear is cheap for a reason. Look for value and what offers noticeable benefits
2. Buying light and compact equipment, in order to keep a young scout's pack weight down and so the gear fits in a small pack and saves space.
3. Buying only the necessary equipment and delay buying the extra stuff. Backpacking gear is like golf. There is always something new that is lighter, more exciting, and more expensive.

SLEEPING BAG

If there is one piece of equipment that a parent should try to get right to first time, that is the scout's sleeping bag. When your son starts scouting he might be a small guy of 11 years old and may weigh less than eighty pounds. It is incredible how these boys grow during the next four or five years. The right sleeping bag will serve his needs throughout his scouting years and into his adult life. The alternative is to buy several bags as he grows. Of course, the first method is much, much cheaper.

For backpacking, I would recommend that you buy a 20-30° sleeping bag with down insulation, in a mummy shape, in an adult size. It should weigh less than three pounds, or even less than 2.5 pounds.

Such a sleeping bag can be found for not much more than \$150.

Additionally, parents should also consider investing in a less expensive, lightweight sleeping bag that can be used during warm summer months and for summer camp. A 50 degree bag that can compact to a small size is good, or you can use lightweight sheets or blankets during the hot camping season. These can definitely be found for less than \$100.

There is quite a continual discussion over the choice of synthetic or down insulation. I will not weigh in on this controversy since parents can easily do their own research on this topic. However, I will say that for backpacking, I choose a down-filled bag because of the low weight and small packing size. But if you have a scout that will not be able to keep his sleeping bag dry, go with synthetic that can stay compact.

Instead of a 20-30 degree bag, many Scout parents buy a bag rated to a much lower temperature, thinking they are doing the Scout a favor by providing him with extra ability to sleep warm in colder conditions. Actually that is not doing the Scout a favor, because a sleeping bag which is rated for 0°, for instance, can only be used in the winter season, and is much bulkier than a bag rated at 20°-30°. What the Scout needs for three seasons of hiking is a bag rated at about from 20° – 30° or even 40°. My own down bag is rated at 30°, even though nights in the mountains often get down to the mid-20s. In those situations I put on other clothing to carry me through the night. A sleeping bag rated at 20° to 30° is advantageous for the Scout because this keeps the sleeping bag light and makes it able to be stuffed into a smaller volume.

Other sleeping bags which the scout parent might buy could be slightly cheaper, but the scout will soon find such bags to be totally inadequate. The bags to avoid will be sleeping bags which weigh more than 3 pounds, some bags which use synthetic insulation, bags with a rectangular shape, bags made of flannel, camo colored, military bags, and bags which cannot be stuffed but must be rolled. The bag you buy should be able to be stored into a stuff sack as big as a volley ball, or a small watermelon, or about 6" x 14".

Types of Bags to Avoid:





Avoid:

- Rectangular bags
- Bags with flannel interior
- Army surplus bags
- Bags weighing over 3 pounds
- Bags that need to be rolled
- Bags with heavy synthetic fill

Certain sources are preferable to getting a high-quality sleeping bag, and certain places are just about guaranteed to provide you with a bag you will be unhappy with. Stores such as REI, REI Garage (online close-out site), Alps Mountaineering (Hiker Direct), and the Boy Scout Shop are generally places to get good sleeping bags. Brands which are good values in sleeping bag include REI, North Face, Kelty, Mountain Hardware, Sierra Designs, Montbell, and Marmot. Top ranked bags include Western Mountaineering and Feathered Friends, but these are likely out of the price range for scouts, and other brands are almost as good and quite a bit cheaper.

Stores which I guarantee you will sell you a bag you will not be happy with are Cabella's, Sports Authority, Sportsman's Warehouse, Walmart, Costco, and Army Navy Surplus. Brands to avoid include brands such as SlumberJack, Coleman, Cabella's, and Camp Trails.

The best way to pick up good value in sleeping bags is to buy them on sale, buy them at the REI Garage Sales, or in certain cases used bags through eBay or craigslist.com if you know what you're buying. If in doubt about a bag on ebay or craigslist, email me at jrnavey@gmail.com and I'll be glad to discuss your options.

The REI Garage Sales are particularly promising but you still have to know the brands of bags that you want to look at, inspect them carefully BEFORE purchase, and you have to check the temperature ratings of the bags that you find. The REI Garage Sales are for REI members only, and it is worth buying the \$20 membership just to go to the garage sales. At the garage sales, items which have been returned from customers are re-sold at a 50% or more discounts. Often they have been returned because of some minor defect or the item simply was the wrong color or size.

Alps Mountaineering/Hiker Direct has great values on sturdy, no frills, equipment for those with a restricted budget. Be sure to shop online at www.hikerdirect.com for good values.

BACKPACK

Another piece of gear to eventually think about getting for your Scout is a backpack. One option to try before you buy your Scout a backpack is to borrow one of the troop's backpacks. We have several very small internal and external frame backpacks which are a good fit for young Scouts including 11 year olds. I strongly suggest you use this option to help your scout decide on what works for him best.

In the world of backpacks, there are internal frame packs and external frame packs. The external frame packs are an older style of pack and they are somewhat out of style, but they are very functional and have advantages over internal frame packs. An advantage of external frame packs is that bulky items can be lashed to the outside of these packs. Therefore if the Scout's sleeping bag, sleeping pad, or any other piece of equipment are large and bulky or just can't fit inside the pack, they can be lashed to the outside of an external frame pack. Of course the scouts will see that the older scouts have internal frame packs, and they will want an internal frame pack. I would encourage you to have your Scout go on a few Scout trips with a borrowed internal or external frame pack from the troop until he gets gear which will fit in an internal frame pack or decides which style is best for him.

It's just about inevitable that your Scout will start with a small size pack, and in a few years he will need a medium-size pack, and then in another year or two he will need an adult size pack. My suggestion is to use a small external frame pack first. Remember, the troop has a few that are available for loan. The Scouts who sign up for the trip first have first choice on packs.

Next get a medium sized internal frame pack, and next get an adult size internal frame pack. With backpacks, what is important is that his pack fits his frame. No shortcuts here!

In sizing a backpack it does not matter how long his legs are. The size of the pack is determined by the distance between his shoulders and his hip bones. When the shoulder straps are tightened to fit on the Scouts shoulders, the waist belt of the pack should rest above his hip bones, so that when the waist belt is tightened he can take some of the weight off his shoulders. REI has knowledgeable and helpful associates that will help correctly fit your scout for a backpack and determine his torso length, even if you don't end up buying from REI. I strongly suggest that you take advantage of their services.

BOOTS

The next major piece of equipment is boots. Unfortunately, the scout years are years when a youth's feet are growing pretty fast. I would recommend NOT buying an expensive pair of above-the-ankle hiking boots during these years. The Scout doesn't weigh much, and therefore needs less ankle support than a larger person. A lot of running or walking shoes will serve for hiking in these years as long as they are well-fitted, have a good tread, and are comfortable when laced correctly. They also have the ability to dry out quickly if they get wet.



The REI Garage Sale has lots and lots of lightly used boots and shoes for sale, and it would be worthwhile to check those out for youth hiking boots.

DO NOT SPEND HUNDREDS OF DOLLARS ON EXPENSIVE, NAME-BRAND, WATERPROOF SHOES OR BOOTS. SAVE THIS FOR WHEN THE SCOUT DECIDES TO TRULY PURSUE BACKPACKING AS A REGULAR ACTIVITY!! However, you may decide to choose a less expensive waterproof boot that won't "break the bank" as they grow out of their current size. Choose what is right for you. Remember that their feet will grow really fast, so expensive is a waste.

CLOTHING

After boots, the next important thing to buy is appropriate clothing, including rain gear. Hiking and backpacking clothing has a common theme, and that is NO COTTON. Wet cotton dries very slowly if at all, and it sucks the heat out of the wearer. Loss of body heat is what people lost in the mountains die of, and cotton clothing is a great contributor to that statistic. The clothing that is needed is listed below:

Article of Clothing	Description	Good source or brand
Long pants	Zip off legs preferred, must be nylon. Lightweight for summer, heavy for winter.	Scout pants are good. No cotton or jeans. "Swishy pants" that can stop the wind are great.
Long sleeve shirt	Should be nylon or polyester blend. I like button up shirts. Look for items on sale during the off season.	REI, Sports Authority, Dick's, Academy Sports, online
2 Base Layer T-shirts (One to change into for Fri night/sat day, and one for sat night/sun day)	Nylon or polyester blend.	Sports Authority, Under Armor, Academy Sports, online Blue Troop t-shirt...
2 pr underwear and/or long leg base layer	Nylon or polyester blend preferred, go for comfort. Whatever style does not lead to personal chaffing!	REI, online
Sun hat	Baseball type, or some prefer a broad brimmed vented synthetic hat that rests gently on the head	
Fleece hat for warmth	It gets cold at night, and a fleece hat worn at night extends the comfort range of a sleeping bag	
Fleece pullover	Or a down sweater	REI, online
Light insulated gloves or mittens	Avoid knitted gloves	
2 pr wool blend socks	Wool blend, Merino wool socks are best. Avoid cotton socks. Should wick moisture away from feet.	REI, and elsewhere BSA backpacking socks perform well.
Rain Jacket	This should be unlined, not a ski coat , totally waterproof, cover the butt, have a hood, have pockets, and should stuff into a sack the size of a large coffee cup. Avoid ponchos.	Shop for something affordable. Should be loose enough to cover the fleece pullover, down sweater, or other worn

		clothing & should be breathable. Choose waterproof, not water resistant.
--	--	--

Surprisingly, with a few rare exceptions, that is all the clothes a scout should ever have in a backpack. Anything added to that list is just adding weight to his pack. On a cold night he will be wearing all of that gear. On a longer backpack he can wash a set of socks, underwear and t shirt every day, and hang it off the pack to dry. Washing is by swishing in soap and water in a zip lock bag. But in reality, scouts are rarely interested in changing clothes, much less washing clothes.

SLEEPING PAD

This is another absolutely necessary piece of gear, right up there with clothing and sleeping bag. The Sleeping Pad keeps the scout insulated from the cold ground in winter and summer. It also helps the scout get a good night's sleep. However, the scout doesn't need an expensive version of his pad. A \$10 blue closed cell foam pad from Walmart is sufficient. A scout only weighs 80 pounds, so he doesn't need the thickness of padding that an adult needs. A foam pad is fine until he does enough backpacking that he knows he will continue it, and can justify the expense of a deluxe pad.

When he is ready for a nicer pad, a Thermarest Neo Air X-Lite is the best, but there are other models such as the REI Air Rail, Thermarest Pro-Lite, and the Big Agnes Insulated Air Core that will work as well. Just be sure it packs down to a small size and is lightweight.

COOKING GEAR

My, how new scouts love those metal mess kits! What he should have is simple: a plastic cup, a plastic bowl, and a plastic spoon & fork or SPORK. Mark the cup with indicators for the portions of a cup, and make it a measuring cup. For a water container, use a bottled water plastic bottle or something like a Gatorade/PowerAde bottle. Nalgene bottles are durable, can hold heated liquids, and work well, but are heavier than something like a pop bottle. You might also want to include a small plastic plate for larger car camping meals.

In most cases, your scout will just be boiling water to prepare his meal. A large, complicated, cooking kit is not needed. A small cooking cup that holds about 16-24 oz. is good. You may also want him to have a larger cook pot that can be used for combining ingredients for a meal. Smaller is better than larger. Avoid expensive titanium. The weight savings and high cost is only for the most serious hiker. Small cook kits that are lightweight and nest multiple cook pots are also good. I like the Coleman cook kit.

DON'T get these for your Scout: Mess kit, Utensil kit, metal cup!!



KNIFE

Scouts love big knives, but a smallish knife with a lock back blade is the safest and most versatile. The tiny Swiss Army Classic is also good, because it has scissors. A big survival knife or heavy Leatherman tool is totally not needed on any backpack. All a scout will use a knife for is to cut his dinner into bite-size pieces, cut rope, sharpen a branch, or maybe to clean a fish. Sheath knives are not permitted in Troop 219.

FLASHLIGHTS

The smaller the flashlight, the better. All one needs is enough light to find a piece of gear in the pack or tent or to find your way along a dark trail. An LED flashlight that takes one AAA battery is perfect for the task, and highly recommended. An LED headlamp is also recommended. This comes in handy while setting up camp at night and while hiking at night. A keychain photon LED light would also work, as long as the battery is strong. However, some of those tiny lights make it difficult to change the battery. Always consider weight & size when choosing a flashlight. Battery operated lanterns are not needed or recommended. Always pack a spare battery for your light. This does not need to be an expensive item.

PACK COVER

Packs may need to be outside the tent overnight and might be subjected to rain or dew. They also might be worn while hiking during rain. Being able to cover the packs for rain protection is recommended. A purpose-made silnylon rain cover is one way to accomplish this. Or use a trash compactor bag inside the pack and keep all your “stay dry” gear (sleeping bag, clothes, etc.) there. The pack and all other gear can, and usually will, get wet even if you have a pack cover.

STOVES

This should be one of the last pieces of gear the scout buys, because other troop members have stoves that scouts can use. For scouts, I would recommend an MSR Pocket Rocket or a Giga Power canister stove. These stoves use Iso-butane fuel and are most efficient for the type of backpacking we enjoy. If the food plan is to just boil water, the JetBoil is fast and fuel efficient but is rather expensive and bulky.

WATER FILTER

The troop always makes sure we have adequate water filters for every trip, so this is another piece of

gear where the purchase can be delayed. When it is time to buy one, I recommend the MSR Miniworks or MSR Sweetwater hand pump systems.

GOOD PLACES TO LOOK FOR BACKPACKING GEAR:

- REI Co-op (Recreational Equipment Inc.) - <https://www.rei.com/>
I can't say enough about this company. They offer a wide variety of quality, name-brand gear at competitive prices. They also have their own house brand gear that is as good, or better, than other brands. Spend the \$20 for a lifetime membership. You get 10% of all your purchases returned to you in an annual dividend, can attend special events such as the regular Garage Sales where you find returned gear at up to 50% off, and are alerted to special discounts and pricing throughout the year. More importantly, they have a helpful and knowledgeable staff that actually uses the products they sell.
- Gear Trade - <https://www.geartrade.com/>
New and used gear at a discount from manufacturers and individuals.
- Hiker Direct - <https://www.hikerdirect.com/>
Although selling only Alps Mountaineering gear, this is a great place to find value. Usually not the lightest or most compact, but the gear is solid and well-made. Phenomenal discounts several times throughout the year.
- Sierra Trading Post - <http://www.sierratradingpost.com/>
Basically, just an online retailer of camping equipment. Many times not the least expensive, but a good source to do research when comparing equipment
- Campmor - <https://www.campmor.com/>
Identical to Sierra Trading Post
- Individual websites of camping equipment manufacturers
Kelty, Marmot, Thermarest, Osprey, Jansport, Eureka, Gregory, Deuter, Sierra Designs, Tarptent, The North Face, etc.
- Craigslist - <http://charlotte.craigslist.org/>
This can be one of the most cost-saving websites out there when it comes to camping gear. Many folks buy expensive gear and discover they don't really like backpacking or camping. HUGE discounts can be found from sellers locally. Be sure to use the "Search Nearby Areas" tab to expand your results. However, be very cautious before making a purchase. I suggest you personally inspect each item to make sure there is not damage that has not been revealed, evidence of mold or mildew, or missing parts or pieces. DO YOUR RESEARCH FIRST, and then shop for what fits your needs. Unfortunately, I see a lot of VERY OLD gear for sale that has been sitting in someone's garage for years and will likely not be a good purchase. However, I have bought some really nice gear at extremely low prices.
- EBay - <http://www.ebay.com/>
Much like Craigslist, but also offering new items for sale. Again, let the buyer beware. I've also seen a lot of gear manufactured and sold from China. Not necessarily a bad thing, but I would do some hard research before purchasing. Ask questions of the seller to make sure you

get what is shown for sale.

- Goodwill Retail Stores/Thrift Shops

Most all of the expensive, name brand, clothing that I wear while hiking or camping I found at Goodwill. North Face, Patagonia, Columbia, and Mountain Hardware are just some of the brands you can get at ridiculous prices. Many times almost new because the owner outgrew it or just got tired of seeing it in the closet.