



An Introduction to the Explorer Scout Section

Introduction

The Explorer Scout Section was formed in 2002 along with the Scout Network (for 18 – 25 yr olds) to replace Venture Scouting. Since its launch Explorer Scouting has taken off and has over 30,000 Members in 2,000 Units across the UK.

Who is the Explorer Scout Section for?

Explorer Scouts is open to young people aged between 14 and 18 years old who want to join and can make the Scout Promise.

The Scout Promise

Scouting differs from many organisations in that it requires its Members to make a promise. The Scout Promise is the same for Scouts, Explorer Scouts, Members of the Scout Network and adult Members of the Association. It is:

On my honour,
I promise that I will do my best
to do my duty to God and to The Queen,
to help other people
and to keep the Scout Law.

Different wordings of the promise are available for those of different faiths who may prefer not to use the word "God" and for those with special needs and circumstances.

By making the Promise a young person becomes a Member of the worldwide Movement; they become a Scout.

The Scout Law

The Scout Law is a set of 'rules' that Scouts should do their best to live their life by. They are based on the Laws that Baden-Powell came up with, but have evolved to reflect changing times. The Laws are:

1. A Scout is to be trusted.
2. A Scout is loyal.
3. A Scout is friendly and considerate.
4. A Scout belongs to the worldwide family of Scouts.
5. A Scout has courage in all difficulties.
6. A Scout makes careful use of time and is careful of possessions and property.
7. A Scout has self-respect and respect for others.

The Motto

The motto for all Members of the Movement is: *Be Prepared.*

The Explorer Scout Uniform

Explorer Scouts wear a khaki colour shirt. They also wear a scarf (sometimes called a "necker"), which varies in colour from Explorer Unit to Explorer Unit. They will also have a leather woggle, to keep their scarf up. Activity trousers and a Scout belt (including Young Leader and Explorer Belts) are also part of the Explorer Scout uniform and there are several optional items available as well!

How are Explorer Scouts organised?

Explorer Scout Units are primarily Leader led, with as much participation in decision making by young people as possible. There are a number of different types of Explorer Scout Units; these will vary according to local needs and circumstances. Explorer Units are all based at District level, even though the Unit itself may be attached to a Group or specialist Scout body, such as a campsite.

Explorer Scouts also have the option to become Young Leaders. Young Leaders carry out a Leadership role in a Beaver Scout Colony, Cub Scout Pack or Scout Troop. Young Leaders have their own training scheme but can also take part in all other Explorer Scout Activities.

Explorer Scouts have no structured groupings as you find in Beavers, Cubs or Scouts. By being involved in a number of different groupings Explorer Scouts will get the chance to develop their teamwork and leadership skills.

Investiture

Making the Promise is the most important act in Scouting and is common to every section. Scouting has a special ceremony for making the Promise called Investiture or being invested. When a young person makes their Promise they receive their Unit Scarf, The Membership Award (for those coming into Scouting for the first time) or their Moving-On Award (if they have been in Scouts) and are welcomed as a new Member into the Scout Family.

What do Explorer Scouts do?

Units decide themselves how often they meet. Members should be able to attend when it is convenient for them. Explorer Units might not need to meet every week because they will often be out and about at weekends or in the holidays doing activities. There will be times when they will be busy doing other things such as exams, and being an Explorer Scout will have to fit around these.

Explorer Scout Programme

Explorer Scouts have the opportunity to take part in adventurous activities, local conservation projects, creative projects, camps and expeditions, community support...the list is endless! Explorer Scouts can gain awards – from nationally recognised governing bodies (e.g. BCU for canoeing), to Scout Awards and Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Explorer Scouts are highly involved in deciding what they want to do and helping their Leaders in running the Programme.

Programme Zones

The following are the Programme Zones for Explorer Scouts: as part of the Balanced Programme they will take part in activities from all the Zones over a period of time. They are:

- *Outdoor and Adventure*
- *Skills*
- *Community Service*
- *Values and Relationships*
- *Global*
- *Physical Recreation*

Methods

The Unit Programme is delivered using a number of methods to make meetings and activities more interesting and appeal to more Members. They are:

- Visits
- Games
- Outdoor Activities
- Residential Experiences

- Technology
- Networking Activities
- Discussion

Badges and Awards

Even though the emphasis is on a Balanced Programme of activities, there are still badges and awards for Explorer Scouts to aim for during their time with the Unit. Badges and awards are given in recognition of the effort made by each young person at their own level. There is a wide range of awards and badges to appeal to all Explorer Scouts, whatever sort of Unit they are in. Awards are important as they offer challenge, achievement and recognition for young people.

▪ The Membership Award

This Award helps the young person understand the commitment they are making when they make the promise and become a Member of the Movement, if they have not been a Scout. It covers the history, traditions and practices of Scouting.

▪ Participation Awards

The Participation Awards recognise a commitment to Scouting. They celebrate Scouts participating in a Balanced Programme over a period of time. They are awarded on the anniversary of the young person joining Scouting.

▪ Top Awards

The top awards for Explorer Scouts are the Chief Scout's Platinum Award, the Chief Scout's Diamond Award and the Queen's Scout Award. All three are linked to the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards (Bronze, Silver and Gold respectively)

The Awards are made up of four challenges:

- Skills
- Physical Recreation
- Community Service
- Expedition

For the Queen's Scout Award and the Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award there is also the requirement to complete a five-day residential experience.

The Queen's Scout Award is The Scout Association's top award. The Chief Scout presents Queen Scout Award Certificates at a National Presentation on a regular basis. Queen's Scouts are also invited to the annual National Scout Service and Parade at Windsor Castle held in April each year. All those who have achieved the Award in the last year, plus their guests, are invited to attend.

▪ Activity Badges

There are 28 Activity Badges available to Explorer Scouts. These build on the requirements of the Activity Badges in the Scout Section and lead towards the requirements for National Governing Body Awards. They range from Lifesaver to Mountain Activities and Snowboarding.

▪ Staged Activity Badges

In addition to the Explorer Scout Activity Badges, there are six Activity Badges staged across the all Sections. These give a young person the opportunity to develop an area of interest throughout their time in Scouting from 6–18. These are:

- Emergency Aid
- Hikes Away
- Information Technology
- Musician
- Nights Away
- Swimmer

- Partnership Awards

Partnership Awards are designed to encourage Sections to work together, and for Explorer Scouts to work with other organisations in their community. There are three Partnership Awards:

- The International Friendship Award
- The Faith Award
- The Environment Award

- The Moving-On Award

This badge helps ease the transfer of Explorer Scouts to the Scout Network. It also allows the Explorer Scout to be invested into the Network immediately, recognising that they are already Members of the Scout Movement.

- The Explorer Belt

The Explorer Belt is a challenge of a lifetime available to Explorer Scouts over the age of 16 and to the Scout Network. It is the opportunity to undertake an expedition in another country over ten days that brings a real understanding of a different country, its people and their way of life.

Explorer Scouting Outdoors

Scouting has a reputation as an outdoor organisation based on strong traditions of camping and other outdoor pursuits. Explorer Scouts will have the opportunity to camp and go away on expeditions that will challenge and test them. This is an essential part of Explorer Scouting and a good opportunity for them to organise activities and stretch their limits.

Why get involved?

As Scouts young people have the opportunity to develop their skills in many areas including decision making. Explorer Scouts provides opportunities for young people to decide what they want to do and what they want to get out of Scouting. The opportunities will be there for them to take part in a wide range of activities and to gain a variety of skills and knowledge. They will get to learn more about themselves by not only taking responsibility for themselves, but for others as well.

Explorers on-line

Explorer Scouts have their own pages on The Scout Association's website where they can find out lots of useful information, enter competitions and connect with other Explorers on social networking sites! Find out more at:

www.scouts.org.uk/explorers

Resources for Explorer Scouts

Explorer Scouts have their own resource called the *Explorer Scout Membership Pack*. It's full of useful information about the programme and Scouting. The requirements for all Explorer Scout Badges are included in the *Explorer Scout Badge Book*.

Adult resources include posters and record cards as well as 4 comprehensive resources; Unit Essentials, Unit Programmes, Unit Programmes Plus and the Young Leaders Essentials.

