

Scout Better with Scoutbook

Version: April 25, 2020

By: Joshua Froimson (Scoutmaster, Troop 54)

Troop 54
Worcester, Massachusetts
Founded in 1915



Scoutbook is Better Than Paper

- **Scout records are always available** as long as you have access to the Internet. No more waiting for a Scout to remember to bring his/her book in to record a completion.
- **Requirements are always accessible** for every badge and award.
- **Parents can enter completions** at home for Cub Scouts.
- **Ends transcribing completions** onto advancement wall charts.



What is It?

Scoutbook is a web app for Scouting unit management. That means you use a browser on your computer or mobile device to access the system at scoutbook.com.

You don't download an iOS or Android app onto your device.

It is not the Scouting app.

It is not Scoutnet.



What is it for?

The core application of Scoutbook is tracking rank advancement - adventures for Cub Scouts and rank requirements for Scouts BSA members.

Can also track completion of requirements for merit badges and other awards.

Can be used for unit communication, attendance tracking and payment tracking.

Each requirement completion is recorded in Scoutbook. The overall badge/award transfers to Scoutnet automatically for the Scout's permanent record. Scoutnet is the main member management system of the Boy Scouts of America.



Who Uses Scoutbook and Scouting App?

Leaders enter completions in Scoutbook.

Parents enter completions for Cub Scouts in Scoutbook.

Scouts (Scouts BSA) access their records using Scouting app, not Scoutbook. Their parents give them access in Scoutbook.

Cub Scouts are unlikely to need the app as adults are guiding what they do at every meeting and event.



Get Your Unit Started (Key 3 Unit Leader)

Go to Scoutbook and log in using the same credentials you use on my.scouting.org. The current members of your unit should already be associated with the unit in Scoutbook.

There is no fee to use Scoutbook. Previously, there was a small fee.



Set Up a New Youth Member

Wait for the Council to enter the new member in Scoutnet. The member will automatically come over to Scoutbook the next day. Entering the member yourself in Scoutbook will later result in a duplication that will probably need a help ticket to resolve.

1. Enter and invite the parent in the youth's Connections).
2. Put the member into the patrol or den.
3. Use Connections Manager for the unit or the den/patrol to adjust the access of all existing leaders.



Set Up a New Leader

Wait for the Council to enter the new member in Scoutnet. The member will automatically come over to Scoutbook the next day. Entering the member yourself in Scoutbook will later result in a duplication that will probably need a help ticket to resolve.

1. Enter or adjust the leader's position and role.
2. Put the member into the patrol or den, if applicable.
3. Use Connections Manager for the unit or the den/patrol to adjust the access of all existing youth.



Get Your Parents Started



Troop 54

Worcester, MA

Onboarding - Scoutbook

Troop 54 uses Scoutbook to track progress in several areas:

- Completion of requirements toward ranks.
- Completion of requirements toward merit badges (in some cases).
- Participation on camping trips.
- Participation on hikes.
- Completion of service hours.

You will be able to follow along to see what your Scout needs to do to complete each rank. After you activate your account, you will be able to give access to your Scout.

The folks at the Boy Scouts of America give all parents access to enter completion of requirements, but **please do not enter completion of requirements and awards** for your Scout. Doing so will create an additional administrative burden for our volunteer leaders (deleting those entries).

How You Get Added

Your Scout will be added to this system automatically within about a day of us submitting your Scout's application to the Council. Then, we will add you as a parent, connected to your Scout's account. You will then receive an E. Mail from info@scoutbook.com.

Activate Your Account

Action item: Find that E. Mail from info@scoutbook.com and follow the instructions in the E. Mail to activate your account.

Give Access to Your Scout

Prep your parents so they will know that they are going to be invited and how to activate their accounts.

Then, check in Scoutbook to see if they did activate their accounts. Go into the Scout's main page to check the symbol next to the parent's name.



Pending connection



Activated connection



Enter Advancement

For Cub Scouts or Scouts BSA, there are 2 ways to enter advancement:

- Enter for the individual Scout.
Unit > Scout > Advancement >
- Use Quick Entry to enter the same completion(s) for multiple accounts.



Track Key Information

Camping Log - Leaders can enter for Scouts during or just after each trip.

Hiking Log - Leaders can enter for Scouts after each hike.

Service Hours - Leaders can enter these as reported.

Awards - Firem'n Chit, Totin' Chip and many others.

Note: While Scoutbook allows you to track the above items, it will not automatically credit them toward a particular rank, merit badge or award requirement. Service hours do not (yet) automatically get reported for the unit.



Keep Up

Like any record-keeping system, it is much easier if you record each completion during the meeting or event when it happened.

- Key 3 leaders should encourage den leaders and other unit leaders to keep up.
- Watch for a den that has no completions to approve for weeks in a row.
- Enable this visibility by not giving the den leader the ability to approve completions (don't make him/her an Admin, even for the den).



Reports

Pre-configured Reports (examples)

Troop XX > Troop Reports > Needs Approval Report

Troop XX > Troop Reports > OA Eligibility Report

Pack XX > Pack Report > Needs Approval Report

Custom Advancement Reports

Dashboard > Reports Menu > Report Builder Manager



Communicate

Suburban units report great success using the Messages function Scoutbook.

Each E. Mail address requires confirmation before it can be used. This effectively renders the tool useless for inner city units



Award Process

1. Enter the completion.
2. Approve the completion. Use Pack/Troop Report > Needs Approval Report.
3. Purchase the item. Use Pack/Troop Report > Needs Purchasing Report.
4. Award the item. Use Pack/Troop Report > Needs Awarding Report.

Make it clear what parents are allowed to enter (nothing in Scouts BSA).

Decide who is responsible for each entry in your unit.

Establish exactly when each entry is to be made.



Purchasing Awards in Person

1. Bring the Needs Awarding Report or view the report on your mobile device at the store.
2. View report in landscape on a smartphone to see the picture of each item (makes finding Cub Scouts adventures easier).



Non-contact Awards Purchasing

Can't get to the Lancaster Shop in person? No problem.

1. Call the HNE council office during their business hours and ask to have your unit balance sent to the Scout Shop.
2. Create a purchase order in the Needs Awarding Report and save to PDF.
3. E. Mail the PDF purchase order to lancasterscoutshop@scouting.org.
Indicate that you want the awards sent to you by FedEx (extra charge to your account).



Other Notes

Transfers - A Scout's entire record, from Tiger to present, can be transferred from old unit to new unit. Transfers from one council to another typically require assistance from the council registrar.

Internet Advancement was previously the main BSA tool for entry of completed awards, badges and ranks. Once you start using Scoutbook, you should avoid this completely.



Information is Available

Use Forums in Scoutbook (Home > Forums) to search for “how to” solutions to most of the things you will need to do in Scoutbook.



Help is Available

Sometimes a record gets messed up. It does not mean you did anything wrong (maybe you did). The BSA has a support desk.

Send as much detail about the problem and how you think it should be resolved via an E. Mail to: support.scoutbook@scouting.org

Most problems can be resolved in a few days, assuming you provided enough detail. An ongoing correspondence to get enough information to the support desk will drag this out.



Contact

Joshua Froimson

joshua@froimson.net

Cell: 774-641-1560

Get a PDF of this presentation on the Troop 54 Website (t54.org) under Resources > Scoutbook.

Contact Joshua for links to the Troop 54 and Pack 54 onboarding guides.



Thanks for joining us!
Remember to share your experience on
our Facebook event #campquarantine2020

For more fun visit:

campquarantine.hnebsa.org

