



Scouts BSA Meetings - Best Practices

Please follow all Youth Protection and Social Media Guidelines

1. Understand how to run a virtual meeting. And be sure to review with your scouts Etiquette for online meetings.
 - a. Use your real name when entering meeting
 - b. Use of the chat window at the meeting is important
 - c. Raise your hand to speak or use raise hand key
 - d. In large groups, mute yourself when not speaking
 - e. And other key components you want your scouts to follow
2. Understand running a virtual meeting is not the same as an in-person meeting. Meetings should be tighter and shorter - 35 to 45 minutes is a good time limit.
 - a. Start on time. Don't wait for Pat to show up other wise you will all be staring at each other.
 - b. Be sure your SPL has an agenda to follow. Your SPL cannot just wing it!
3. Encourage your Scouts to still wear their uniforms to the virtual meetings. It helps to set the tone through the whole meeting.
4. Keep your Opening and Closing like your in-person meetings.
 - a. Be sure that a patrol has been assigned to do the opening ceremony, just like your in-person meeting. See if someone has an American Flag they can have posted. Or you can Zoom in a picture of an American Flag.
 - b. Include the Scout Oath, Law and Outdoor code. And be sure everyone is standing up!
 - c. Be sure to mute all but the person leading the opening or closing.
 - d. At the end of the meeting as part of closing check in with each scout to make sure that they have what they need to succeed. Or this could be a follow-up by Troop Leadership during the week.
5. Do not have death by PowerPoint.
 - a. A PowerPoint presentation can be just what is needed to teach a skill but be sure to include some hands-on visuals. For example, if you have a great power point on the different types of back packs and their benefits, have one of the older experienced scouts show their backpack and explain why they chose that pack. That can all be done virtually. They can even show how to fit the pack!
6. Be sure to have an interactive component of your virtual meeting. Your scouts can handle that part of the meeting!
7. Have multiple scouts responsible for small portions of the meeting. Scouts can be creative.
8. Scouts don't like to sit for 35 minutes! Have them stand up and do something even if it is just to jump and turn around. In one troop, all Scouts bring rope to the meeting and at some point, the SPL will say the name of a knot and they have to stand and tie that knot. When they are done they can sit down. Some of the Scouts do get silly and that's ok.
9. Stage the meeting so that the older scouts do not get bored with what the younger scouts are learning.
10. Skills! Yes your scouts can work on skills during this stay healthy stay home order
 - a. Have them do the skill and record it with the sound on. They can then share it with their patrol leader.
 - b. Work with the patrol leaders to be sure scouts are advancing
11. Council and district events continue: Virtual FOS, Virtual Camp card sales, Merit badge webinars and the Virtual CamporALL!
12. Camping. Yes, keep on camping!
 - a. Backyard camping is allowed.
 - b. Be sure to follow the same procedures for planning your back yard campout as you do for previous campouts.
 - c. Menu planning, pack checks, site selection, campfire, etc . . .
13. Engage youth that are missing in action. If you have not seen a scout for three weeks it is time for Troop Leadership to make a call. These are challenging times and we need to be there to support the scout and their family.
 - a. Patrol leader should contact the scout
 - b. Leader should contact the parent of the scout
14. Instant recognition is an important part of the Advancement program; do not wait to recognize Scouts "until things get back to normal."
 - a. Hold a virtual court of honor. You can Zoom in the Scout Rank Badge (clip art) for that new Scout that has worked so hard to reach that first rank.
 - b. Being creative with your Virtual Court of Honor will motivate the scouts. And the Scouts can still plan the Court of Honor; it will just take a little more coordination with the techy person in the troop.
 - c. Be sure to invite the parents to the virtual court of Honor.
 - d. Does not need to be long.
15. Perseverance: #BeCalmScoutOn
16. Keep up to date with Council information at: <http://www.mountbakerbsa.org/scouton>
17. Keep up to date with information from National BSA at: <http://www.scouting.org/scoutingathome>