

AGE APPROPRIATE GUIDELINES FOR SCOUTING ACTIVITIES

Age- and rank-appropriate guidelines have been developed based on many factors. When planning activities outside of program materials or handbooks, ask this question: *Is the activity appropriate for the age and for Scouting?* Not every activity needs to be conducted.



LIONS
(WITH ADULT PARTNER)



TIGERS
(WITH ADULT PARTNER)



WOLF/BEAR SCOUTS



WEBELOS SCOUTS



SCOUTS BSA



OLDER SCOUTS BSA, SEA SCOUTS, VENTURERS
(*Older Scouts BSA* are age 13 and have completed eighth grade or 14 years old and up.)



Outdoor Skills

Hunting							Venturers Only
Mountaineering/Scrambling/Cross-Country Travel							✓
Search and Rescue Missions							✓
Search and Rescue Practice						✓	✓
Fueled Devices (Stoves and lanterns)						✓	✓
Hiking—Multiple Day						✓	✓
Mountain Boards						✓	✓
Orienteering						✓	✓
Wilderness Survival Training					Castaway Elective	✓	✓
Camporees					Day Visit Only	✓	✓
Fire Building					✓	✓	✓
Pioneering					✓	✓	✓
Cooking Outdoors				Bear Necessities Requirement	✓	✓	✓
Horseback Riding				✓	✓	✓	✓
Map and Compass			Map Only	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pioneering Towers (Check requirements for height restrictions.)				Council/District Events Only	✓	✓	✓
Rope Bridges (Check requirements for height restrictions.)				Council/District Events Only	✓	✓	✓
Conservation Projects	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Fishing	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Hiking—Day	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓



Tools (See SAFE Project Tool Use Guidelines: filestore.scouting.org/filestore/healthsafety/pdf/680-028.pdf)

Power Tools—Chain Saws, Log Splitters, Wood Chippers, Power Saws							Adult Use Only
Power Tools							See Age Guidelines for Tool Use
Axes						✓	✓
Bow Saws						✓	✓
Pocketknife				Bear Only	✓	✓	✓
Hand Tools		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



Trekking

Horse Treks							✓
Backpacking—Overnight, Backcountry						✓	✓
Bike Treks—Multiple Overnights						✓	✓
Ski Touring—Multiple Days and Nights Carrying Gear						✓	✓
Day Hikes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



Shooting (See shooting sports guides at www.scouting.org. Note: Shooting at each other is prohibited.)

Centerfire/Large-Bore Rifles							Venturers and Sea Scouts
Pistols							Venturers and Sea Scouts
Pistol Safety and Marksmanship Programs							Council-Run Program
Specialty Programs—Cowboy Action Shooting							✓
.22 Rifle						✓	✓
Archery—Field						✓	✓
Muzzleloaders						✓	✓
Shotguns						✓	✓
Specialty Programs—Airsoft						✓	✓
Specialty Programs—Chalkball						✓	✓
Air Rifle (pellet guns)					Webelos Long-Term Camp Only	✓	✓
BB Guns					Council/District Outdoor Programs Only	✓	✓
Archery—Target, Action (moving targets)					Council/District Outdoor Programs Only	✓	✓
Slingshots/Wrist Rockets					Council/District Outdoor Programs Only	✓	✓
Catapults/Trebuchets							Projectiles must be soft and small (no larger than a tennis ball).



Camping (See Guide to Safe Scouting: www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss)

Unit-Coordinated Camping					Camping as a Den or Pack at Council's Designated Locations	✓	✓
Council-Coordinated Camping	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

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Vehicles

All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV)					Approved Council Use Only; No Unit Use	
Personal Watercraft (PWC)					Approved Council Use Only; No Unit Use	
BMX Biking			✓	✓	✓	✓
Mountain Biking			✓	✓	✓	✓
Bike—Day Trip	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



Cope and Climbing

Caving (other than simple novice activities)						✓
Lead Climbing						✓
Snow and Ice Climbing						✓
Belaying					✓	✓
Rock Climbing					✓	✓
Amusements—Aerial Adventure Parks					✓	✓
Amusements—Canopy Tours					✓	✓
Amusements—Zip Lines					✓	✓
Rappelling				✓	✓	✓
COPE	Age-Appropriate Initiative Games				✓	✓
Bouldering	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Climbing (age-appropriate man-made facility)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



Aquatics (See [Safe Swim Defense](#), and [Safety Afloat](#) for restrictions based on skills, such as swimming ability, rather than age.)

Aerial Towed Activities (kitesurfing, parasails)	Not Authorized					
Cliff Jumping, High Dives	Not Authorized					
Triathlon: Swim Races in Open Water						Sanctioned Events
Paddle Sports: Youth Operated on Class III or Above Whitewater						✓
Personal Water Craft (PWC)	Approved Council Programs Only					
Paddle Sports: Whitewater With Professional Guide on Board					✓	✓
Paddle Sports: Youth Operated on Class I or II Whitewater					✓	✓
Motorboats: Youth Operated (check state regulations)					✓	✓
Overnight Cruise on Live-Aboard Vessel					✓	✓
Sailboats and Sailboards: Youth Operated					✓	✓
Snorkeling in Open Water					✓	✓
Scuba					✓	✓
Surfing					✓	✓
Towed Activities (waterskiing, knee boarding, floats)					✓	✓
Tubing (floating in gently flowing water)			✓	✓	✓	✓
Paddle Sports: Youth Operated on Calm or Gently Flowing Water	Passengers Only		Paddle Sports Include Canoes, Kayaks, Pedal Boats, Rafts, Rowboats, SUP			
Commercial Marine Transport (ferries, excursion ships)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Day Rides on Large Private Craft With Trained Adult Operator	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Swimming	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Snorkeling in Confined Water	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Water Parks, Slides, and Floating Attractions	Appropriate Age Varies by Feature					