

# Overview

## Program Planning



All Scout programs should be adventurous, fun, challenging and inclusive for all Scouts involved. By following the programming model for each age section, young people are able to create a Scout program that is engaging and suitable for all members of the Unit or Patrol. Some Scouts may need support to contribute their ideas, and to deliver their ideas in the program.

There are four Challenge Areas that support the generation of ideas and make up the Scout program. These are: Community Challenge, Creative Challenge, Outdoors Challenge, and Personal Growth Challenge.

At the **Plan>** stage of programming, Scouts work together, with support from adults, to develop a program that involves activities from each of these areas. A variety of resources and key words assist in this process across each of the age sections and Challenge Areas. Scouts use a variety of means to write their program using the Challenge Areas. Scouts may brainstorm, work in Patrols, use imagination aids, focus on any of the key word categories, and think of activities they would like to do personally or as group. Through this process, Scouts are encouraged to make sure every activity is adventurous, fun, challenging, and inclusive.

We want to try and avoid Scouts stretching the definitions of the four Challenge Areas and therefore the adult Leader has a strong support role to play, no matter the section to make sure the Unit or Patrol is being genuine with their Challenging Area ideas and isn't just trying to fit any social activity into a Challenge Area.

There are six key steps in any program cycle:

### Review>

1. Reviewing the success of the current program cycle (by Patrols or Unit)

### Plan>

2. Gathering all the information that's happening in Scouting and the community
3. Listing the personal progression ideas of all Unit members (by Patrols)
4. Program planning (Unit Council)

### Do>

5. Monitor the Program (Unit Council)

### Review>

6. Ongoing Review

## The Challenge Areas



Outdoors



Creative



Personal Growth



Community

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Our Challenge Areas are

**Outdoors**

**Creative**

**Personal  
Growth**

**Community**

Some word prompts are

Environment  
Camping  
Time in nature  
Water activities  
Adventurous  
activities  
Journeys

Expression  
Arts  
Making  
Creating  
Inventing  
Designing  
Planning

Health &  
Wellbeing  
Resilience  
Mental health  
Beliefs & Values  
Social justice  
Skills  
Interests

Getting out into  
community  
Engagement  
Involvement  
Projects &  
Partnerships  
Visits  
Volunteering  
Diversity &  
Inclusion  
Environment  
Active  
citizenship

They could be

Fast  
High  
Wide  
Slow  
Deep  
Safe

Unusual  
New  
Colourful  
Bold  
Innovative  
Investigative

Individual  
Healthy  
Growing  
Resilience  
Believing  
Commitment  
Understanding  
New skills

Local  
National  
International  
Supporting  
Knowledge  
Service

We'll make sure they are:

**Adventurous**

**Fun**

**Challenging**

**Inclusive**

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In order to ensure the program suits all individual youth members, Units may need to consider some additional elements, which can include:

- Timing of activities (taking into consideration religious needs and fatigue of participants)
  - Accessibility of facilities (taking into consideration amenities, water access)
  - Equipment (taking into consideration suitability for all members of the Unit)
- and any other additional requirement of the Units members so everyone can be included.

The Scout program also aims to engage with parents and to offer them the opportunity to be appropriately involved. If there are disabled parents or siblings associated with the Unit or Patrol and an event is being held that other parents or siblings are being invited to, consideration should be made for the needs of those with disabilities. The Scouting Movement should be a welcoming and inclusive environment for all families.

## The Scout Method

For all Scouts, the Scout Method underpins the Scout youth program. All elements of the Scout Method are appropriate for all ages and all backgrounds and abilities. However, there may be times when the implementation of particular Scout Method elements may need to be adapted to suit individual Scouts' needs. Some common strategies, and factors that may need to be considered, are detailed below.

A key idea of Scouting that is implemented through the Scout Method is that the Scout Movement embraces non-formal education and learning, as complementary to formal learning offered by schools and universities.

## Youth Leading, Adults Supporting

In programming, young people should be encouraged and supported to share their ideas and to ensure the program suits their interests and desires. Some Scouts may need additional assistance to be able to communicate their ideas, such as by working in partnership with other Scouts, supported by adults as required. For all Scouts, it is important that a range of collection styles are used for ideas when programming, perhaps providing a mix each time so that no one style is seen to be particularly favoured. Ideas can be drawn, verbalised, typed, selected from pictures or magazines, brought along rather than solely thought of at the time, discussed in pairs or small groups before suggesting to a larger group, written on whiteboards, voted on with stickers, dropped in suggestion boxes, or many other methods.

In the delivery of the program, Scouts have a diversity of prior skills and abilities to be able to participate, assist and lead. For some Scouts, assisting and leading activities may be daunting, may be different to what they are culturally used to doing, or they may have additional challenges such as existing difficulties communicating.

However, with appropriate support, young people can still develop leadership and teamwork skills. Units need to consider how best to address these challenges for individuals, so that they are not penalised or feel left out, but are instead able to develop themselves in a culturally and developmentally appropriate manner. Strategies may include writing down or drawing instructions prior to delivering them or even having a teammate deliver the instructions to the group, based on the Scout's thoughts and ideas; carefully selecting activities or games for a Scout to assist or lead based on what the Scout is most comfortable with or interested in; providing opportunities for Scouts to lead by example or lead in other ways, rather than being the person 'in charge'; and building up experience and skills by starting with more simple and/or less daunting challenges at first. Scouts should be encouraged to step outside their comfort zone, but should always do so feeling supported and included – they should not feel so outside their comfort zone as to be scared, feeling unwelcome, or ridiculed.

Adults have a variety of information sources to draw on to learn how to best support Scouts. One of the best resources is the Scouts themselves – ask them if they are feeling comfortable, if they have areas they are struggling with or require help, if what you are doing is helping or if there are other things you could be doing. If young people seem more comfortable with a particular adult or another Scout, ask if they can sensitively find out if the Scout needs additional support. Other resources include other adults in a Scout Group, such as those from a previous section who worked with a Scout, parents of individual Scouts who know their needs and existing supportive strategies, other adults in your Branch support structure, training courses and online resources. Remember though, that what worked with another Scout or with this Scout when they were younger may not be the most appropriate strategy for this Scout now. Young people and adults may not initially know the best strategies to use, so trying out some different ways of doing things and seeing if those work is a great way to build variety and to learn about what both groups prefer. Above all, focus on inclusion, creating a safe, supportive and welcoming environment, and on constantly reviewing to ensure supportive strategies are doing the best they can.

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## The Patrol System

The Patrol is where a Scout undertakes their adventures and where they are supported to achieve their own goals. Working in small teams helps young people develop communication, teamwork and interpersonal skills. Often these skills are developed through the fact that the small team needs to work together to achieve other tasks, rather than specifically organising activities that develop these skills.

For some Scouts, relating to others and working in a team are very difficult skills to learn. It may assist in inclusion if the Patrol Leader is aware of some of the Scout's particular challenges, so they can help to work to overcome them where appropriate. Mixing up the small team experience through Project Patrols, where a Scout is able to work with different peers and pursue an activity they are particularly interested in, can help in the learning experience and make the program more exciting.

Unit Councils and Patrol Leaders also need to carefully monitor how well patrols are working together, and that no bullying or harassment is occurring, including the deliberate exclusion of patrol members. It can be very difficult for Scouts to learn the leadership and interpersonal skills necessary to combat these, and Patrol Leaders and others in patrols may need support from the Unit Council and adults to deal with these situations.

## Personal Progression

Scouting is all about the individual and their own learning journey. The program offers opportunities for all Scouts to try new things, develop skills and understanding and, importantly, to choose their own future challenges. Plan>Do>Review> is a critical tool in this personal journey, enabling Scouts to set the destination and understand the steps along the way.

As with programming, there are many different ways to plan and review. These can be formal or informal, planned or spontaneous, individual or shared with a group. Scouts can draw, explain, find inspiration in source material such as books, magazines or the internet, write, make models, have a conversation or create a video, if they want to. All elements of Plan > Do > Review > should be developmentally appropriate, and need not cover everything for an activity if the Scout is not yet ready. A Scout could plan for one component, or how the team will gain one of the required skills, as part of a team effort to deliver an activity. They may also choose to challenge themselves to plan a component they have not previously been involved in, perhaps after they have mastered other skills they were working on.

At all times, the individual Scout should be in the driver's seat. Even at a young age, they should have the opportunity to provide feedback and adapt the inclusion strategies that are being put in place to ensure Scouting is open to them. They set themselves goals, challenging themselves to try new activities and develop new skills, even if their goals will take them a long time to achieve. They reflect on their development, celebrating successes and reflecting on how to improve for next time when things go wrong. If things are not working for them, young people are empowered to communicate to their Unit or adults supporting them what isn't working or what they would prefer instead.

Adults and other Scouts should be wary of making assumptions or setting low expectations about what Scouts can or can't, should or shouldn't, do. Whilst there are some activities or tasks that some individuals are unable to do, or require additional support in order to complete, there are also many things that Scouts can learn if they set themselves a goal and are supported by their peers and adults to achieve. All Scouts should be encouraged to 'do their best' and strive to achieve new goals, as well as celebrating when they have achieved their past goals.

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## Nature and the Outdoors

The outdoors is the setting for many Scouting adventures, and the program aims to develop young people's connection with nature and the environment. Adapting this element of the Scout Method is generally about ensuring that all young people have the opportunity to experience the outdoors in a manner that is appropriate to them. There are many parks, gardens and nature reserves that include accessible paths. Beach and all-terrain wheelchairs are often able to be hired, including from some national parks. For Scouts who are apprehensive about exploring unknown areas, strategies can be put in place such as starting with the familiar and building up to more complex situations, or explaining to and involving Scouts in the strategies that their Unit and adults are putting in place to manage risks and what will happen in an emergency.

Ensuring accessibility is also about making the outdoors interesting and relevant to individuals. Consider different senses and approaches – would a Scout connect more with this environment through touching various tree trunks and leaves, listening to the natural sounds, tasting different bush foods, an active game, drawing what they see around them, quiet reflective time, knowing more about the local ecology, climbing a tree or digging in the mud? There are many different ways that cultures relate to the nature and the outdoors, and individual Scouts may come with different understandings of the environment around them. Exploring different ideas with guest speakers or visiting different locations can also build cultural awareness in Scouts. Varying the program and offering many ways of exploring and understanding the outdoors enables Scouting to connect with many different young people, and to broaden individual's horizons.

## Community Involvement

One of the benefits of having a diverse cohort of Scouts within a Unit is the opportunity to tap into the networks they may have into their diverse communities. There may be opportunities to expose Scouts to different ways of living, different faiths or ways of showing beliefs, and to foster Scouts' appreciation and understanding of their diverse communities. Through this Method element, Scouting aims to foster positive relationships and partnerships, including service, responsible citizenship, and understanding others.

It is important not to expect individual Scouts to have to teach others about people like themselves. Diverse Scouts are likely often inundated with questions about what it's like to be a person like them, which can make them feel different or excluded, and is an additional burden others do not have to undertake. Many questions directed at people with disabilities, gender and sexuality diverse people, and people from different background are often highly personal and not generally deemed appropriate to enquire of others, or based in outdated stereotypes. These can include questions about their sexual lives and/or anatomy, how they got their disability, what they can or cannot do, where they are from (with the assumption it is not Australia) or how they go to the toilet. Unless Scouts are interested in teaching their Unit or Patrol about their lives, the general teaching about diverse community members should be undertaken through partnerships with community groups, guest speakers, visits, festivals, and other strategies that do not put undue attention or interrogation on individual Scouts.

Units can, and should, be involving themselves with all different aspects of their communities, regardless of if they have members of those communities within their Unit or not. The presence of a hearing-impaired Scout is not required for a Unit or Patrol to decide to learn sign language nor a Jewish Scout needed to gain benefit from visiting a Synagogue – indeed, approaching other communities can help young people to relate to those around them and in their broader community who they may have never met before.



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### Promise and Law

The key values, ideals and principles of Scouting are epitomised in the Promise and Law. All individuals will have a different understanding of what the Promise and Law mean to them, and this will develop during a young person's time and development in the movement. Some Scouts may need some concepts within the Promise and Law explained to them in language they are more familiar with, real-life examples, or may need to start with smaller concepts and work up to an understanding of the whole structure.

It is important for young people to be helped to recognise that the Promise and Law can apply to them regardless of their religion, or lack thereof, and that it can be understood in terms of their cultural understanding of the world. Some Scouts may choose to talk to their religious or community leader about how the Promise and Law can sit within their culture or faith's view, identifying similarities and areas where the two have a different expression. Adults and Unit Councils working with Scouts should appreciate and acknowledge these differences in opinion or expression, and allow Scouts to work through these at their own pace. A rich, culturally nuanced understanding of the Promise and Law should be sought by all Scouts; there is not one interpretation or way of expressing it.



### Learning by Doing

Experiential learning is one of the underpinnings of the Scout program. All Scouts should have opportunities to try new things, stretch their comfort zones, develop skills through practising activities, and to make mistakes. Accommodating individual Scout's needs throughout this process is, of course, important.

It can be tempting for adults and even some Scouts to do things for individuals who are struggling, whether this is because it makes the activity faster or because the Scout lacks the dexterity, skill or practice to do it 'properly'. However, aside from the actions that need to be completed in a particular, technical manner to ensure safety (for example, rigging an abseiling wall), Scouts should be allowed to learn through trying activities at their own pace and with their own (safe) methods.

A variety of activities should be included in programs that will challenge all Scouts in different ways, rather than repeating the same old activities simply because they have worked in the past. It is also important to include activities that will enable Scouts to showcase what they can do, to have an opportunity to succeed in a task rather than always being the one who struggles.

We always prioritise learning activities that encourage active engagement by Scouts as a learning style, rather than being asked to sit and listen to knowledge being "given".

### Symbolic Framework

The symbolic framework exists to assist young people to relate to the concepts within the Scouting program, and to be challenged and inspired to step outside their comfort zones. Themes and symbolism should be chosen that is appropriate to the developmental stage of the young people using it. Scouts will not necessarily understand or fully grasp the full meaning and implications of all symbols at first, instead this can be another element of their development. For some Scouts, additional explanation may be needed of some symbols and the concepts they have been chosen to signify.

For more information on Programming please visit [pr.scouts.com.au/the-weekly-program/](https://pr.scouts.com.au/the-weekly-program/)