

Guide to Ceremonies in Australian Scouting





Scouts
AUSTRALIA

**Guide to
Ceremonies in
Australian Scouting**



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First Printed October 2017
Revised April 2020

Published by the authority of the National Executive Committee of the Scout Association of Australia.

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ISBN: 978-0-909732-04-2

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As Scouts of Australia, we acknowledge Australia's First Nations Peoples, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as the Traditional Custodians of this land. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

We're grateful to do our Scouting in this country; we commit to use its resources wisely, and develop our understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

We also acknowledge any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scouts who are part of our movement today.

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Ceremonies

Ceremonies help us mark important times in Scouting. We use a whole range of different ceremonies, and many of these will look pretty different depending on where you are or who you're with.

Ceremonies in Scouts Australia are adaptable and changeable. This book acts as a guide; it includes some key considerations for designing ceremonies, and some examples.

The features of your ceremonies and the way they're run is mostly up to the youth members in your Unit, with adult support as needed.

Why we have ceremonies

Ceremonies should be meaningful and special. They're an opportunity for us to stop and celebrate something important and special.

Ceremonies can help us:

- Celebrate success and *personal progression*
- Build unity and team morale
- Create a sense of identity
- Mark important events
- Reflect

We often use ceremonies as a symbolic way of recognising a key moment in time. Most of the ceremonies we experience are Scouting-specific; they form part of our identity as Scouts. They are also part of the **symbolic framework** we use to remind us of this identity.

Ceremonies have been part of Scouting since its beginning. Some aspects of our ceremonies may be traditions (like the left handshake), but the way our ceremonies look will be different right around Australia.

Ceremonies can help us to build our Unit identity and make sure the experience is focused on the young people involved. In this way, we have some traditional aspects, but on the most part ceremonies are kept contemporary by being youth-led.

Many Scouting ceremonies will refer to the one journey of the program, and help remind Scouts of the path they're on.



Developmental opportunities through ceremonies

Scouting in Australia provides members with the opportunity to participate in and take a leading role in ceremonies, within and external to the Movement.

Ceremonies reflect the Scout Method in many ways, and this document outlines some of these ways. The Scout Method should be used throughout everything that we do within Scouting, including in ceremonies. Sometimes the Scout Method is very visible, and other times it is much more subtle.

All components of the Scout Method should be considered when members are involved with a ceremony.

The **symbolic framework** is utilised in every ceremony, as the ceremony will incorporate aspects of the 'themes' and values of each section's **symbolic framework**.

Youth leading, adults supporting is probably the element of the Scout Method that is most prominent, as youth members should run almost all aspects of the ceremony (this is section dependent).

Youth members work in Patrols when they lead and participate in ceremonies, demonstrating and building their skills of teamwork and leadership within the **patrol system**.

Learning by doing is self-evident - if youth members are immersed and involved with the ceremony then they are learning about aspects of respect, leadership, teamwork, acknowledgment and reflection.

Promise and Law is another element of the Scout Method that is self-evident. When they show respect and build a sense of belonging through the involvement in a ceremony, Scouts are developing their understanding of the **Promise and Law**.

Ceremonies

It is important that some ceremonies are carried out in a public space. When undertaken well, ceremonies can be a great public relations opportunity where all members can demonstrate their ability to work together and show respect and acknowledgment.

Many ceremonies have the purpose of acknowledging **personal progression**, and are an important way for youth members to be recognised for their hard work and dedication.

Later in this document, examples of how youth members can incorporate **nature and the outdoors** are outlined. It is important that ceremonies occur in many different environments, such as local bushland.





Common Scouting Ceremonies

Common Scouting ceremonies in Australia mark the following occasions:

- Investiture into Scouting** Welcoming a new member to the World Scout Movement.
- Welcoming new Unit members** Welcoming a new member to the Unit who has previously been invested in another Unit or Group. Follows a similar process to an investiture.
- Section transition** Marking the progression from one section to the next.
- Personal Progression achievements** Celebrating a Scouting achievement with a member, generally involves the presentation of a badge to mark the achievement.
- Finishing the program** Marking the completion of the youth program by an exiting Rover Scout.
- Regular Unit activity opening & closing** These moments are not considered 'ceremonies'. They serve to mark the beginning and end of a regular Scouting activity.

TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THE LAND

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have experienced a long history of exclusion in Australia, and many aspects of First Australians' cultures have sadly been lost.

As Scouts, we make a promise to live by the Scout Law. One part of the Law reminds us to *Be Respectful* and *Care For Others*. Including recognition of Australia's First Peoples in events, meetings and national symbols is one way for us to help uphold Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and work towards reconciliation.

Incorporating welcoming and acknowledgement protocols into official meetings and events recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians and Traditional Custodians of the land. It promotes an ongoing connection to place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and shows respect for Traditional Owners.

Ceremonies

There are two simple ways we pay respects to Traditional Custodians at the start of our Scouting activities:

- **Acknowledgement of Country:** Words spoken publicly by anyone participating at the start of an activity, meeting, or ceremony
- **Welcome to Country:** A formal welcome given by a Traditional Custodian or Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person with specific permission from the Traditional Custodians.

For some more information, visit:

www.reconciliation.org.au

Acknowledgement of Country

An Acknowledgement of Country is an opportunity for anyone to show respect for Traditional Owners and the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Country.

It's important to give an Acknowledgement of Country at the start of all Scouting activities and meetings.

Anyone can make an Acknowledgment and people are encouraged to make it their own. The key parts needed in every Acknowledgement of Country are:

- Acknowledge the specific **Traditional Custodians** of the land you're gathered on – if you're not sure, look it up beforehand! If you're still not sure, you can just say "Traditional Custodians".
- **Pay respects to Elders** past and present. Especially in youth organisations like Scouting, we choose to add "and emerging".

Example: I'd like to start by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the land we meet on today, the [people] of the [nation] and pay my respects to Elders, past, present and emerging.



You can add more words if you'd like. This can be a chance to acknowledge another valued aspect of the local People's culture, or to say something about the importance of Reconciliation. This part is optional, but it's important that whatever you say is sincere, purposeful, respectful and prepared.

eg: I wish to acknowledge the the [people] of the [nation] as the Traditional Custodians of this land. Their traditions have made sure this land has been cared for and respected for tens of thousands of years. I pay my respects to Elders, past, present and emerging. We can learn a lot from these Elders so that we can continue their tradition of caring for the land.



You might also like to adapt the Acknowledgment of Country used in this handbook to your local Traditional Owners:

As Scouts of Australia, we acknowledge Australia's First Nations Peoples, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as the Traditional Custodians of this land. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

We're grateful to do our Scouting in this country; we commit to use its resources wisely, and develop our understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

We also acknowledge any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scouts who are part of our movement today.

Ceremonies

Welcome to Country

Protocols for welcoming visitors to Country have been a part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures for thousands of years.

Crossing into another group's Country required a request for permission to enter. When permission was granted the hosting group would welcome the visitors, offering them safe passage and protection of their spiritual being during the journey.

A Welcome to Country occurs at the beginning of a formal event and can take many forms including singing, dancing, smoking ceremonies or a speech in traditional language or English. A Welcome to Country is delivered by Traditional Owners, or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have been given permission from Traditional Owners, to welcome visitors to their Country.

To arrange a Welcome to Country for a special event, contact your local Traditional Custodian group.

Your local council should be able to help you make contact if you're not sure where to go! Please note, there is often a cost involved.

SCOUTING PROTOCOLS

Many of your ceremonies will involve one or more of the following. You can help provide an inclusive and welcoming environment by making sure those involved understand what the following are and what they mean.

Uniform

Many people recognise us as Scouts when we're in our uniform; it's important to make sure it's worn correctly with respect.

Have a look at the latest version of **Scouts Australia Policy and Rules** for information on what is meant by official uniform. Your Branch of Scouts Australia might also have some extra expectations.

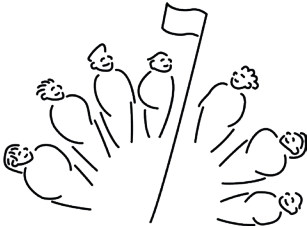


Not all ceremonies will need you to be in uniform. For some ceremonies, it's important to be in full uniform, while for others it might be appropriate just to wear a scarf on top of your regular clothes. When planning your own ceremonies, have a think about what's appropriate, and when joining ceremonies organised by someone else, make sure you check with them about what's suitable.

We should always remember that some Scouts may not be able to afford a uniform, or certain pieces of clothing, like leather shoes for very special events. **We should always work to make sure that these Scouts don't feel singled out or excluded from a ceremony or event.**

Keep this in mind when setting or communicating uniform requirements for a particular activity.

Ceremonies



Formation

For ceremonies, activity openings and closing, the Unit normally gathers in a circle or horseshoe formation, and where possible, next to a flagpole. Typically, a Unit will gather in their Patrols, with the Unit Leader/s standing at the front.



Standing at the alert

During some ceremonies, it's common for the person leading the ceremony to ask members to stand at the 'alert'. This means:

- Standing up straight (or sitting if you're unable to stand), normally in a formation (often a horse-shoe or circle shape) with the rest of the Scouts gathered
- Holding your arms to your sides, or as close to your sides as you can
- Keeping still and silent.



Standing at ease

Generally, after something formal has happened in a ceremony (like raising a flag or making the Scout Promise), the person leading the ceremony will ask members to 'stand at ease'. This means:

- Standing (or sitting if you're unable to stand) comfortably, still in formation
- If standing, your feet shoulder-width apart and your hands behind your back or in front of you
- Keeping still and silent.



Scout salute

All members of Scouting in Australia use the Scout Salute, with three fingers of the right hand raised to the forehead, or as close as they are able to comfortably. Salutes are to be used during the raising, breaking and lowering of the national flag. When the national anthem is playing, all members should stand at the alert but not salute.



Scout sign

The Scout sign involves holding the middle three fingers of the right hand (similar to the Scout salute) in line with your right shoulder. The Scout sign is used when the Scout Promise is being made by you, or in a ceremony you're attending.



Left handshake

Many Scouts around the world use the left handshake when greeting another Scout; it's just like a right handshake, except using the left hand. If you're lucky enough to meet Scouts from another country, keep in mind this may not be a tradition for them, and sometimes this is for cultural reasons.

For those who follow the tradition, like Scouts Australia, this custom goes right back to when B-P met warriors of a particular cultural group in South Africa. For a person of this group, shaking with the left hand meant exposing their body from behind their shield and was considered a symbol of trust. We use the left handshake to remind us to trust and respect our fellow Scouts.

Ceremonies

Flags

A flag's purpose is to represent a place, organisation, or a people, generally on a rectangular piece of cloth and able to be seen from a distance. In Scouting, we use flags symbolically to represent our movement, Australian Scouting, and our local Scouting formation. We also contribute to our community by upholding what the flags of our states, territories, and country represent, alongside the flags of the First Nations' People.

Scouts treat flags with respect; they're seen as important symbols of the country or group they represent. This means we:

- Look after flags by keeping them neat and clean
- Never deliberately damage flags
- Try our best to not let them fall to or touch the ground
- Don't wear the Australian flag like a cape
- Treat the flags of other countries with the same level of respect we do our own.

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL FLAG

Some guidelines for the Australian National Flag:

- The flag should be raised quickly and carefully, and lowered slowly
- Do not raise the flag earlier than sunrise, or lower the flag later than sunset
- Only fly at night if the flag is lit-up
- The Australian flag should not share a flagpole with any other flag
- Do not fly the flag if it is damaged
- Do not use the flag to drape a table
- The Australian flag should not lie on the ground
- Do not salute a flag that has already been lowered.

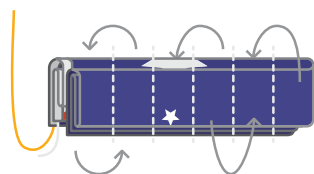
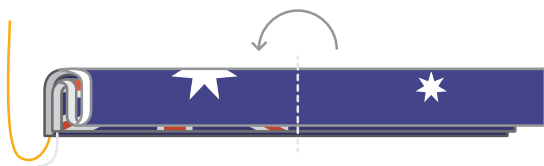
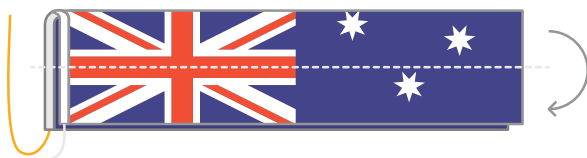
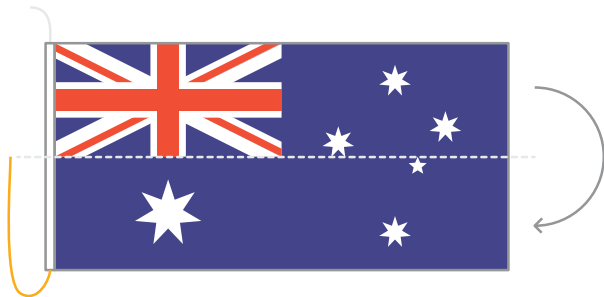
More guidelines can be found on the Australian Government Website – Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Many local MPs (Members of Parliament) provide Australian flags free of charge to community groups like Scouts. If you're in need of a new flag, you should contact your local MP's office.

You may also be able to obtain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags – displaying these flags is a great way of acknowledging Australia's First Nations' Peoples.



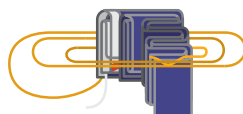
Folding the Australian National Flag



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Using the Australian National Flag

The Australian National flag is often broken or lowered at the opening and closing of our activities, and sometimes at the start and end of many of our ceremonies.

BREAKING

- The flag, correctly folded for breaking, is hoisted to the top of the flagpole by the Patrol Leader or Unit Leader before the ceremony or activity opening. The Unit is called into a circular formation, and to "Alert".
- The person raising the flag (pre-determined) walks to the flagpole and, without saluting, holds the loose side of the rope, at the same time saying "Unit, face the flag".
- The member holding the rope says: "Unit, Salute", and at the same time pulls down on the rope, breaking the flag, and then steps back to salute the flag with the rest of the Unit. The salute ends when the member at the flag brings their hand down from the salute position.
- All youth and adult members return to their standing positions around the ceremony formation, and the person leading the ceremony asks the Unit to "Stand at ease" while any announcements, activity discussions and proceedings occur.

LOWERING

- The flag is at the top of the pole. The Scouts are in a circle or horse-shoe in front of the flag pole.
- The person leading the ceremony asks the Unit to stand to "Alert".
- The person lowering the flag (pre-determined) walks around the back of the formation to prepare to lower the flag. They might need to take another Scout to help them and make sure the flag doesn't touch the ground.
- The person lowering the flag stands in front of the flag and salutes.
- The person lowering the flag says, "Unit, face the flag". (All turn to face the flag; if necessary, the person assisting turns to stand underneath the flag facing the Unit).
- The flag is lowered slowly either into the arms of the person assisting or onto a piece of furniture or similar. The Unit salutes as the flag is being lowered. The Unit drops their salute once the flag has been completely lowered.
- The Scout/s who lowered the flag return to their position/s.
- The person leading the ceremony asks the Unit to "Stand at ease".

Creating Ceremonies

All our ceremonies should keep to the principle of **young people at the centre**. The best way to make sure this is the case is to involve youth members in the Plan> (designing and preparing), Do> (running) and Review> of your ceremonies.

It's a good idea to do a Review> of your ceremonies on a regular basis.

There might be some parts that remain the same over a long time (like a location), but it's important to check these aspects are still relevant and inclusive for all young people that might want to join your Unit.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD CEREMONY?

Ceremonies should be:

- Developmentally youth-led, and with youth members' best interests at the centre
- Focused on the person, people, moment or thing that's being recognised and celebrated
- Sincere and meaningful
- Simple and short
- Engaging and inclusive for everyone
- Meaningful and relevant to the needs of those involved

As always, think about whether your ceremony is adventurous, fun, challenging, and inclusive!

Creating Ceremonies

Making ceremonies special

Ceremonies should be special for your Unit or Group, as well as the specific person or people it's for. Here are some questions you might like to explore when designing or adapting your ceremonies:

- What's important to your Unit or Group that could play a role in certain ceremonies? It might be a location, geographic feature (like a mountain or ocean), object or something else entirely.
- How can you make the ceremony a memorable highlight for each Scout? Consider how it can be more adventurous, fun, challenging and inclusive. Also think about the individual involved – remember some people don't like being the centre of attention! You always need to be ready to adapt your approach.
- What sort of feelings do you want those present to have? Maybe you want them to feel reflective or excited or proud or something else – what sort of ceremony can help this happen?
- Is the ceremony relevant and interesting for young people? Think about testing the concepts with some young people outside the group – what feels normal for you might look a bit weird and exclusive to others, which isn't what Scouting should be!





Ceremony considerations

Before a ceremony, it's important to consider:

- What is its purpose?
- Who are the key people involved in the ceremony?
- How important is it?
- Who should be invited?
- When should the ceremony happen?
- Where should it take place?
- How will the ceremony be run?
- How long should it take?
- How will you keep people engaged?
- What equipment will you need (like badges, flags etc)?

It's also important to consider the **protocols** and **traditions** for the ceremony:

- Is uniform needed?
- Will flags be used and how?
- Does everyone understand what's happening?
- How can we make everyone there feel included?
- Is there tradition or history that needs to be explained to attendees?



Creating Ceremonies

Creating Symbolism for ceremonies

The symbolism of ceremonies should be based around the Scout Method, and the overall *symbolic framework* “**One Program, One Journey**” and our Section specific Mottos: “*discover adventure, create the path, explore the unknown, look wide, beyond the horizon*”.

It might be useful for your Group, Unit or Patrol to critically examine traditions that you have, and determine if they are valuable, contemporary, and prized by the youth members. If they are, then they can be intertwined with the symbolic framework and Scout Method so long as none of those elements are lost.

The symbolism of ceremonies should be based on the section symbolic framework described on the following pages. They are able to be changed and adapted to suit Group, Unit and Patrol purposes, as long as the general intent of the symbolism is not lost. Discuss with Scouts in the Unit how the Group, Unit and Patrol can ensure that the symbolism and the ceremonies can be relevant, meaningful, purposeful, respectful, and appropriate.

A *symbolic framework* provides structure to the program, remembering that no one theme should constantly dominate the program, or restrict it, and the imagination of youth should be encouraged in order to further their development. The journey that Scouts will follow in Australian Scouting, is based on the symbolism that is outlined below.



Joey Scouts

Joey Scouts is about **discovering adventure**.

This is the beginning of the journey as a Scout. In Joey Scouts, members will make new friends and look out for each other. They will be part of a small team called a Patrol. Working together, with their Patrol, to discover lots of different, fun, exciting and challenging adventures outdoors. Throughout the Joey Scout section, young people are presented with a range of opportunities and tastes of adventure and investigate what is adventure to them.

The Joey Scout symbolic framework is about:

- Beginning the Scouting Journey
- Exploring new skills
- Discovering new adventurous activities
- Having fun
- Interacting with the communities around us
- Discovering what they enjoy



Creating Ceremonies

Cub Scouts

Cub Scouts is about **creating the path**.

Developing an increased awareness of an individual's journey of development through Scouting, *creating the path* builds on the Cub Scout's previous learning and experience as they begin to navigate life in their own unique ways – a sign of increasing independence.

They may have already been on a journey of discovery, and whilst keen to explore, forging their individual pathways requires support. *Creating the path* can happen anywhere! This is not about the location in which you live or meet regularly, but about the journey of imagination and experiences you take! Being in the outdoors is a key element of *creating the path*.

The Cub Scout symbolic framework is about:

- Finding new friends and bonding with them
- Forging skills in adventurous environments
- Exploring new ways to learn and discover
- Having fun and being challenged
- Creating understanding of the community around us





Scouts

Scouts is about **exploring the unknown**.

Progressing on from the previous sections, which have symbolic frameworks based around imagination and the use of characters, the Scout section symbolic framework focuses on concrete concepts and real-world application. The *symbolic framework* of exploration targets the inherent curiosity of early adolescence, and encourages Scouts to explore not just their physical surroundings, but their interests, values, beliefs and fears.

Exploration goes hand in hand with *personal progression*. As young people explore their own identity, friendships and world, they will develop and reflect on their progress. The program is designed so that the young person can explore areas of their choosing, and develop at their own pace, even when exploring with a team of friends.

The Scout symbolic framework is about:

- Exploring new territory with a team of friends
- Pushing boundaries
- Exploring the unknown and supporting one another
- Exploring the diversity of our community and the world around us
- Exploring and developing a personal identity



Creating Ceremonies

Venturer Scouts

Venturer Scouts is about **looking wide**.

The symbolic framework challenges Venturer Scouts to investigate other ideals, belief systems and ways of living on the journey to strengthening one's identity.

Looking wide opens the eyes and experiences of an adolescent finding themselves and their position in the world, providing an open and enticing framework for members to pursue new adventures, without dictating how they do so or what the specific results should be.

Venturer Scouts are encouraged to extend their view and seek a range of opportunities. They explore their own values and have adventures that identify the limits of, and challenge, their comfort zones. These adventures will help shape their developing character through adolescence and into adulthood. This exploration is individual, but usually occurs with the support of a group of peers.

The Venturer Scout *symbolic framework* is about:

- Extending boundaries
- Investigating other ideals, belief systems and ways of living
- Searching for alternative moral ideologies and making lifestyle decisions
- Broadening social circles and interactions
- Experiencing new adventure, with the support and encouragement of peers
- Searching for new activities and networks
- Embracing new challenges
- Increased individual exploration
- Broadening community engagement through education, hobbies and employment
- Exploring the diversity of our community and the world around us
- Exploring and developing a personal identity
- Seeking independence
- Building an expanding network to support team adventures



Rover Scouts

Rover Scouts is about going **beyond the horizon**.

This *symbolic framework* embraces the challenge and uncertainty of a young adult entering the world, providing a strong and uplifting framework for members to challenge themselves, without dictating how they do so or what the specific results should be.

Discovering their potential, tackling real issues and influencing positive change in the world around the Rover Scout is what “beyond the horizon” focuses on. Rover Scout adventures will take them further than ever before as they explore new places with new people and old friends. Through these experiences they will develop a whole new level of understanding of who they are and what they can become.

The Rover Scout *symbolic framework* is about:

- Broadening boundaries
- Investigating other ideals, belief systems and ways of living
- Searching for alternative moral ideologies and making lifestyle decisions
- Expanding social circles and interactions
- Leading new adventure, with the support and encouragement of peers
- Searching for new activities and networks
- Leading new challenges
- Individual exploration
- Extending community engagement through education, hobbies and employment
- Exploring the diversity of our community and the world around us
- Exploring and developing a personal identity
- Reaching independence
- Utilising an expanding network to support team adventures

Access & inclusion

To truly keep with the principle of **young people at the centre**, we need to be ready to adapt our ceremonies to the young people involved.

The experience of the youth member is far more important than what we might consider to be an important ‘tradition’ or custom.

This extends beyond making sure young people can physically take part in the ceremony. For many Scouts, the prospect of completing a certain aspect of the ceremony, or simply being the focus of a group of people might not sit well with them.

While surprises can be nice, for some people, they’re much more comfortable knowing exactly what’s about to happen. The best idea is to check with the Scout or Scouts involved in a ceremony before it happens. If there are “surprise” bits, ask the Scout if they’re OK with this, or if they’d prefer to know what will happen during the ceremony.

Reviewing> ceremonies

To keep our ceremonies up-to-date, relevant and focused on the changing needs and interests of young people, it’s important to Review> them.

As with everything in Scouting, make sure you follow the full process of Plan>Do>Review> for ceremonies on a regular basis.

It can be also a good idea to do a full Review> of your Unit or Group’s ceremonies every couple of years to make sure they’re still meeting their purpose and aligned to community expectations.



Common Ceremonies

These are some common ceremonies you'll experience in Australian Scouting and examples of how they might look.

ACTIVITY AND CAMP OPENING & CLOSING

While we detail what's involved in an Opening & Closing in this ceremonies guide, keep in mind:

The opening and closing of a regular Scouting activity is not a ceremony, nor do we call it a parade.

These moments don't fit the criteria of marking a special or unique moment for celebration: they're brief moments to mark the beginning and end of a regular Scouting activity. These moments give some context of what's happening for that activity, or to announce what is happening the next week. They also help us bring together all the Scouts involved and set the tone for the activity.

Keeping Unit activity openings & closings brief and to the point helps keep them true to their purpose, and allows you more time to get on with your activities!

Core features – openings

The opening of a regular Scouting activity:

- Brings together all those taking part in the activity
- Includes a briefing of the activity
- Where possible (like at the Scout Hall), includes the breaking of the Australian flag.



Common Ceremonies

Typical proceedings of openings

The typical proceedings for an opening will generally be how things play out for a night at the Scout Hall. Some aspects like flag break might not be achievable on certain nights.

- The Unit stands quietly in a horseshoe or circle shape, next to the flag pole (if available).
- A pre-determined member of the Unit shares an **Acknowledgement of Country** as per the guidelines from earlier in this chapter.
- The flag is then broken as per the guidelines for using the Australian flag from earlier in this chapter.
- The Unit Leader defers to the Scout leading the activity to provide a briefing.
- The person leading the activity shares an overview of the plan so that the Unit is ready to start.
- The Unit Leader requests for the Unit to stand alert, and then “break-off”.
- All present turn to the right and separate from the circle.
- The activity begins!

Examples of openings

As mentioned already, openings should be brief and simple. The nature of the opening is likely to differ a bit, depending on the location and nature of the activity.

EXAMPLE 1

The Cub Scout Unit meets at the start of a hiking trail for a night hike. The opening involves them gathering in a circle and sharing the plan for the night over torch-light before heading out on the hike.

EXAMPLE 2

The Patrols of the Scout Unit all meet in different locations for their own Patrol activities. Each Patrol Leader performs their own opening by gathering and briefing their Patrol on the activity.

EXAMPLE 3

The Unit meets in the hall and follows the **typical proceedings**.





Core features of closings

The closing of a regular Scouting activity:

- Brings together all those who took part in the activity.
- Happens after a brief and informal Review> of the activity.
- Includes a thank you to everyone for participating and acknowledges those who led and assisted.
- Includes a reminder of the next activity to make sure Scouts know what's happening and that they're excited about the upcoming activity.
- Where possible (like at the Scout Hall), includes the lowering of the Australian flag.
- May include a personal reflection from a member of the Unit.
- Includes a quick farewell.

Typical proceedings of closings

The typical proceedings for a closing will generally be how things play out for a night at the Scout Hall. Some aspects like flag lowering might not be achievable on certain nights.

The closing should take place following a Review> of the activity.

- The Unit stands quietly in a horseshoe or circle shape, next to the flag pole (if available).
- The Unit Leader thanks everyone for coming and gives a special thank you to those who led and assisted the activity.
- The flag is then lowered as per the guidelines for using the Australian flag from earlier in this chapter.
- The Unit Leader (and others as relevant) give key information required for the upcoming activity/ies.
- The Unit Leader requests for the Unit to stand alert, and then says "Unit dismissed".
- All present turn to the right and separate from the circle while giving a Scout salute.

Common Ceremonies

Examples of closings

As mentioned already, closings should be brief and simple. The nature of the closing is likely to differ a bit, depending on the location and nature of the activity.

EXAMPLE 1

The Joey Scout Unit gathers following their wide game activity. By lantern light, the Joey Scout Leader thanks the activity lead/s and assist/s and shares an update on the upcoming activity.

EXAMPLE 2

The Rover Scout Unit gathers in the car park of an archery range to thank the activity lead and assist and to share an update on the upcoming activity. One of the members shares a brief, 30 second reflection in their own words about how grateful they are to have been helped during the activity with their archery.

EXAMPLE 3

The Unit meets in a park with their constructed flagpole and follows the typical proceedings above.





WELCOMING NEW UNIT MEMBERS

Whether we're marking the very beginning of a Scouting journey, or welcoming an existing Scout to our Unit or Group, we have a special ceremony.

Ceremonies focused on welcoming new Unit members include:

Investiture Ceremonies Welcoming a **new member to the Scouting movement.**

Transition Ceremony Marking the progression **from one section to the next.**

Other Welcoming Ceremonies Welcoming a new member to the Unit who has **previously been invested in another Unit or Group.** Follows a similar process to an investiture.

Youth members should be involved in the full process of Plan>Do>Review> for all welcoming ceremonies. Make sure they're involved somehow in conducting the ceremony!

It's a good idea to invite family members along for these ceremonies.



Common Ceremonies

Investiture Ceremony

An investiture symbolises a new Scout's entry into the Movement.

This ceremony should be one of the most special and memorable moments of a Scout's time in the program. It's all about them, and welcoming them to their future as a member of the Scouting community.

Note: It is important that the member (youth or adult) gets to review and choose between the two options of the Australian Scout Promise with a Unit Leader, Patrol Leader or adult Leader well in advanced of them affirming or re-affirming the Promise.

Scouts Australia has resources such as the Promise & Law Discussion Guides to support potential new members understanding of the Australian Scout Promise & Law.

Sections transition ceremonies and moving Scout Groups ceremonies involve very similar ceremony outlines. However, it is important to realise that a Scout is only invested once - when they first become a member of Australian Scouting. Read more about this below.

If someone is re-registering as a Scout after an extended break from Scouting (at least a year), it might be appropriate to hold a new investiture ceremony. This decision should be made with the Scout involved.





Core features of Investiture Ceremonies

- The member making their Scout Promise – making the Scout sign with their right hand and placing their left hand on the Unit or Group flag
- Other members of the Unit being present and involved
- Being youth-led in a developmentally appropriate way
- The presentation of new uniform items (such as membership badges, the scarf, Introduction to Scouting & Introduction to Section badges) – **Note:** some items will require program components to be completed before the investiture occurs
- The new member feeling part of something special!
- The involvement of the new member’s peer mentor (for more information on peer mentors, visit the “Welcoming new members to the Unit” section of each age section chapter of the Program Handbook).

The ceremony should not be drawn-out; 5 minutes is a good length of time.

Remember the **symbolic framework** of **one journey**: it’s recommended that you draw from your section’s motto as inspiration for these ceremonies

Joey Scouts: Discover adventure

Cub Scouts: Create the path

Scouts: Explore the unknown

Venturer Scouts: Look wide

Rover Scouts: Beyond the horizon



Common Ceremonies

Typical proceedings of Investiture Ceremony

Unit stands at the alert in a circle or semi-circle with the adult and youth leaders together in a line at the front. The new Scout is brought forward by their mentor to stand facing them.

Unit Leader: [NAME], are you ready to join Scouting (for an investiture) and our [SECTION] Unit?

New Scout: Yes

Unit Leader: Unit, are we ready to support [NAME] as part of our Unit and to help [NAME] to discover adventure / create the path / explore the unknown / look wide / adventure beyond the horizon with us?

Unit: Yes!

Unit Leader: [MENTOR NAME] has [NAME] completed the Introduction to Scouting (if relevant) and Introduction to section?

Mentor: Yes

Unit Leader: [NAME], remember the Australian Scout Promise is made by every Scout – by making / reaffirming our Promise we commit to live by it – it reminds us to be good Scouts and good people. Now that you have decided which version of the Australian Scout Promise you would like to [make/reaffirm], [NAME], are you ready?

New Scout: Yes

Unit Leader: [holding the Group / Unit flag between them, draped over a staff]

[NAME] please place your left hand on the flag next to mine and make the Scout sign with your right hand.

Unit Leader: Everyone please make the Scout sign.

New Scout: [recites or repeats each line of chosen version of the Scout Promise]



Unit Leader: [NAME], welcome to Scouting (for an investiture) and our [SECTION] Unit!

At this point members of the Unit (both adults and youth), as well as the new Scout's mentor, present the new Scout with the various uniform items, show them where they go, and explain their symbolism.

Here are some explanations of common uniform items:

World Scout Emblem: Earned by completing the Introduction to Scouting. It symbolises we are part of a world-wide movement of almost 60 million Scouts.

Australian flag badge: Symbolises that we are part of Australian Scouting, where there are over 70,000 members.

District and/or Region badge or tape: Shows which District or Region the Scout is a member of.

Group name tape: Shows which Scout Group the Scout is a member of.

Introduction to Section badge: Earned by completing the Introduction to Section, which indicates that the new Scout has learnt about their section.

Scarf: The scarf (or necker) is symbolic of Scouting across the globe. All Scouts wear a scarf, and much like a flag, the scarf indicates the Group or formation they belong to.

After the presentation of uniform items, the new Scout shakes the left hand of youth and adult leaders and their mentor, remembering any cultural requirements.

Unit Leader: [NAME], please turn and salute the Unit
New Scout turns and salutes Unit, who salute back.

Common Ceremonies

Making it special

An investiture ceremony will be a little different for each Unit. It should be special for your Group, Unit, and for the Scout involved.

You might like to:

- Hold the ceremony in a boat on a local lake or river
- Use a historical Unit or Group flag
- Use a natural light source such as a fire, candles or lanterns
- Incorporate bushcraft or pioneering into the ceremony

Investiture ceremony examples

Generally, the ceremony itself will follow typical proceedings like those above. These are some examples of how you might make it unique and special.

EXAMPLE 1

- The Joey Scout Unit waits patiently, standing in circle-formation in a bush clearing
- The new Joey Scout is led by their Mentor along a short path to the clearing through the scrub to meet them
- The Mentor runs the investiture, with prompts as needed from the Joey Scout Leader.

EXAMPLE 2

- The Rover Scout Unit stands on the summit of a prominent hill or mountain as the sun sets over the horizon
- As part of the ceremony, the Unit Leader points out key community landmarks visible from the summit and reminds the new Rover Scout of their ongoing commitment to their local community.
- The Unit Leader then points in the direction of significant locations beyond the horizon, and challenges the Rover Scout to seek adventures in locations like these during their time in the section.

Transition ceremonies

A transition ceremony happens when a Scout moves from one section to the next. A transition might occur directly before the Unit welcoming ceremony, or on a different day. Normally it will involve some sort of small challenge that symbolises the path from one section to the next.

A transition ceremony is an important part of Group life – you might like to hold your Group’s transition ceremonies together at a special Group event.

When a youth member is transitioning from your section to the next, you might also like to hold a special farewell celebration for them.

Core features of transition ceremonies

Transition ceremonies should:

- Involve both the previous Unit and the new Unit
- Mark the journey from one section to the next
- Help inspire younger Scouts to continue their Scouting journey to the next section
- Be youth-led in a developmentally appropriate way
- Not be drawn-out – 10 minutes is a good length of time for the ceremony itself
- Help the new member feel part of something special!

Remember the overall *symbolic framework* **One Program, One Journey**: it’s recommended that you draw from your section’s motto as inspiration for these ceremonies.

Joey Scouts: Discover adventure
Cub Scouts: Create the path
Scouts: Explore the unknown
Venturer Scouts: Look wide
Rover Scouts: Beyond the horizon



Common Ceremonies

Typical proceedings for transition ceremonies

- Both Units stand at the alert in semi-circle formations, separated by a small distance (the size of this distance will depend on the nature of the ceremony activity). The transitioning Scout will make a journey between the two Units during the ceremony.
- Between the two Units is some sort of challenge or obstacle (like crossing a bridge), set up by the Scouts in the older section.
- The Unit Leader of the older section crosses over to meet the younger section.
- The Unit Leader of the younger section thanks the Scout for their time in the section and asks them to share some highlights of their time there.
- The older section Unit Leader shares a few words about the adventures to come in the next section and explains the meaning of the section motto. They ask the Scout if they are ready for the challenges and adventures to come in the next section and the Scout responds that they are.
- The Unit Leader invites the Scout to farewell the previous Unit and join them in crossing over to the new Unit.
- The Scout shakes left hands with the members of the previous Unit.
- The Scout follows the Unit Leader across to their new Unit.
- The new Unit welcomes their new member with left handshakes and continue with the **welcoming ceremony**.





Transition ceremony examples

EXAMPLE 1

The Joey Scout Unit gathers at the start of a flying-fox, and the Cub Scout Unit at the other end. With the assistance of an appropriately qualified person, the Joey Scouts farewell the transitioning Joey Scout, and send them down the flying-fox to be welcomed by the Cub Scouts.

EXAMPLE 2

The Scout section works with the Cub Scout section to build a rope bridge across a creek, for the transitioning Scout to cross during the ceremony.

EXAMPLE 3

With the help of an appropriately trained person, some Venturer Scouts set up an abseil rope. The Scout Unit farewell the transitioning Scout at a safe location near the top of the cliff. The Scout abseils down the rope to meet the Venturer Scout Unit at the base.



Common Ceremonies

Other welcoming ceremonies

Other welcoming ceremonies are very similar to an investiture in terms of the process. The main difference is:

During an investiture, a Scout **makes** their Scout Promise for the first time. During other welcoming ceremonies, the Scout **reaffirms** their Scout Promise.

Your Unit might like to make investiture ceremonies a little different to other welcoming ceremonies to make it feel extra-special.

Moving Scout Groups

When a Scout moves from one Scout Group to another (and they are remaining in the same section), you should hold a welcoming ceremony, where the Scout:

- Is welcomed by the Unit
- Reaffirms their Scout Promise
- Is presented with the District or Region badge (if different), the Group name tape and the relevant scarf.

Moving Sections

Following their **Transition Ceremony** (involving both the previous and the new Unit), a welcoming ceremony should take place to welcome the Scout to the section, and to their new Unit. Normally this will just involve the members of the new Unit and any guests the Scout would like to invite (like their family). In this ceremony, the Scout:

- Is welcomed by the Unit
- Reaffirms their Scout Promise
- Is presented with all the introductory badges for their new section uniform shirt (including their Introduction to Section).

Core Features and Typical Proceedings of other welcoming ceremonies

Follow the examples provided for investiture ceremonies for ceremonies about Scouts moving scout groups and for Scouts coming into your section after a transition ceremony. When following these, remember to adjust the words spoken knowing that the Scout is already a member of world and Australian Scouting, and is simply moving into a new formation.”



ACHIEVEMENT PATHWAYS

Achieving something in Scouting is worth celebrating. This is why we hold ceremonies to recognise many of our members' achievements, including when they complete elements of the **Achievement Pathways**.

It's important that these presentations happen as soon as realistically possible after a Scout has completed their achievement. Delaying a presentation until the Unit goes on camp in a couple of months, for example, isn't very respectful towards the Scout and the effort involved in their achievement.

Core features of Achievement Pathways presentations

Each time a Scout completes an element of the Achievement Pathways and earns a badge is one that should be celebrated in a ceremony of some kind. This might happen as part of a larger ceremony, or in a ceremony held specially – this generally depends on the level of importance to the Scout involved.

Typically, presentations for achievements of **Milestones, Special Interest Areas, Outdoor Adventure Skills** and **additional achievements** (like Landcare, Their Service Our Heritage) will take a simple form. Achievements like **Peak Awards** normally involve more significant celebrations.

Typical achievement presentations:

- Involve the members of the Unit and other people that took part in the work undertaken (like members of a Project Patrol)
- Include a summary of what the Scout has achieved through the opportunity
- Should serve to inspire other Scouts to challenge themselves through exciting new opportunities
- Include the presentation of a badge to be worn on the Scout's uniform.

These presentations are not about badges!

Make sure the presentation is focused on the achievement of the Scout, challenges they overcame through the opportunity, and how they've developed.

Common Ceremonies

Typical proceedings

- The Unit stands at the alert in a circle or horseshoe formation
- The Unit Leader calls the Scout to stand in front of them
- The Unit Leader explains that this Scout has completed all the:
 - » Goals (for Milestones, Special Interest Areas, some additional awards) set out by them, together with the Unit Council and/or
 - » Requirements (for Outdoor Adventure Skills, Peak Awards, some additional awards) to be presented with [the award].
- The Unit Leader explains, or asks the Scout to give a summary of, what they achieved through this part of the Achievement Pathways.
- The Unit Leader congratulates the Scout with a left handshake and presents them with the badge signifying the achievement.

Specific examples

Presentation ceremonies should be special for the individual Scout, and relevant to the achievement being celebrated. In addition to the typical proceedings above, Units should think about how they can make these moments memorable.





Milestones

Milestones mark key moments in every Scout's progression through the program. Each Milestone represents a Scout being a little further along the one journey of the program, and them being a little more advanced in their leadership and personal development. These are significant to the Scout's Journey and should be seen as very important in every Scout's Journey.

EXAMPLE 1

A Cub Scout Unit holds Milestone presentations in different locations in the community, making sure each time the location is somewhere the Scout has never been before (like a local Aboriginal landmark or the Town Hall). The location provides an opportunity to talk about leadership in the community, and to emphasise the value of going to places we have never been before in our Scouting adventures.

EXAMPLE 2

A Venturer Scout Unit keeps a video record of all their activities. When it comes time to present a Milestone 3, the Unit puts together a video of the Scout's participates, assists and leads. This includes a video diary of some of the Scout's Reviews. The video is shown at the presentation of the Scout's Milestone 3.



Common Ceremonies

Special Interest Areas, Outdoor Adventure Skills, additional awards

The presentation of a Special Interest Area, Outdoor Adventure Skill or other additional award represents the end of a concerted effort from an individual Scout on something that interests them. Many of these achievements will be something that Scouts feel especially proud of, and will hold many good memories.

EXAMPLE 1

A Cub Scout completes their Stage 3 Boating; their presentation is held on a sailing boat.

EXAMPLE 2

A Scout is awarded a Special Interest Area for their role in planning and delivering a community art mural. The presentation of the Special Interest Area is held at the opening of the mural with members of their Project Patrol and the community present.

EXAMPLE 3

A Rover Scout completes their Language Emblem in Arabic. They invite a fellow Arabic-speaker along for some of the presentation to be conducted in the language.

Peak Awards

The completion of a peak award is a very exciting time for any Scout; it represents a huge amount of work and personal development, normally over a number of years.

Typically, a peak award ceremony will be a fairly significant event for the Scout. When planning a peak award ceremony, it's best to make sure the Scout has the opportunity to help shape how the ceremony operates so it's as meaningful for them as possible.

Examples of aspects to consider:

- Inviting key people who mentored or supported them along the way
- Inviting key Scouting and community leaders to be present (especially for the older sections)
- Holding the ceremony at a location significant to their peak award
- Having a joint ceremony with peers who have achieved their peak award at the same time and whose adventures towards their awards have crossed over with their own
- Holding the ceremony in a public location
- Providing food and/or entertainment as part of the celebration
- Including short speeches from the awardee and limited other key people.



Common Ceremonies

Completing the program

When a Rover Scout completes their time in the program (no later than age 26), they are farewelled in a special ceremony.

Completing the program really is a huge achievement in itself! It means that a Scout has reached the **Educational Objectives** of the Scouts Australia program. It represents the time at which Scouting's **Purpose** has been realised for that young person.

As youth and adult leaders, this moment is one we aim to make sure all of our Scouts reach. The ceremony itself should be celebrated by all who've played a role in the Scout's time in the program.

Core features of program completion ceremonies

The central feature of these ceremonies is that it is focused on the individual Scout completing the program. Just like their **investiture**, this should be a special and memorable moment. It's all about them; it's a time for them to reflect on the experiences and personal growth they've experienced through Scouting.

It's also a time for them to consider how they will use the skills and attitudes they've learned through Scouting to contribute to their communities.

These ceremonies should:

- Involve whoever the Scout would like to invite
- Include a ceremonial aspect
- Features the Rover Scout reaffirming the Australian Scout Promise of their choice
- Include some sort of reflection of their Scouting journey and their personal growth
- Be personal and special for the Scout completing the program.

Often these ceremonies will involve some meaningful symbolism for the Rover Scout Unit, such as the gifting of a plaque or the recording of the Scout's name in a book or designated board of alumni.

Note: *this ceremony should never include aspects that have the potential to cause or result in physical or emotional damage to any attendee and should always follow the Organisation's and Branch's Rules & Procedures*



Typical proceedings

These ceremonies are quite unique; as such there aren't typical proceedings beyond the core features noted above.

Program completion ceremony examples

EXAMPLE 1

A Rover Scout who has been quite active in their Scout Group chooses to hold a special Group picnic that features their ceremony. The opportunity includes activities for all the sections to take part in. Their ceremony takes place in a local park and features a traditional Welcome to Country from a local Aboriginal Elder, a flag break, and some speeches from their Unit Leader and some of their Scouts.

EXAMPLE 2

A Rover Scout chooses to hold a small ceremony with just their Rover Scout Unit. Drawing inspiration from the section motto, Beyond the Horizon, the ceremony is held on sea kayaks at sunset and features the Scout reaffirming their chosen Australian Scout Promise.



Common Ceremonies



Involvement in non-Scouting ceremonies

Scouts get involved with many non-Scouting ceremonies, such as ANZAC Day commemorations and community event opening ceremonies. Involvement in events like these provides an opportunity for learning – in line with the **community involvement** element of the **Scout Method**, and opportunities for **Community Challenge** activities. If you're looking to engage in opportunities like these, it's best to communicate with the organisers to explore the specifics of your Unit or Group's potential involvement.

Adult Ceremonies

Ceremonies for Adult Achievements in Scouting

Just like with our youth members, we sometimes use ceremonies to mark adults' special moments and successes. Our adults make a huge contribution to our youth members' personal growth and achievements, and it's important for us to make special recognition of what it is they achieve.

As with our youth ceremonies, adult leader ceremonies:

- use the process of Plan>Do>Review> to maintain quality, and to keep them purposeful and relevant
- have the person involved at the centre, with their input and desires considered important.

There's also no reason why adult ceremonies should not also be adventurous, fun, challenging, and inclusive.

Various ceremonies are used to recognise adult involvement in, and support to, Scouting.

Common Scouting ceremonies for adults in Australia (that we'll cover in this guide) include:

Adult leader investiture

Welcoming a new adult leader to the Scouting movement.

Appointment ceremony

Welcoming a new adult leader who has previously been invested elsewhere, or into a different role. Follows a similar process to an investiture.

Presentation of certificates

Presenting a Scouting achievement to a member, generally involves the presentation of a badge to mark the achievement.

Wood Badge presentation

A presentation marking the completion of Wood Badge training relevant to the appointment.

Adult Recognition Award presentation

A presentation marking the awarding of an Adult Recognition Award at the Branch level.

Adult Ceremonies

Each of these ceremonies can be held at the local level, or at larger gatherings like Branch events celebrating achievements across a whole state or territory. As you Plan> your adult ceremony, refer to the chapters in this guide called “Ceremonies” and “Creating Ceremonies”. While the level of youth member involvement in the Plan>Do>Review> of adult ceremonies might be different, there are other principles that are just as important.

Involving Youth Members

We are a movement of young people supported by adults; remember that youth members can make a hugely valuable contribution to a successful and meaningful adult ceremony. It could make things extra memorable if your adult ceremonies are youth-led. Involving young people in planning and running ceremonies can provide a unique opportunity for them to be able to show appreciation for the support their adults give them.

Welcoming an Adult to a new Role

Whether we’re marking the very beginning of a Scouting journey, or welcoming an existing adult member to a new role, we have a special ceremony.

Ceremonies focused on welcoming new adult members include:

Investiture

Welcoming a new member to the Scouting movement.

Appointment ceremony

Welcoming a new adult who has previously been invested elsewhere, or into a different role. Follows a similar process to an investiture.

Investiture ceremony are normally completed for an adult who is becoming a uniformed leader. An investiture ceremony is normally held when becoming a member of the Movement, as an adult or youth member, and involves making the Scout Promise.



Investiture

AN INVESTITURE SYMBOLISES A NEW MEMBER'S ENTRY TO THE MOVEMENT.

Investiture ceremonies should be a special and memorable moment of someone's time in Scouting. It's all about welcoming them to their future as a member of a worldwide Scout community.

When an adult moves between Scout Groups or changes role, the ceremony involves a very similar outline to an investiture ceremony. Someone is normally only invested once - when they first become a member of Australian Scouting. This includes if they were previously a youth member and are becoming an adult leader.

If someone is re-registering as an adult in Scouting after an extended break (at least a year), it might be appropriate to hold an investiture style ceremony. This decision should be made with the adult involved.

The member will need to choose which version of the Australian Scout Promise they want to use with their Team Leader, or even better, with a Unit Leader, well in advance of them making or re-affirming their Promise.

Scouts Australia has resources such as the Promise & Law Discussion Guides to support potential new members' understanding of the Australian Scout Promise & Law.

During an investiture, a Scout **makes** their Scout Promise for the first time
During other welcoming ceremonies (like an appointment ceremony), the Scout **reaffirms** their Scout Promise

Adult Ceremonies

Changing Scout Groups, Units, or Roles

When an adult changes from one Scout Group to another, or to another Unit, or changes roles, you should hold an appointment ceremony, where they:

- Are welcomed by the Group / Unit / other formation
- Reaffirm their Scout Promise (of their choice)
- Are presented with the identifying badges and scarf relevant to their new location and / or role.

Core Features of Investitures and Appointment Ceremonies for Adults

These are very similar to a youth member's ceremony. All ceremonies welcoming a new adult member should involve:

- The member being asked if they understand and are willing to fulfil the obligations for their appointment
- For members: making or re-affirming their Scout Promise – making the Scout sign with their right hand and placing their left hand on a Group, Unit, or other Scout formation flag
- Note: where there is no Group, Unit, or other Scout Formation flag available the Australian flag may be used but must not be lowered and is to remain in an upright position
- Other members of the Unit / Group / formation being present and involved
- Being youth-led, especially if it is at a Group or Unit level, although other levels can do this too
- The presentation of new uniform items (such as membership badges, relevant scarf, name badge, shoulder badges – this will vary from place to place, and with the role)
- The new member feeling part of something special!

The ceremony should not be drawn-out; 5 minutes is a good length of time.

Remember the symbolic framework of “one journey”: if this is a Unit level ceremony, it's recommended that you draw from your section's motto as inspiration for these ceremonies.

Consider how you might make the ceremony special – an outdoors activity that is part of a local Scout Unit's weekend camp program, for instance.



Typical Proceedings

Feel free to adjust these typical proceedings to make your ceremonies special.

The Scouts present stand at the alert in a circle or semi-circle with the Unit Leader or adult leader at the front. The person being invested steps forward and stands facing them.

Ceremony Leader: [NAME], are you ready to [join the worldwide movement of Scouting and] become a [ROLE TITLE] at [FORMATION or GROUP NAME]?

New Member: Yes

Ceremony Leader: [NAME], the Australian Scout Promise is made by every Scout. By [making/reaffirming] this promise, we commit ourselves to live by it. It reminds us to be good Scouts and good people. Through making your Promise, you also acknowledge that you accept the obligations of your appointment.

Now that you have decided which version of the Australian Scout Promise you would like to [make/reaffirm], [NAME], are you ready?

New Member: Yes

Ceremony Leader: [holds the Group or / Unit flag between them, draped over a staff or the Australian Flag in an upright position if no Group, Unit, or other Scout Formation flag is available]

[NAME] please place your left hand on the flag next to mine and make the Scout sign with your right hand.

Ceremony Leader: Everyone please make the Scout sign.

New Member: [recites or repeats each line of chosen version of the Scout Promise]

Ceremony Leader: [NAME], welcome to [the world Scout Movement and] [FORMATION or GROUP NAME].

Adult Ceremonies

At this point the new adult member is presented with the various uniform items explaining their symbolism.

Here are some explanations of common uniform items:

- World Scout Emblem: Symbolises we are part of a world-wide movement of almost 60 million Scouts.
- Australian flag badge: Symbolises that we are part of Australian Scouting, where there are over 70,000 members.
- District and/or Region badge or tape: Shows which District or Region of which the Scout is a member.
- Group name tape: Shows to which Scout Group the Scout is a member.
- Group/District/Region/Branch/National Team scarf: The scarf (or necker) is symbolic of Scouting across the globe.
- After the presentation of uniform items, the new member shakes the left hand of the ceremony leader.

Ceremony Leader: [NAME], please turn and salute your fellow Scouts and Leaders.

The salute is returned.

Presentation of Certificates

Adults in Scouting can be presented with a range of certificates for their engagement and involvement in Scouting. Some certificates come with a related uniform badge like one recognising years of service.

Another type of certificate, the Appreciation Award, is available for Group Leaders and Commissioners to recognise supporters of Scouting who have provided significant support to adult leaders in carrying out their responsibilities (refer to Policy & Rules R13.6.1).



Setting up the Presentation

WHERE TO PRESENT

Certificates are normally presented at the local level; the setting will normally depend on the person's role.

For adults who work closely with young people in the Scout program, it's most appropriate to present their certificate in the presence of Scouts – normally at a regular Scouting activity.

INVOLVING YOUTH MEMBERS

It's often a great idea for the presentation to be led by a Scout from the Unit, Group, or District in which the adult is appointed. If you're engaging youth members in the presentation, make sure they have a good understanding of the award and why it's being received as well.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

External organisations may also want to acknowledge the work that an adult in Scouting has achieved in the community and could be invited to a Scout meeting to make, or watch a presentation.

Certificate presentations should normally be short – no more than 5 minutes – and don't normally need any formalities such as salutes or reaffirming of the Scout Promise. It's a good idea to include a short statement as to why the person is receiving the acknowledgement. In some ceremonies this is referred to as a "Citation" and is read out aloud to the gathering and presented to the adult.

Depending on the presentation, uniform may or may not be necessary. This often depends on the nature of the activity at which the presentation is being made.

Adult Ceremonies

Typical Proceedings

1. Come together as a formation – Unit, Group, District, Region, etc. People can be organised in a circle or horseshoe formation, as described on page 14 of this Guide.
2. The person leading the ceremony welcomes everyone, including any special guests, and explains the significance of today's presentation.
3. The adult is presented with the certificate (and badge if applicable), perhaps along with some specific examples of what they have done to be awarded the certificate. This would be done by a person of the adult's choosing.
4. The opportunity to say some words is offered to the adult who has received the certificate.
5. The person leading the ceremony thanks people and brings things to a close.

Presentation of the Wood Badge

When an adult (relevant here for both adult leaders and Rover Scouts) achieves the Wood Badge. It's important that Wood Badge presentation ceremonies reflect this major accomplishment.

THE WOOD BADGE

In Australia we divide the Wood Badge training scheme into the Certificate of Proficiency, comprised of Scouting Essentials, Scouting Adventure or Scouting Management; and Scouting Leadership.

The Wood Badge is actually made up of four elements.

- Gilwell Woggle
- Gilwell scarf
- Two wooden beads
- Parchment certificate.

Adult Leaders are presented with the first part of their Wood Badge, the Gilwell woggle, on achievement of the Certificate of Proficiency. Therefore, typically a Wood Badge presentation ceremony would not include this part.



SHAPING THE CEREMONY

The Wood Badge presentation should happen soon after it has been achieved. Make sure you allow time for your Branch office to process everything they need to.

When developing your Wood Badge ceremonies, you might like to include some historical context. This can help those present (especially the recipient) to understand the symbolic framework of the Wood Badge.

There are a number of myths out there about the Wood Badge. Two reliable sources of information are:

1. The Scout Association's (UK) heritage website: heritage.scouts.org.uk/explore/gilwell-park/the-history-of-the-scout-wood-badge/
2. The World Organization of the Scout Movement's (WOSM) Wood Badge Framework publication (2020): www.scout.org/woodbadge-framework2020
Some Branches also share a summary of this history when they send out the Wood Badge itself.

Typically, a Wood Badge presentation ceremony is a significant event. When planning a Wood Badge ceremony, it's a good idea to make sure the recipient has the opportunity to help shape how the ceremony operates so it's as meaningful for them as possible.

Adult Ceremonies

Examples of aspects to consider:

- Holding the ceremony at a location significant to their adult training journey, either public or private.
- Holding the ceremony at a typical Unit's meeting time to symbolise the role that adults in Scouting play in supporting Scouts' own growth and development.
- Inviting key people who mentored or supported the recipient along the way.
- Inviting key Scouting and community leaders to be present.
- Adults who have themselves achieved the Wood Badge are normally requested to wear their uniform along with Gilwell scarf, Wood Badge beads, and Gilwell woggle.
- Having a joint ceremony with peers whose adventures towards their own Wood Badge have crossed over with their own.
- Including short speeches from the recipient and limited other key people.
- Providing food and/or entertainment as part of the celebration.

Traditionally, adults who are awarded the Wood Badge are also invested into the 1st Gilwell Park Scout Group (UK). This usually occurs as part of the Wood Badge presentation ceremony and is confirmed through the reaffirmation of the Scout Promise.

WHO SHOULD PRESENT THE WOOD BADGE?

The presenter of the Wood Badge is a key aspect to consider – this should be decided by the Wood Badge recipient themselves. If desired, a different person could present each part. They could be: the Group Leader, District Commissioner, mentor, fellow adult leader, a Patrol Leader or Unit Leader, their Personal Leader Advisor, and so on. Traditionally the presenter of the Beads and Scarf would themselves be a Wood Badge holder. That doesn't preclude youth from being involved.

You should also consider your Branch customs around presentations.



Typical Proceedings

Prepare ahead of time:

- A ceremony leader (can be an adult or youth leader)
- A person to lead the re-affirmation of the Australian Scout Promise (can be an adult or Scout)
- A person or people to present the three remaining parts of the Wood Badge (per Branch level customs, can be adults or Scouts)
- Someone to read aloud the symbolism of the Wood Badge constituent parts (if desired) (adult or Scout)
- Ensure you have received from your Branch the three remaining parts of the Wood Badge, and that you have an explanation of the symbolism behind each.

The invited group of youth and adults gather. It's up to you, the recipient and the venue how you would like them to gather.



Adult Ceremonies

The ceremony leader calls the assembled group of attendees together.

1. A short opening/flag break occurs (refer to earlier chapters).
2. The ceremony leader explains the purpose and significance of the ceremony.
3. The Wood Badge recipient is asked to step forward.
4. The ceremony leader salutes (Scout Salute) the recipient – who returns the salute.
5. The recipient is presented with their Gilwell scarf. As this symbolises membership of 1st Gilwell Park Scout Group, this part is traditionally presented by someone who is already a member.
6. The explanation of the scarf's symbolism is read out
7. The scarf is placed over the head of the recipient and the Gilwell woggle is transferred from the recipient's usual scarf to their Gilwell scarf. Their usual scarf is then removed from the recipient's neck.
8. The explanation of the beads' symbolism is read out
9. The recipient is presented with their Wood Badge two-beads.
10. The recipient is presented with their parchment.
Option: You may choose to conduct a symbolic "investiture" into the 1st Gilwell Scout Group, where the recipient re-affirms their Scout Promise.
11. The recipient is invited to make a small appreciation speech.
12. The ceremony leader makes some suitable closing remarks and closes the formal ceremony.
13. The ceremony leader salutes (Scout Salute) the recipient – who returns the salute.



Presentation of Adult Recognition Awards

Adult Recognition Awards (ARA) are presented for especially good service to Scouts Australia. They're awarded to people who've given especially valuable service or significantly contributed to the wellbeing of Scouting beyond the level normally expected of someone in their role.

There are different levels of ARA, each with minimum requirements. Some ARAs are for members in active leadership roles, and some are for non-uniformed supporters of Scouting.

Check Scouts Australia's Policy and Rules to understand the different ARAs and how they might influence how you plan a local-level presentation.

ARAs work through an annual nomination and review process, ending in national announcements of awardees on World Scout Day: 1 August every year. Depending on your Branch, Award presentation ceremonies normally happen between August and December.

If you'd like to nominate someone for an ARA, contact your Branch Office.



Adult Ceremonies

Core Features

For most recipients, the ARA presentation ceremony happens at a State or Territory-wide Branch event. The ceremony is normally planned to cater for a large number of recipients and their families, and to receive their award from the Branch or National Chief Commissioner or Chief Scout.

Sometimes people aren't able to attend one of these events; in this case the Award is passed to their local Commissioner or Group Leader for presentation. Along with the different parts of the Award, there will sometimes be a membership record and citation included.

When done locally, the ceremony should be brief, probably less than 5 minutes. Much like with certificate ceremonies, this ceremony can happen at a regular activity of the Unit, or at a District, Region, or Branch meeting. It's best to invite family members along as well.

There are three core features of a local Adult Recognition Award ceremony:

- Explanation of the particular award and why the recipient has earned it.
- Presentation of the award, which comes as a certificate, a uniform badge, and for most Awards, an around the neck medal.
- The option for the recipient to re-affirm the Australian Scout Promise (the version of their choice).





Typical Proceedings

1. Come together as a formation – Unit, Group, District, Region, etc. People can be organised in the way described on page 14.
2. The person leading the ceremony welcomes everyone, including any special guests, and explains the significance of today's presentation.
3. For Silver Emu, President's Award, and Silver Kangaroo presentations, the person leading the ceremony will read aloud the citation. For others, they may wish to briefly talk about the accomplishments of the recipient that has led to their recognition through an Award.
4. They now place the medal over the head of the recipient. This is followed by the accompanying certificate with uniform badge attached. It is not unusual for the uniform cloth badge to have been sent to the recipient well ahead of the ceremony, but not before the 1st August in the year it has been awarded. If this is the case then an adjustment to proceedings is appropriate
Option: You may arrange for the recipient to re-affirm their Scout Promise.
5. The opportunity to say some words is offered to the recipient.
6. The person leading the ceremony thanks people and brings things to a close.



A Final Note

Now that you know all about ceremonies in Australian Scouting, go ahead and make them special and unique to your Unit, your Group, and most importantly for each and every Scout involved.

Remember, ceremonies should be adventurous, fun, challenging, and inclusive.

Don't forget to draw on our symbolic framework, and to Review> your ceremonies once in a while to keep them fresh and relatable to the young people involved.

Most of all, enjoy the celebration of achievement that Scouting ceremonies embody.

