

2008 Rank Requirement Changes

Several Boy Scout rank requirements have been updated for 2008. The new editions of the Boy Scout Handbook and 2008 Boy Scout Requirements book will be available in Scout shops very soon. Until then, here are the updated rank requirements.

Tenderfoot

Tenderfoot requirement 9b has changed. It now reads: Explain the importance of the buddy system as it relates to your personal safety on outings and in your neighborhood. Describe what a bully is and how you should respond to one.

The buddy system is a way for Scouts to look after one another, especially during outdoor adventures. When your troop goes swimming, for example, each Scout will be assigned a buddy. You keep track of what your buddy is up to, and he knows at all times where you are and how you are doing. Now and then a Scout leader might call for a buddy check. That means you must immediately hold up the hand of your buddy. If anyone is missing, everyone will know it right away. The buddy system should always be used when a troop or patrol is hiking, camping, and participating in any aquatics activities. It's a way of sharing the good times and preventing the bad. You can use the buddy system when you go places in your community, as well, to help keep yourself and your buddies safe.

A bully is someone who wants to hurt another person. Bullying can be physical, verbal, emotional, social, behavioral, or any combination. Bullying can also take place just about anywhere: on the bus, at school, at soccer practice, even online, via the Internet. However, bullying can be stopped. Help put an end to the bullying by taking action first yourself.

If ignoring the bully doesn't work, stand up for yourself with words. Rehearse what you want to say to that you will feel in control of your emotions when you confront the bully. Tell the bully how hurtful it feels to be bullied, and ask why you are the target. Ask the bully to stop.

Sometimes, agreeing with the bully and having a ready response will work ("So what if I have a face full of zits. What's it to you?").

Hang out with a couple of friends; try not to be alone.

Tell an adult you trust, such as a parent, teacher, or coach.

This requirement is described on page 57 of the 2008 edition of the Boy Scout Handbook.

Tenderfoot requirement 12a has changed. It now reads: Demonstrate how to care for someone who is choking.

During a meal, a man lurches from his chair and clutches his throat. His face turns red and he seems unable to breathe.

Ask, "Are you choking?" If the victim nods yes and he cannot speak, cough, or breathe, perform back blows and abdominal thrusts.

Do not interfere with a person who is conscious and can speak, cough, or breathe. He is still getting air into his lungs. Encourage him to cough up the object, and be ready to administer first aid if it is needed. Have someone call for help.

Food caught in the throat is like a cork stuck in the neck of a plastic bottle. Nothing can get in, but squeeze the bottle the right way and the cork will pop out. That's the principle behind using back blows and abdominal thrusts. Here's how to do it:

If the child or adult is conscious, give a series of five back blows. From behind, place one arm across the person's chest and lean forward. Firmly strike the person's back with the palm of your hand. Follow the five back blows with abdominal thrusts as described in steps 2 and 3.

Stand behind the victim. Put your arms around the waist and clasp your hands together. The knuckle of one thumb should be just above the victim's navel but below the rib cage. Thrust your clasped hands inward and upward with enough force to pop loose the obstruction.

Repeat steps 1 through 3 until the obstruction clears or medical help arrives.

If a choking person is very large or has lost consciousness, use this method:

Lay him on the floor and sit straddling his thighs.

Place the heel of one hand on the victim's upper abdomen, slightly above his navel but below the rib cage.

Place your other hand on top of the first and press upward with quick thrusts.

With your index finger, probe the mouth of an unconscious victim to remove any obstructions. Be ready to start rescue breathing.

Repeat this procedure until the obstruction pops loose or medical help arrives.

If you ever choke on food and cannot breathe, clutch your throat with your hand. That's the universal sign for choking, and it might bring someone to your aid. If there is no one nearby, perform the abdominal thrusts on yourself by pulling your fist into your upper abdomen, or you can bend over the back of a chair and force it against your belly.

Thrusts to the abdomen can cause rib fractures and other injuries. Use only mannequins or other training devices to practice or demonstrate abdominal thrusts.

This requirement is described on pages 296-297 of the 2008 edition of the Boy Scout Handbook.

Second Class

Second Class requirement 8b is new. It reads: Explain the three R's of personal safety and protection.

Be aware of the three R's to help ensure your personal safety and to help protect yourself.

Recognize that anyone could be a child molester. Child molesters can be very skilled at influencing children, so be aware of situations that could lead to abuse.

Resist advances made by child molesters to avoid being abused. Just say no, and don't be embarrassed to run away, scream, or cause a commotion.

Report any molestation or attempted molestation to parents or other trusted adults.

Anytime someone does something to you that your instincts tell you is wrong, or that makes you feel threatened or uncomfortable, tell someone you trust. It's OK to ask for help.

Most relationships with others can be warm and open. That is because they are built on trust. A pat on the back, a hug of encouragement, or a firm handshake are ways we can show people we care about them.

However, it is a sad fact that some adults and teenagers use their size and their power over others to abuse them. You need to know about abuse so that you will understand what to do if you are ever threatened.

Those who abuse young people know they are doing something wrong. They usually try to keep their actions a secret from other adults. They might frighten their victims to prevent them from telling anyone what is happening. They might try to make the abused person feel that he or she is to blame.

No one should live in fear of abuse. You do not have to let people touch you in ways you find uncomfortable. If you are ever asked to do something you know is wrong, you have the right to refuse.

Protecting Yourself From Sexual Abuse

Most sexual abuse can be prevented if young people know and follow these three R's:

Recognize.

Resist.

Report.

Recognize. Recognizing a situation that could become sexual abuse can help you get away before you are in serious danger.

People who sexually abuse young people are called molesters. Most often, the molester is known by his or her victim. The molester might be anyone--a family member, schoolteacher, religious leader, or youth group leader.

An adult attempting sexual abuse might be by touching you in ways that are confusing. He or she might try to touch your groin area and pretend it was an accident. You might be asked to pose for photographs in your underwear or swimming suit, and then in no clothing at all.

Some adults or older youths might try to use your natural curiosity about sex as an opportunity to attempt sexual abuse. Sex is a normal bodily function you need to understand. Be on guard around anyone who makes it seem dirty or secretive.

Resist. If anyone ever attempts to do something to your body that makes you feel bad or that you know is wrong, you have the right to stop them. Run, shout, or make a scene in public to protect yourself. Faced with resistance, most molesters will back off.

Report. Anytime you believe that someone has tried to abuse you or someone else, report it. Talk to a trusted adult or call an abuse hot line--you can get the number from the phone book or by dialing an operator. Abuse is an adult-sized problem. By talking about it with adults, you can let them solve it.

For more information on dealing with abuse, you and your parents or guardian can read together the pamphlet *How to Protect Your Children From Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide*, found inside the cover of your Boy Scout Handbook.

This requirement is described on pages 108 and 378-379 of the 2008 edition of the Boy Scout Handbook.

First Class

First Class requirement 12 is new. It reads: Describe the three things you should avoid doing related to the use of the Internet. Describe a cyberbully and how you should respond to one.

Computers allow access to a vast amount of knowledge. By logging onto the Internet, you can contact sources of information around the world and download material about any subject. You might already be using the Internet for schoolwork, hobbies, or simply for enjoyment. You can also develop online friendships with Scouts anywhere on the globe.

For all of its benefits, though, the Internet can also present hazards you should know about and avoid. Most people using the Internet are friendly and honest. However, there are some who use the Internet to take advantage of others. There are also Web sites with content that is unsuitable for young people. Use the following guidelines to protect your privacy and gain the most good from your time online.

Whenever you go online: (1) Don't respond to inappropriate messages or Web sites. If you stumble across information or images that you don't understand, it's OK to talk about it with your parent or guardian; (2) Don't share information such as your address, telephone number, school name, or your parents' work address or telephone number, and never send any photos via the Internet unless you have permission; (3) Never agree to meet anyone who has contacted you online unless your parent or guardian goes with you.

Another hazard of the Internet is called the cyberbully. A cyberbully uses electronic communications such as the Internet to harass, threaten, and harm others. Some tactics that cyberbullies use include dissing (spreading damaging gossip about a person), harassment (repeatedly sending hateful messages), and impersonation (pretending to be someone else and posting damaging information to harm another's reputation).

If you feel you are the victim of a cyberbully, do not retaliate. Ask the cyberbully to stop. Do not make your message aggressive or emotional. Let the bull know that you will take other steps if the abuse does not stop. If that does not help, tell your parent or guardian right away. Cyberbullies can't be seen when they are online; this gives them a false sense of security. That they don't know is that they can be found out, caught, and even punished.

The best way to protect yourself is to be a good online citizen. Don't post information that could be used against you or other people. Stay away from sites that tolerate and encourage bullying. Be kind online.

This requirement is described on pages 165 and 359 of the 2008 edition of the Boy Scout Handbook.