Scouting America









SOCIAL MEDIA PLAYBOOK



WELCOME



INTRODUCING

THE SCOUTING AMERICA SOCIAL MEDIA PLAYBOOK

Objectives:
Grow Scouting's reach, support recruitment and build strong online communities.

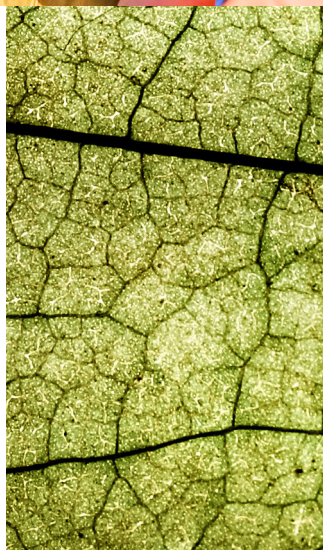
Target Audience:
For units, volunteers, councils and parents.





Use this guide to set up your social media account(s) and post with confidence and consistency.

If you have questions, concerns or noteworthy stories (features, events, etc., that you believe should be highlighted on National social media), email the Scouting America National Social Media Team at Social.Media@Scouting.org.



WHY SOCIAL MEDIA MATTERS

Social media connects families, shares adventures and inspires new members. It's where parents are active and it is used to recruit and retain Scouts. Social media also builds visibility for Scouting in your local community.



Goal to Educate

Highlight Scouting's benefits, values, active community involvement and programs.



Goal to Engage

Create conversations and invite families to get involved.



Goal to Inspire

Share photos, videos and stories from your unit.



GENERAL BEST PRACTICES

Post regularly.
Aim for 2–5+ times a month and build up from there.

Use high-quality images and videos.

Follow and tag the National Scouting America and Cub Scouts accounts across platforms and use relevant hashtags.
For example: #ScoutingAmerica, #CubScouts, #ScoutSafely, #EagleScouts.

Seek to include a call to action.
For example: “Join us,” “Learn more.”

NOTE: *For each and every platform, include your website and make sure your channel’s about/bio is up to date, clear and informative.*



WHERE TO FIND SCOUTING AMERICA ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook

Scouting America: *https://www.facebook.com/scouting.america/*
Cub Scouts: *https://www.facebook.com/officialcubscouts*

Instagram

Scouting America: *https://www.instagram.com/scouting.america/*
Cub Scouts: *https://www.instagram.com/thecubscouts/*

LinkedIn

Scouting America: *https://www.linkedin.com/company/scouting-america*

Tiktok

Scouting America: *https://www.tiktok.com/@scouting.america*

YouTube

Scouting America: *https://www.youtube.com/@boyscoutsofamerica*



HASHTAGS

A hashtag is a word or phrase with the symbol “#” preceding it. For example: #CubScouts.

On social media, hashtags are used to categorize content, making it easier for people to find posts on specific topics. They help boost visibility for content, and allow users to join/follow conversations, trends and campaigns across various platforms.

We advise individuals to use 5-7 hashtags per post – this is a solid, universal range that is a good goal across platforms.

With specific campaigns, holidays, trends and initiatives, there may be additional hashtags to include. For example: #GivingTuesday #PinewoodDerby.



SCOUTING AMERICA
NATIONAL HASHTAGS

Make sure to tag and mention Scouting America, Cub Scouts (where applicable) and your local council.

Use the following hashtags where relevant:

#ScoutingAmerica
(always use)

#CubScouts
(always use for Cub Scouts content)

#CubScouting
#Scouting
#ScoutsBSA
#SeaScouts
#Venturing
#Exploring
#LearningforLife
#EagleScouts

#ScoutingforFood
(Scouting for Food is a National Scouting America initative aimed at reducing hunger and helping those in need)

#CleanWaterScouts
(Scouting for Clean Waterways is a National Scouting America initative aimed at reducing marine debris and pollution)







SAFEGUARDING YOUTH

Follow ALL Scouting America Youth Protection and Safeguarding standards online

Learn more here:
https://www.scouting.org/training/youth-protection/

No one-on-one youth/adult communication.

Avoid posting full names.
For example: use “Samuel J.” instead of “Samuel Jones.” Avoid using other private identifying information about individual Scouts such as addresses, schedules and extremely personal details.

Talk about social media and digital privacy with your unit before you begin your social media Scouting adventure.

Respect the wishes of those who do not want to participate.
If a parent does not want his or her child(ren) on social media, blur face(s) or include photos without his or her child(ren).

Report misuse of photos or accounts to your council.

INSTAGRAM OVERVIEW

Target audience:
Parents ages 25–45; older youth in Scouting or recent alums.

Visual-first platform perfect for photos and short videos.

Use Stories, Reels and Carousels to increase reach.

Follow the National Scouting America and Cub Scouts accounts.

Don't be afraid to grow your Instagram presence over time, experiment, try new things and see what works for YOUR unit!



INSTAGRAM FEATURES

Reels
Reels are video content of any kind. Great for Pinewood Derby, camp moments, quick how-tos or tutorials.

Carousels
Carousels are posts with multiple images. Showcase step-by-step activities, Scout accomplishments, events, Merit Badge work and more.

Stories
Stories share behind-the-scenes or timely updates; repost content from National accounts, your council and/or relevant micro-influencers.

Your story is content that lives on your profile (you click your profile circle image to see these) for 24 hours; can be saved in highlights on your profile.



Collaborative posts enable you to share content with partners. For example: if your troop volunteers at an animal shelter, you can invite that animal shelter (if it has an Instagram profile) to be a collaborator on your post; if you have an Instagram profile for a troop and also have an Instagram profile for the corresponding pack, you can create collaborative posts that include both accounts on Instagram.

If you are editing a post on your phone (after the post has already gone live), you will see “Add collaborators” at the top of your post, under/next to your username.

NOTE: To invite someone to be a collaborator on your post, click “Tag” and “Invite Collaborator” will pop up as an option underneath; you can collaborate with five accounts for each post (send five collaborator invites).



INSTAGRAM

CONTENT TIPS

Include fun, emoji-filled captions with a clear call to action.

Post vibrant, authentic images of Scouts in action.

You cannot add links to captions. URLs/ links are NOT clickable, so we recommend using LinkTree or another similar service/ tool for the link in your bio. This will enable you to include a full list of links.

Use consistent filters or styles to keep your feed unified.

As referenced before, tag the National Scouting America, Cub Scouts and high-adventure accounts; use relevant hashtags, too (1-7 hashtags per post).



FACEBOOK OVERVIEW



Ideal for reaching adults like parents, grandparents, Scouting advocates (alumni) and community leaders.

Great for sharing event recaps, photos and announcements.

Largest versatility/widest range of capabilities and tools.

Refrain from using private groups or pages.

Set up your page with a name that associates you/your profile with Scouting America and provides your location for interested families. For example: “Scouts BSA Troop 144 – San Diego, California” or “Cub Scout Pack 59 – Milwaukee, Wisconsin.”

Include basic info for meeting times/locations and contact info for unit leaders.

FACEBOOK CONTENT TIPS

Share local Scouting stories with photos.

Post event reminders and follow-ups.

Use Facebook Events for recruitment nights or service projects.

Encourage parents to like, comment and share your posts.

Do NOT tag youths' personal profiles.

Use Facebook Pages for public updates and recruitment.

Pin key info (like how to join) at the top of your page.

Facebook live and stories provide additional capabilities.

Follow the National Scouting America and Cub Scouts pages; follow your council; engage on posts and reshare content.





TIKTOK OVERVIEW

TikTok is perfect for storytelling, humor, trends and quick tips.

When used safely, TikTok is both youth- and parent-friendly.

Focus on fun, short videos with music and text overlays.

Leverage older youth for help creating and editing content; however, parents/adults MUST post and manage account.

Do not take TikTok too seriously – what's popular on TikTok this evening may be forgotten by tomorrow morning; while your content can go viral, we do not recommend spending a massive amount of limited resources on this platform.

TIKTOK
CONTENT TIPS

Use appropriate music and follow trends that align with Scouting values to highlight Scouting fun. (If you are ever in doubt about whether a trend or something else is OK to emulate, err on the side of caution.)

Show hands-on activities, crafts, adventures, photo montages and more.

Keep videos 15–60 seconds with closed captions and/or voiceovers.

Follow the National Scouting America account; engage and interact with National, your council, micro-influencers and those in the Scouting and outdoor communities.











YOUTUBE OVERVIEW

Ideal for longer-form video storytelling.

Use for recaps, how-to videos, camp previews and testimonials.

Great tool for recruitment and education.

YOUTUBE CONTENT TIPS

We advise that you do not set your content as "made for kids," which may limit your reach and exposure. It also prevents viewers from adding your video to their playlists.

You can also create playlists according to year, topic (campouts, meetings, etc.), recruiting, events, service projects and more.

Create playlists and include content from the National channel, your council's channel and media/news. For example: if a news outlet covers your pack's Pinewood Derby, you would want to include that in your playlist.

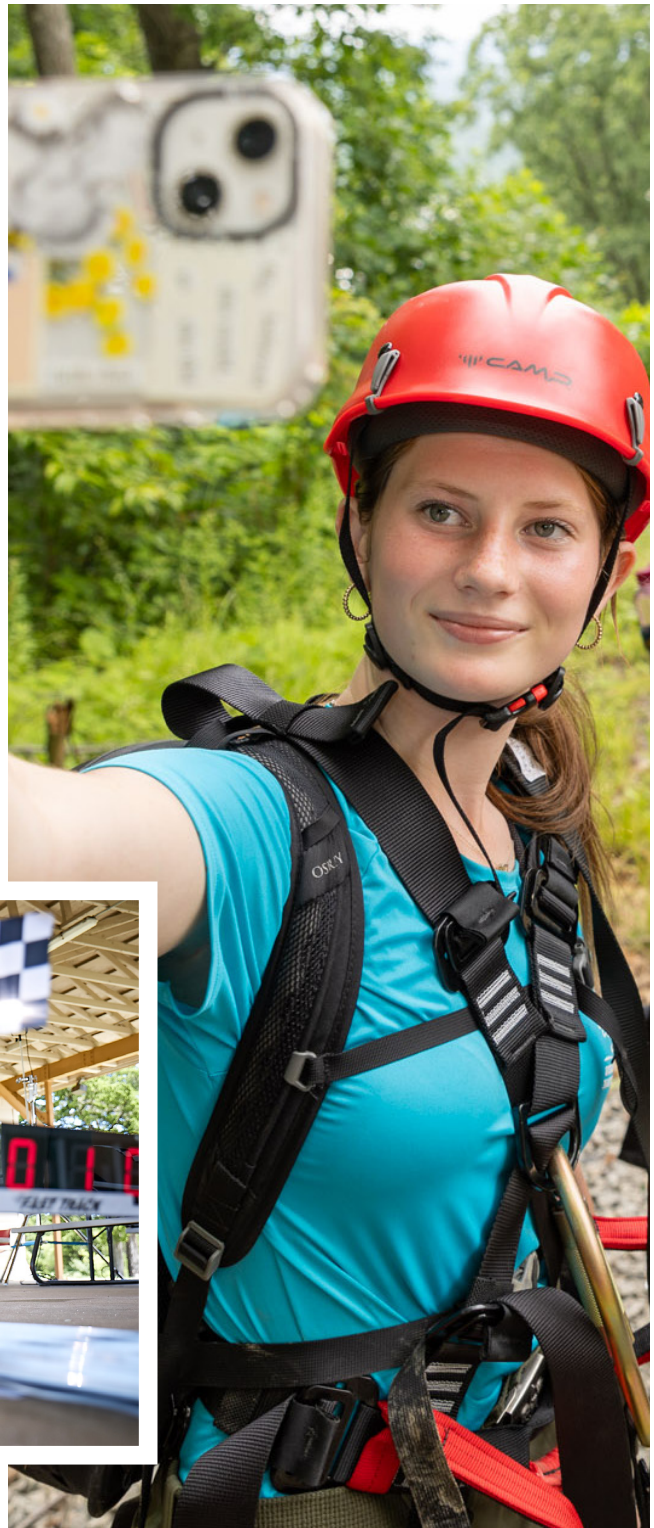
Include strong titles, thumbnails and descriptions while leveraging relevant hashtags and keywords.

YouTube shorts are up to 3 minutes long. These can be leveraged for other social media platforms, too.

Leverage YouTube live to livestream content. For example: Eagle Board of Reviews, crossover/ranking up ceremonies, live sessions with guest speakers, etc.)

Post longer videos for more in-depth content, tutorials, etc.









BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Remember, social media is an extension of Scouting in real life – stay positive, safe and on-brand for Scouting America.

Make sure your social media content and actions online align with the Scout Oath, Scout Law and Scouting's values.

Highlight achievements, adventures and service; leverage social media to expand your reach, increase awareness of all that Scouting has to offer and connect with others in the Scouting community - whether in your state, across the nation or worldwide!

Use photos and stories to tell the Scouting story while also showcasing what makes YOUR unit special and authentic.

CONSISTENTLY promote joining and volunteering.



FINAL REMINDERS AND SUPPORT

Follow National Scouting America and Cub Scouts accounts across platforms and engage! Email Social.Media@Scouting.org with questions, concerns and ideas/leads.

You don't have to post perfectly – just post authentically. Remember, it's a marathon, not a sprint! You can grow your Scouting social media over time and learn what works and what doesn't.

Never allow social media about Scouting to get in the way of Scouting, itself. (Your unit's social media is a side dish for the main course of Scouting - it's an extension of the main attraction!)

Remember, social media is always evolving and changing; new features are always being added, new apps/platforms will emerge over time, etc. Be willing to adapt and do not focus on being perfect.

To this point, being active on one or two platforms – and doing them well/improving over time – is better than having inactive, stagnant accounts on five+ platforms.

Let's grow Scouting together, one post at a time!