

Your guide to leading a Den in Pack 337

2010 – 2011

Pack 337 Den Leader's Guide
2010-2011

TRAINING

- **Fast Start** - Recommended for all new leaders, and may be taken online.
- **Youth Protection** - Required for all leaders, and may be taken online. Training covers guidelines leaders must follow in order to keep youth safe.
- **Leader Specific** - Required for all leaders, and may be taken online, or in person (recommended). Training specific to the position you hold (which may change every year). These trainings are put on by the District Training Committee. When a leader changes positions, there often is a new level of training required for that position.
- **Supplemental Training** - Other training such as "Safe Swim Defense", "Safety Afloat", "BALOO (Basic Adult Leader Outdoor)", and many others are offered. Some are offered online, others are put on by the District. Note: Webelos Den campouts are restricted based on Training, refer to the current rules online for this.
- **Training Awards** - Training knots may be earned and worn on leader uniforms. Requirements generally are to be trained, to attend either 2 Roundtable meetings or University of Scouting, and to serve 1 - 2 years in a position. Look online for requirements.

UNIFORM

- **Uniform Types** - Field Uniform refers to the dress uniform. This was formerly referred to as Class-A. Activity Uniform refers to a Scout T-Shirt (or Pack T-Shirt) along with appropriate pants or shorts. This was formerly referred to as Class-B.
- **At Pack Meetings** - Den Leaders, as well as key Committee Members are asked to wear uniform shirts, and if possible Scout pants. Preference would be for leaders to wear uniform shirt tucked in. Ladies have options of the alternative "Den Mother" outfit, or khaki skirts as well. Leaders are not encouraged to wear hats and scarves of their rank. Boys wear full Field uniforms.
- **At Den Meetings** - Den Leaders may wear either a Field Uniform, or an Activity Uniform for their Den meetings. Boys are expected to wear their Field Uniform, but should be encouraged to wear a Pack T-Shirt underneath so that they can remove their hats, neckerchiefs, slides, and dress shirts, as needed. If a Den is planning a meeting with all Sports, or rough activity, they may announce that it is an "Activity Uniform Day".
- **Other Meetings** - The assumption should be that boys and leaders wear Field uniforms to every Pack event, unless otherwise specified. Assistants - Assistants are encouraged, but not required to wear uniforms.

DENS ONLINE

Our Pack Website is at www.pack337.com. Each Den is able to maintain their own web page, calendar, etc. Please check with the Pack webmaster for training on how to do this.

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PACK MEETINGS

- **Preparations** - The following is a list of things the Den needs to prepare for each monthly Pack Meeting:
 - a) **Flag & Cheer** - The Den should be prepared with a good flag and cheer. Generally, Dens have a few standard cheer or two, and if time permits, come up with a theme oriented Pack Meeting cheer every once and a while.
 - b) **Show & Tell**- Dens are encouraged to send in photos to show prior to the Pack meeting, and to bring in any "Show & Tell" items to set up on a table for people to see as they gather. Be sure if you do this to have a tent sign with your Den number on it.
 - c) **Skits, Performances, Jokes, Run-Ons, or Presentations** - Dens are encouraged to offer some form of entertainment which allows the boys a chance to get up front. Most presentations are humorous, but many can be serious and themed for the Pack meeting.
 - d) **Assigned Duties** - At Leaders Meetings, Den Leaders may volunteer to perform duties such as Flag Ceremony, Prayer, Opening and Closing Ceremonies, Setup, or Cleanup. These duties will either be posted online, or supplied at leader's meetings.

- **Meetings** - The following help is needed from Den Leaders at Pack Meetings:
 - a) **Representation** - The Den Leadership position must be represented either by a Den Leader, an Assistant Den Leader, or at a minimum, by a responsible parent.
 - b) **Gathering** - Den Leaders should arrive before their members do. Normally, members arrive up to 20 minutes prior to the meeting. Den leaders can help setup their Den chairs, and can help monitor the Cubs and sibling behavior prior to the meeting.
 - c) **Guidance** - Spirited Den Leaders make for an exciting Pack Meeting. Most Pack games are setup by Den, so Den Cheers are in order. Additionally, Den leaders should always monitor the behavior of all Cubs and sibling (and parents) during the Pack meeting. The following Pack Rule always applies "When it's time to have fun, we have fun, and when it's time to be serious we be serious". Den Leaders set the entire tone of the Pack Meeting.
 - d) **Cubmasters' Moment** - This is a time for all Cubs to listen. Den Leaders are asked to group their boys together and to sit with them, helping them to listen quietly.

PACK LEVEL SUPPORT

Den Leaders primary focus should be their Den, but they are also asked to "Help the Pack Go" as follows:

- **Leader's Meetings** - All Dens should be represented at Pack Leaders meetings. If the Den Leader can't make it, they should arrange for an Assistant or responsible adult to attend.
- **Den Communication** - No one can communicate to Den families as well as the Den Leader can. Please leave space in your Den Meeting agendas every week for Pack announcements. These announcements should be designed to rally the boys, and to inform the parents. Many Den leaders find that summarizing upcoming events and getting it to their families in printed form or even an email, is very effective. If you wish to set up a Yahoo Group email list for your Den, let us know.
- **Parent Volunteers** - Den Leaders know their parents. As Pack volunteer needs arise, please be prepared to offer the services of your Parent volunteers. The more you ask different parents to help, the more buy-in they have, and the more involved they become in the program in general.

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AWARDS

The following is a description of most major awards:

- **Bobcat** - Incoming Cubs are expected to earn their Bobcat badge prior to a Pack Meeting setup by the Cubmaster. Bobcat ceremonies involve a short candlelight Ceremony. If a new boy earns Bobcat after this Pack meeting, the ceremony must be coordinated with the Cubmasters.
- **Rank** - Rank Badges are generally awarded at the Blue & Gold Banquet (February or March). However, Dens have the option of having their ranks awarded earlier, if coordinated with the Cubmasters. Blue & Gold rank advancements are generally set up by the Cubmasters and Awards Chairman, but Dens are welcomed to design their own Ceremonies, with Cubmaster approval. Either way, Den leaders should be prepared to offer a short word of encouragement and/or reflection about their Den.
- **Tiger Paws (for Tiger Rank)** - Tiger paws are awarded at Den meetings, after completing some minimum requirements. Beads for the paws are given out during the meeting so that the boys can receive awards along the way leading up to their Tiger badge.
- **Progress Towards Rank (non Tiger Ranks)** - These emblems and related beads are awarded by Den Leaders at the Den Level. They allow the boys to receive immediate recognition for their work towards their Rank badge.
- **Arrow Points** - Arrow points are for Wolf and Bear ranks. They will be issued at a Pack meeting. Den leaders are welcomed to have a short talk about what their Den did to earn it, if desired.
- **Webelos Activity Badges** - These Pins are for the Webelos rank. They will be issued at a Pack meeting. Den leaders are encouraged to have a short talk about each awarded Badge, since they are so involved.
- **Sports & Academic Belt Loops & Pins** - These will be awarded at a Pack Meeting. Boys may earn these at home under the direct supervision of the Den Leadership. Boys must earn these awards with Cub Scouts in mind, and in the current year, while he is a Cub. Note: The belt loops are very easy to earn, and typically, parents push the awards through in high numbers, sometimes to the point where the Cub doesn't know what he has earned. Please discourage this practice by monitoring, and enforcing the above requirements. These awards constitute a large percentage of the high awards costs for the Pack.
- **Religious Awards** - Earned through a specially assigned counselor through your place of worship. These awards may be awarded at your place of worship and/or at a Pack Meeting.
- **Perfect Attendance Awards & Year Pins** - These will be issued at the end of the year at a Pack Meeting.
- **Other Awards** - There are many other individual as well as Den awards such as "Conservation", "Leave No Trace", "Summertime", "Outdoor", "World Den", and more, in which you may participate. Check your Scout book, and online.

Sign Off - When signing off on awards, remember the Cub Motto "Do Your Best". If you have a boy who is trying hard, but is unable to achieve exactly what the award or achievement dictates, then it's time to sign him off and move on. Also, if you have an unsupportive parent, you want to be careful to not punish the boy for their lack of involvement in the program. However, if a boy is capable, and is not doing his best, it is completely appropriate to not sign him off.

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DEN MEETINGS IN GENERAL

- **Purpose** - "Fun with a Purpose", as the founder Lord Baden Powell says. Den Meetings are to be a fun time of celebration, tempered with productive activities, structure, and achievement. Preparation for the Pack meeting can promote team spirit, and teach boys the importance of working together. In everything that is done, Boy Scout character development is held high.
- **Den Chief** - Den Chiefs are Boy Scouts who come and help in your Den. You can coordinate getting a Den Chief for your Den through the Cubmaster, who will, in turn work with a Scoutmaster to set it up. Den Chiefs are extremely helpful, and you will find that they are a great asset to your Den. Additionally, they keep Boy Scouting in front of the boys.
- **Denners** - Another important part of the Cub program is the Denner: A Cub Scout leader in your Den. Every boy should have a chance to be a Denner. You may select the 1st few Denners, but after that, it is suggested that you hold an election, complete with little speeches. Denners should serve for about 1 month (Pack meeting to Pack meeting), and are awarded a yellow Denner bar to wear during their tenure. Denner bars may be picked up at the Scout Shop. Denners can be the helper with attendance, dues, handing things out, and leading the boys.
- **Achievements** - Leading up to the Blue & Gold, you need to be sure you get the rank requirements done. You may work on electives and sign them off, but arrow points are not awarded until the Rank is awarded. Don't forget to implement the rank-specific "Progress towards Rank" badge.
- **Discipline** - Good behavior is expected of a Scout. The goals of the Scouting program includes the building of character traits such as: Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, and Reverent. As leaders, we need to guide boys in this direction, and good behavior is a MUST. At the same time, we need to be as gracious as we can with boys who are learning to behave, without allowing them to ruin the experience for the others. Amidst all of this, we need to be sure to keep the program FUN. Start the year off by being very strict, while being very fun and loving at the same time. Boys are not to chat and goof off during serious work or during flag ceremonies. Boys respecting each other needs to be constantly reinforced. Here are some guidelines for Den discipline:

Individual Discipline - Pull a Scout aside privately (being careful to not humiliate), and tell him what he's doing is not acceptable. Second time, sit down with the parent and the Scout after the meeting and let them know that the behavior will not be tolerated, and that he may be asked to miss a Den meeting if it continues. Third time, suspend the Scout from a Den meeting.

Use "Signs Up" Properly- Sometimes throwing the signs up and saying "Hey guys ... signs up", can become ineffective. Try quietly putting up your sign, and waiting without saying anything. This is a subtle way of pointing out the disruptors. Do this even if it takes a few minutes. Once you have every ones attention say "Okay guys, now you've wasted ## minutes of your game time, this is a choice you make. Remember, we cut game time first". The boys hate to loose game time, and the ones who were goofing offhate to be to blame for it.

Pizza Party Incentive - When you have a den that needs to focus try this: Use an empty Jar and tell them you'll add 4 gold coins at the end of every meeting for expected behavior. Tell them when the coins reach a certain line, there will be a pizza party (Little Ceasers is cheap). At the end of meetings, if there were issues, let them know what they were and put in less coins (possibly none). If they did extra well, add more.

Highlight a Motto - Let them know what's expected. Tell them "When it's time to work, I expect you to work hard, and when it's time to play, I expect you to play hard." Reinforcing what's expected keeps proper behavior on the top of their mind.

Cubmaster Visit - A visit from the Cubmaster, especially at the beginning of the year may be\ helpful. An encouraging, positive, inspirational speech about growing up, and being a Scout can go a long way.

Know that your leadership will back you up when you take balanced, fair measures to enforce proper behavior in your Den, albeit strict.

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- **Snacks** - Generally snacks can be disruptive and time consuming. You'll find many parents who want to bring snacks. Decide your policy and enforce it. Water on stand-by is always good.
- **Meeting Length** - Meetings should last a minimum of an hour, but often longer is required. End time should be agreed upon by all Den families, and should be met by the Den leadership. Be sensitive to school nights and bedtimes. Older boys can have longer meetings and stay up later.
- **Location** - It is encouraged for Dens to meet on Faith Fellowship property. However, meetings at other locations is allowed. All meeting locations must be approved by the Cubmaster and Charter Organization Representative. Meeting Days and rooms also need to be coordinated with Pack leadership.
- **Dues** - Den expenses should be supplemented by the families of that Den. Pack Dues cover Pack expenses. It is suggested to collect between .50 cents and \$3 per Den meeting depending on the age of the boys, and the projects the Den is doing. Collecting weekly Den Dues is a great way to encourage scouts to "earn their way" through scouting. It's advised to ask the parents to have the boys "earn" their dues by doing simple small "chores" outside of their normal ones, just for their Den Dues. You should do your best to keep track of who has paid their dues to keep things fair. All expense tracking and spending is done by the Den leaders. Keep good records in case you get any questions. Towards the end of the year, if you discover you have enough dues, you may choose to dis-continue dues, or may continue collect and throw a "Party" at the end of the year. As Den money is spent, be sure to remind the boys that this is "their money" that paid for things.

PARENTS AND DEN MEETINGS

- **Parent Attendance** - At Tiger age, the boys parents are expected to attend. Older ages, it is up to the discretion of the Den leadership. Parents sometime can help, sometimes can distract. Be sure the boys get to do all of the hands-on work themselves!
- **Parent Help** - Don't forget to utilize the resources you have within your Den. Many parents would be glad to take on a teaching or project part of a Den meeting. An involved parent is a happy parent. **Parent Responsibilities** – You should write the parents a letter at the beginning of the year, asking them to let you know well in advance of the meeting if they can not attend. Make sure they understand they can't just come and go as they please. They need to let you know so that you can purchase supplies without waste. Also, you may want to ask your parents to plan on helping you clean up near the end of the meeting.
- **Siblings** - Den meeting are for Cubs. Parents who need to bring siblings should be asked to bring something for them to do. Siblings should play in a separate area from where the boys are holding their den meetings.
- **Achievement Sign Off** - Most Cub books are designed for the Cub to do most achievements at home with his parents. However, experience shows it's often difficult now days for parents to do so. What works best is for some of the achievements to be done in the Den and others at home. The Den leader needs to clearly communicate expectations and deadlines for home achievements to parents. Parents may sign off at home, but all achievements must be approved by the Den Leadership.

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DEN RECORD KEEPING

Normally, Den Leaders assign the following record keeping to an assistant or parent:

- **Awards** - All of the above awards must be tracked at the Den Level, and communicated to the Awards Chairperson one to two weeks prior to the Pack Meeting. The later you wait, the more chance the Scout Shop will be out. Note: To track your awards, you may use an electronic Excel tracker (downloadable on our Yahoo site), a printed paper form (get online), and/or a large plastic advancement dry-erase poster you can get from the Scout Shop.
- **Attendance** - Dens must track Den Meeting attendance. Also, it would be helpful as a Den leader to check the Pack attendance roster at the Pack meeting to ensure all of your families checked in. The perfect attendance award requires attendance of 80% of Den meetings, and all but 3 required Pack events. Remember to have your Denner keep track of attendance. Note: Required Pack events are Pack Meetings (including Blue & Gold and Pinewood), Food Drive, and Family Fest.
- **Dues** - You should always keep track of Den Dues to keep things fair. Remember to have your Denner keep track of dues.
- **Roster** - The Pack maintains a master roster which must be maintained with your help. Please communicate all Name, Address, phone number, and email address changes promptly to the Pack leadership, so that the Pack records and Pack emailing lists may be maintained.

DO'S AND DON'TS

- **Two Deep Leadership** - There must always be at least 1 registered Scout Leader, and a second leader, or 18+ adult present at any Den meeting or outing
- **Swimming** - All Swims (including pools) must be coordinated with the Pack Leadership, and require a trained "Safety Afloat" individual.. If you want to have an unofficial pool party, no boys or leaders are allowed to wear uniforms, say the promise, work on achievements, etc.
- **Camping** - Only Webelos Dens may camp as a Den. All Webelos Den campouts must be coordinated with and approved by Pack leadership, under Pack Guidelines, and must be planned and executed with a Baloo-Trained individual or one with Webelos Outdoor training.
- **Shooting Sports** - BB 's, Archery, and Slingshots are only allowed at District-run events, or at special Pack events where waivers have been obtained.
- **Knives** - Knives may not be brought to or used at any Pack event, unless the Cub has earned his "Whittln' Card", and has the permission of both his parent, and a Leader. Boys may earn their card towards the end of the year during the "Bear" rank. Den leaders are asked to coordinate this training with Pack leadership.
- **Outings** - Outings are allowed, but all rules within the "Guide to Safe Scouting" must be followed. The Pack will reimburse you for this document, should you purchase it from the Scout Shop. Note, you can also print it online. Please inform the Pack leadership of all Den outings in advance.

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DEN MEETING FORMAT

Den meetings are a very important part of the Cub Scouting program. All Dens should have the following elements in their Den Meetings;

- **Opening** - During the opening, the Denner should do:
 - a) Flag Ceremony - performed by the Denner as follows:
 - Assigns someone to hold a small flag (flag holder doesn't salute)
 - "Scouts please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance"
 - "Scout Salute" (waits) "And Pledge" (says the pledge).
 - After the pledge is said, Denner holds salute and then says "Two"!
 - b) Promise - Denner leads the Cubs in the Cub Scout Promise, and asks what the Cub Scout Motto is
 - c) Attendance - Denner quickly records boys attendance and records if they have their Uniform, Book, and Dues. Remind the boys when they get ready for scouts about "U.B.Had" which means "Uniform, Book, Homework And Dues". Tracking this encourages the boys, and can be used to offer periodic awards for those in uniform, bringing their book & dues.
 - d) Dues - Have someone help the Denner collect the dues, but the Denner tracks it. Boys should be asked to always "earn" their dues. It can be something very simple like helping take out the trash, but must be done solely for earning their dues. Make sure the boys get the idea that they are "Helping the Pack go", and when you buy something they take come or consume, reinforce that their dues paid for it. When a boy misses his dues, be sure they make it up.

- **Announcements**
 - a) Reflections - Take time to talk about recent Pack and Den events to reinforce the good time they had and to help boys who couldn't be there to be included.
 - b) Upcoming Events - Announce upcoming Pack events to the boys. Many parents do not inform their boys about announcements sent out on email, and boys forget about Pack Meeting announcements. Help them be aware of Pack and Den events. This is a good time to generate excitement and anticipation about upcoming events.

- **Books**
 - a) Sign Off - Now is a good time to sign off latent achievements, or ones the boys have done at home. Ask parents to sign their home achievements, and to put a sticky in the book to remind the Cub to have it recorded. Note: As boys get their achievements signed off, be sure to have them color in the paws in the back of their book! This generates interest in doing achievements.
 - b) Review Achievements for This Den Meeting - Have the boys open their books, and turn to the achievements you are working on today. This gives them a real sense of accomplishment as they perform the achievements, and motivates them to complete the tasks at hand.

- **Games**
 - a) Selection - Resources for games can be found on our Yahoo website
 - b) Prepare - Cubs should take off scarves, put slides on scarves, remove hats, and optionally may remove dress shirt prior to going outside for games.
 - c) Hydrate - It's a good idea to have water available.
 - d) Spirit - Games can be cooperative or competitive to a point. Boys should be encouraged to always encourage each other and to show good sportsmanship.
 - e) Siblings - May be invited to play, but this is at the discretion/judgment of the Den leaders.
 - f) EVERY DEN MEETING should have an outdoor or indoor game.

- **Activities**
 - a) Purpose - Activities are generally related to achievements, but they don't have to be. What's important is that the Cubs learn and have fun!
 - b) Makeup - If boys miss activities related to achievements, be sure to communicate this to the parent, so that they know what they missed. You may just ask parents who miss to always find out what they missed so that they can take the action to make it up.

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NOTE: It's a very good idea to alternate indoor and outdoor activities. It helps boys settle and focus. Constantly remind the boys to settle down quickly, or else they're wasting fun time. Again, when it's time to have fun, we have a lot of fun, when it's time to be serious, we be serious.

- **Closing**

- a) Sign Off - Sign off the achievements you did in the Den meeting, and have the boys color in the paws in the back of their book.
- b) Den Leaders Moment - Probably the single most important of your Den meeting. Use this time to gather the boys in a circle, sitting on the ground. The leader sits with them, and

- **Occasional Activities**

- a) Inspection - The boys eat this up. Get a list of inspection items from the Pack leadership, and have a competition with prizes. Dollar store prizes, or inspection awards from the Scout Shop are good rewards
- c) Parties - Many Dens plan parties at Christmas time, and for their last Den meeting.
- d) Outings - Dens may plan hikes, bike rides, visits to parks, historical sites, tours of businesses, etc.
- e) Service Project - Often, Dens do a small service project around the church to get an achievement.
- f) Special Guests - You can invite special guests to come visit your Den meeting such as officers.