

Board of Review vs. Scoutmaster Conference

A one-page side-by-side comparison for Scouts, parents, and new leaders who mix the two up.
Print it and keep it handy before either one.

	Scoutmaster Conference	Board of Review
Purpose	One-on-one check-in with the Scoutmaster on how things are going in the troop and at home, plus Scout Spirit. It's a conversation, not a retest of skills.	Final review before a rank becomes official — a conversation about the Scout's experience in the troop, not a quiz on requirements.
Who's Involved	The Scout and the Scoutmaster (or an assigned Assistant Scoutmaster). No other adults or committee members.	3–6 committee members — never the Scout's own Scoutmaster, ASMs, or a parent/guardian reviewing their own child.
Typical Length	10–20 minutes, less formal, often one-on-one in a quiet corner of a meeting or campout.	15–20 minutes, seated with the full board — a bit more formal in tone and setting.
What the Scout Should Bring	Nothing required — just be ready to talk honestly about troop life, home, and how things are going.	Rank requirements signed off in Scoutbook or a handbook, and a positive attitude — no re-demonstration of skills is needed.
What to Expect	Open-ended questions about the troop experience, friendships, and goals. Clears the Scout to move on to the Board of Review.	Questions about what the Scout learned and enjoyed at this rank. Ends with the board voting to approve the rank — nearly always a formality once a Scout reaches this point.

The order matters:a Scout completes the Scoutmaster Conference first, then moves to the Board of Review. The conference clears the Scout to sit for the board — the board doesn't happen without it.

For rank-by-rank sample questions and deeper leader guidance on both, see the full **SM Conference & BOR Guide** at rankreviewready.com/scoutmasters/conference-bor.

Independent resource — not affiliated with or endorsed by Scouting America. Always verify current BSA advancement requirements at scouting.org or with your local council. Requirements are updated periodically.