PARENT'S GUIDE · BOARD OF REVIEW

# Preparing for the Life Board of Review

| TYPICAL LENGTH | WHO'S ON THE BOARD | TONE |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 20 minutes | 3–4 troop committee members | Serious and forward-looking |

Life is the last stop before Eagle, and the board will treat it that way. Expect questions about leadership, teaching younger scouts, conservation service, and the Eagle project, even if it's only an idea so far. Boards want scouts to leave with momentum toward Eagle, so a scout with a rough plan and a realistic timeline will do well. A scout who's unsure about Eagle should feel free to say so.

## What the Board Will Likely Talk About

### Leadership over six months

How the role went over a longer stretch, and how their leadership style has changed.

### Teaching a younger scout

Life includes teaching a skill using the troop's teaching method. Boards often ask how it went.

### Conservation service

At least three of the six service hours were conservation work. What did they do?

### The Eagle plan

Remaining merit badges, a project idea, and a realistic timeline before their 18th birthday.

## Questions to Ask at Home

Ask these casually, not as a mock interview. You're helping your scout remember their own stories, not rehearsing answers.

1. **“Tell me about a time you had to lead someone who didn't want to be led.”**

   A strong answer: A real situation and how they handled it. What they learned matters more than how it turned out.

2. **“Who did you teach, and how did you know they really got it?”**

   A strong answer: Specifics: the skill, the scout, and how they checked that it stuck.

3. **“What conservation work did you do? Why does it matter?”**

   A strong answer: The project and a real reason, ideally tied to the outdoors they've enjoyed.

4. **“Do you have an idea for an Eagle project? Who would it help?”**

   A strong answer: An idea or two, the organization it would help, and why. A rough idea is fine.

5. **“What do you still need for Eagle, and when do you want to finish?”**

   A strong answer: A clear list of remaining requirements and a timeline that works around school.

## Before the Board

- [ ] At least six months active as a Star scout.
- [ ] Five more merit badges (eleven total), including three more Eagle-required ones, with all blue cards recorded.
- [ ] Six hours of service recorded, at least three of them conservation work.
- [ ] Six months in a position of responsibility, confirmed by the Scoutmaster.
- [ ] The Teaching EDGE requirement is signed off.
- [ ] Scoutmaster Conference is done and the board is scheduled.

## Tips for Parents

Count backward from your scout's 18th birthday together. All Eagle requirements must be finished before then, and the project alone can take months.

Ask the troop who the Eagle coach or advisor is, and encourage your scout to reach out themselves.

Your scout's Eagle project is theirs. The best thing you can do is ask good questions, not offer ideas.

> **Watch out:** Eagle needs six months active as a Life scout, so the Life board date starts that clock. Don't let paperwork push the Life board back for weeks.

# Good to Know About Every Board of Review

**It isn't a retest.** The requirements were already signed off. Board members can ask how your scout learned a skill or what they got out of it, but they shouldn't make them retie knots or recite requirements. Your scout doesn't need to cram.

**Parents usually wait outside.** The board is three to six adult committee members talking with your scout. Parents can't serve on their own child's board, and most troops ask parents to wait outside. Check your troop's practice, and don't take it personally — the point is for your scout to speak for themselves.

**There are no "right" answers.** The board wants to hear how Scouting is going and what your scout has learned, in their own words. An honest "the hike was really hard and I almost quit" goes over much better than a polished speech.

**Uniform matters, but not that much.** Scouts should wear the uniform as neatly as they can. Missing pieces or an outgrown shirt shouldn't hold up a rank. If you're unsure what your troop expects, ask.

**If it's not approved, there's a next step.** Boards rarely turn a scout down. If they do, they have to explain what's missing and how to fix it, and the scout can come back. There's also a formal appeal process. A board that "continues" a review just needs something finished first; it isn't a failure.

Troops and councils handle scheduling and logistics differently. When in doubt, ask your troop's advancement chair.