PARENT'S GUIDE · BOARD OF REVIEW

Preparing for the Tenderfoot Board of Review

TYPICAL LENGTH	WHO'S ON THE BOARD	TONE
10–15 minutes	3 troop committee members	Friendly and welcoming

For most scouts this is the first time sitting down with a group of adults they don't know well, and that's really the point. Boards for newer scouts tend to be short and encouraging. Members want to hear about the first campout, how the patrol is going, and whether your scout is enjoying the troop. Your job is to help them feel comfortable talking about their own experiences, not to prepare answers.

What the Board Will Likely Talk About

Their first campouts

What it was like to sleep in a tent they helped set up, what they packed, what surprised them.

The Scout Oath and Law

They may be asked what a point of the Law means or which one is hardest for them. It's about meaning, not reciting it word for word.

New skills

First aid, knots, the buddy system. Expect "how did you learn that?" or "when might you use it?", not a test.

Fitting in

How the patrol is going, who has helped them, whether they feel part of the troop.

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. **“What was the best part of your first campout? What was the hardest part?”**

   A strong answer: A specific moment, like cooking breakfast with the patrol or the tent leaking. Honest about the hard parts.

2. **“Which point of the Scout Law do you think is the hardest to live up to?”**

   A strong answer: Any point, with a real reason. "Kind, because my little brother drives me crazy" is a great answer.

3. **“Who has helped you the most since you joined the troop?”**

   A strong answer: A name and what they did: an older scout who taught a knot, a patrol leader who checked on them.

4. **“What's something you learned that you could use outside of Scouting?”**

   A strong answer: First aid at home, the buddy system at an amusement park, packing their own bag for a trip.

5. **“What are you looking forward to working on next?”**

   A strong answer: Anything they're actually excited about: summer camp, a specific campout, a merit badge.

Before the Board

- [ ] All Tenderfoot requirements are signed off in the handbook (or in Scoutbook) and the Scoutmaster Conference is done.
- [ ] The Board of Review is actually scheduled. In many troops the scout has to ask for one.
- [ ] Uniform is clean and on as neatly as possible.
- [ ] Scout brings their handbook.
- [ ] Scout knows how to introduce themselves: a handshake, their name, their patrol.

Tips for Parents

Ask the practice questions casually, like in the car or at dinner. Don't turn it into a mock interview.

If your scout is shy, remind them it's fine to take a moment to think before answering.

Afterward, ask what the board asked and how it felt. It sets your scout up well for the next one.

> **Watch out:** The most common delay at Tenderfoot isn't the board itself. It's the fitness requirement, which needs 30 days between the first test and the retest. If that isn't signed off yet, the board can't happen.

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.