



Trail to Eagle



Important Note for Parents & Family

After a scout earns the rank of Life Scout, they are at a crossroad. The two “bookends” of that crossroad are scouts who were committed on Day 1 to earn Eagle and those scouts who choose to not pursue the rank of Eagle Scout. And then everything in between. At this point, parents may ask “What can we do to help our scout reach Eagle?” To start, it is important for parents and family members to do two things:

- 1.) Congratulate your scout on earning Life.
- 2.) Offer assistance and guidance in helping your scout to decide whether to continue on the trail to Eagle. **Ultimately, it is up to the scout!**

Less than 10% of all registered scouts go on to earn Eagle. A Scout must complete 100% of the requirements for Eagle before their 18th birthday (there are very few exceptions to this rule). It has been said that the hardest job in Scouting is reaching the rank of Eagle Scout. Probably the second hardest job is being the parent of a scout who is reaching for the rank of Eagle Scout, just because our natural tendency as parents is to help our children. The help that you give your Eagle Scout candidate must be measured, and that is not easy.

Important: You should not assume that your scout automatically wants to reach Eagle. After all, it will take a strong commitment on their part to become Eagle. They will have many distractions, from sports to cars to relationships to the social scene to after-school and summer jobs to college applications, all depending upon age and interests. In addition, your scout may not be “ready” right away after earning Life. In due time, it may become clearer to commit at a later date and that is ok (assuming they have enough time to complete the requirements).

A Scout's Guide to Earning Eagle

Northern Star Council has created a website for Scouts to reference as a starting point:

<https://www.northernstar.org/news/enavigator/a-scouts-guide-to-earning-eagle>

Why is earning the rank of Eagle Scout important?

Fair question. Here are some things to consider:

- 1.) The Eagle Scout rank is the highest rank you can achieve (you can also earn Eagle palms).
- 2.) Post secondary opportunities (ie college admissions, armed forces etc.) are lots of times more attainable for an Eagle Scout.
- 3.) Scholarship opportunities are lots of times more attainable for an Eagle Scout.
- 4.) Having “Eagle Scout” on a professional resume opens up more employment and job opportunities.

Being an Eagle Scout is important because it requires lots of hard work, dedication, and service to others. It gives teens something to strive for and instills confidence, leadership, and a commitment to the community. These skills carry into college, career, and adult life.

Eagle Rank Requirements

NOTE: the following requirements must be completed **before** the scout turns 18 years old. There are a few exceptions that would be considered. [Here is a link](#) to review the exceptions... this is under: **EXTENSION REQUESTS TO COMPLETE REQUIREMENTS AFTER TURNING 18**

Be Prepared! There are seven requirements that must be completed before a scout turns 18.

1. Earn the rank of Life Scout.
2. Earn a minimum of 21 merit badges, 14 of which are required for Eagle. MBs can be found [here](#). Eagle specific MBs [here](#).
3. Complete six months of leadership while a Life Scout in an approved leadership position.
NOTE: Check your Scouts BSA Handbook or [Eagle Scout Rank Application](#) for approved positions.
4. Complete the Eagle Scout Service Project. The physical project must be completed.
5. Complete a SM/Unit leader conference.
6. Be a registered member of Northern Star Council.
7. The scout's Eagle "paperwork" has been handed in and verified by the council. This includes:
 - a. Eagle Scout rank application. Hint: this can be accessed via the [Scoutbook app](#) and most fields are pre-populated.
 - b. The scout's Personal Ambition Statement.
 - c. Confidential letters of recommendation (Scouts do not see these. They are sent directly to the SM or Eagle Coach).
 - d. The completed Eagle Project Workbook (Proposal, Plan and Report).

NOTE: after the requirements have been met, the scout is ready for a Board of Review (BOR). This can happen before the scout turns 18. But must happen within 3 months (90 days) after the scout turns 18.

Eagle Project

1. Must use the official [Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook](#)
2. **(Focus on Planning, Development and Leadership)!**
3. Three parts: Proposal, Plan and Report
4. The proposal must be signed off before you begin
5. The plan is filled out after the proposal is signed and before you begin executing the project
6. The report is completed after the project is done
7. Must be a Life scout to begin work on the project
8. Project ideas: <https://nesa.org/resources/trail-to-eagle/project-idea-generator/>

NOTE: start this process early and stay committed to it!

Eagle Application Process (ie the paperwork part)

1. The Eagle Application can be accessed via the Scoutbook app

NOTE: the Eagle Application will be pre-populated with most of the information

Logon to [Scoutbook](#) Go to your scout's profile. Under Reports | Eagle Application

2. Keep your Scout Handbook updated **(this will be needed at the Eagle BOR)**
3. Scouts will need to request letters of reference
4. Scouts will write a personal ambition statement **(1-2 pages, no more than 2).**

Eagle Board of Review and Court of Honor

1. The Eagle Board of Review (BOR) is the final step for earning Eagle
2. It needs to be completed within 3 months (90 days) of turning 18
3. The Scout will work with the Eagle Coach to prepare for the BOR
4. The Court of Honor (COH) is a special occasion to recognize the scout during a formal ceremony.

Final Thoughts

Each scout can define their own path and your experiences will be both rewarding and challenging. You will have lots of support and at the same time, the responsibility for earning the Eagle scout rank starts and ends with you.

Once you start your journey, stay committed! Ask questions and be curious about the process. Talk with others who have completed their own journey. And know that you will encounter some level of setbacks and frustration. The actions you take to overcome those challenges will be a contributing factor in your growth as a leader.

This is an exciting time and one that will be a lasting memory for you no matter where life takes you. I wish you nothing but the best and look forward to being a part of this special journey!

Yours in Scouting,
Mike Tyrrell
ASM – Troop 458 Life to Eagle Mentor