

## Wood Badge FAQs

### ***What is Wood Badge?***

The ultimate leadership training experience designed to meet the leadership needs for all Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, and Venturing leaders as well as Council and District leaders and Scouting professionals is waiting for you. We look forward to seeing you there in 2016.

Wood Badge is Scouting's PREMIER TRAINING PROGRAM for all adult leaders.

Wood Badge is LEADERSHIP TRAINING, applicable to all scouting positions.

Wood Badge is a TOOL FOR IMPROVING all scouting programs, including yours.

Wood Badge is a six-day course, conducted over two weekends.

Topics include Managing Conflict, Communicating, Listening to Learn, Valuing People and Leveraging Diversity, Stages of Team Development, team and individual leadership, Coaching and Mentoring, Project Planning and much, much more.

### ***What are the course prerequisites?***

Wood Badge is open to all registered adults who have successfully completed the basic training requirements for their primary position. This generally consists of Fast Start, New Leader Essentials, and Position Specific Training. Scoutmasters, assistant scoutmasters, Varsity coaches, and Venturing advisors must also complete Introduction to Outdoor Leadership Skills. This also means that anyone in scouting can take this training. Cub Scout leaders may want to consider Introduction to Outdoor Leadership Skills, also. These are not required for the course, but will be beneficial to you in the long run.

### ***What's this "TICKET" I hear about? What do I need to do to get ready for it?***

Don't worry and don't start Googling. Wood Badge is a learning experience – and one that is impossible to prepare for. Your ticket comes from that experience and learning, so instead of worrying about what you can't possibly know until you get there, just buckle up and hang on for the experience of your life! But, here's some information to fully answer your question.

Participants in the course will be asked to "write a ticket". A "ticket" is a set of five goals related to your primary scouting position. Each participant will create a "vision", a picture of future success, and choose five goals that lead toward that vision. It is your vision for leadership success in your position and in your unit. You write five goals (called ticket items) to get you to the successful completion of your vision. You use the leadership skills learned in Wood Badge to complete your goals and you have 18 months in which to do so.

This is a tangible benefit. There will be a lot of discussion about this during the course.

## **What's the purpose of a Wood Badge "TICKET"?**

The purpose of a Wood Badge Ticket is to help you realize your personal vision of your role in scouting. Ideally, you will write your ticket around your primary job in scouting.

A ticket consists of four parts:

- A list of your personal values
- A description of your scouting role
- A statement of your vision of success
- A mission composed of five significant goals that can be attained within 18 months.

It is assumed that you will use most or all of the skills you learned during the Wood Badge course. Therefore, the only way to write a successful ticket is through the experience of the program.

### ***I know what my ticket will be. Can I start it now?***

Respectfully, you do not know what your ticket will be. How can you? You have not taken the course! People mess themselves up coming with preconceived opinions. Trust me on this! Your ticket will be developed as part of taking the Wood Badge course. Writing a meaningful, effective ticket is a major element of the Wood Badge course. Your ticket will be greatly affected by what you hear, learn, and experience at the course. You can take no credit for any work "toward your ticket" prior to having your ticket approved at the course. However, if your scoutmaster has attended Wood Badge and has a few suggestions for you to bring with you to the course we understand. These suggestions may help you create your ticket, or they may not.

### ***Do I need special Outdoor Skills?***

Since, overnight tent camping and outdoor cooking will be part of the course, some basic camping skills will be helpful. But, outdoor skills are not essential. The staff and experienced participants will help those new to the outdoors have a safe and enjoyable experience. However, we do recommend that if you have not taken any outdoor training, this would be a good time to consider Introduction to Outdoor Leadership Skills mentioned previously. Rest assured that we pay careful attention to the makeup of the patrols to assure that everyone has the best access to the help, diversity, and experience needed to make this the best program possible.

### ***When will it run?***

The 2016 course will run over two weekends, April 29 – May 1, 2016 (Friday through Sunday) and May 13 – 15, 2016 (Friday through Sunday).

***I may need to miss a day due to scheduling conflicts. Is that a problem?***

Yes, it's a problem. Let me say that again. YES.

You must attend the entire course, as per BSA National Policy. It sounds hokey, but there is an experience in addition to the learning that takes place that truly is essential to the learning.

***What equipment do I need?***

You provide your own personal gear such as a tent, sleeping bag, daypack, and full scout uniform. Once enrolled, a detailed personal equipment list will be sent to you.

Health & Safety: The Wood Badge training team adheres to the Guide to Safe Scouting. Each person must have a current BSA medical form before they can attend the course. Each participant must be capable of functioning safely in an outdoor environment. There will be a staff medical officer present who will administer first aid and assist with any health issues that may arise.

If you have any physical limitations make certain that we are aware of it, so that we may assist as needed. We will also be asking about your dietary restrictions. All medical information supplied is kept confidential and is available only to the staff medical officer who will advise the course director.

***How much does it cost?***

The cost for the course is \$275, but there is an early bird registration fee of \$250 for anyone who pays in full by February 26, 2016. Your "tuition" includes six days of training, all meals (prepared for you during the first half of the course – you will prepare meals with your patrol during the second half of the course), all instructional materials, neckerchief, and notebook. The fee also includes your Wood Badge training award that is presented following the completion of the application phase of the course.

We guarantee that what you get out this program, the fun you will have and the friendships that you will make, will be ... priceless.

But in case you're curious: Guess how much a three-day teamwork course would cost in "outside world"?

\$600? \$1,000? – try \$2,390.00!

There are team-building courses online — but to get everything you would get from this program you would have to take at least 20 of them. The cost would be about \$800! The only cheap way to gain this much experience, confidence, and camaraderie is to enlist in the U.S. military!

***If I send in an application, does that guarantee me a spot in the course?***

The process is as follows: We may only have a maximum of 48 people in the course. The first 48 WITH a deposit and fully paid get in. Scouters with no deposit, or who apply when we are over the 48 person limit are placed on a waiting list. Don't worry however, we WANT you to be able to take Wood Badge and will let you know if you have a spot. We will "do our best" to ensure no surprises and no disappointments! So, register early.

***Where do I find an application form?***

[Application](#) forms will be available from many sources. These include the council website and office brochure rack, district roundtables, and of course right here on this site. You can also register on-line to help ensure your application is received and processed in a timely manner.

***Is there assistance for payment?***

Many units and employers will assist or fully pay for the training. Yes, it's that good and the lessons are applicable to many areas of life outside of scouting. There are Wood Badge Scholarships available. The money comes from donations from Wood Badge participants and staff from previous courses. Scholarships are based upon availability and need. Please contact the Scoutmaster for further details.

You may want to let your company know what you are doing, as the skills you will learn will serve you in scouting and in life. Letters and information are available for your employer. Should they have any questions, we would be more than happy to write directly to them. We have had a few participants whose company paid for the course because the skills you will learn if taken in a "corporate" environment would cost them hundreds or thousands of dollars more. See "How much does it Cost" (above).

***I don't have a complete uniform. Do I have to get one for the course?***

Uniforms are one of our scouting methods—and a very effective one, at that. The short answer is, "Yes, you have to have a complete uniform." A complete uniform is a wonderful teaching tool and team building exercise. Get a complete uniform—you'll be glad you did. We will alternate between the field uniform and the activity uniform on both weekends. Activity wear is your scouting pants and the course t-shirt (which is provided as part of the course fee). That said, there is no need to go out and buy the new BSA uniform. But, please have at least a BSA uniform shirt. Borrow one if you need to!

***I'm new to Scouting. Should I wait a year before I take Wood Badge?***

Because the window of time available to scout volunteers can sometimes be short, we recommend you take the course earlier in your scouting career than was typically done many years ago. The training has been tailored to those who are relatively new to scouting as well as those with more experience. So, take it as soon as you're eligible. Your next chance won't be until next year.

***I'm about to cross over into Boy Scouting. What should I expect?***

In our course, we start off as a Cub Scout pack. Then, we cross over and become a Boy Scout troop that first day. You will find it to be familiar as well as unfamiliar. But, a good percentage of our participants have NO Boy Scout experience.

***I was concerned about having a lack of experience as compared with the other people who would be taking the course. Is that a problem?***

On the contrary, I wish every new leader would take Wood Badge as early as possible. Wood Badge is leadership training. It is not a scoutcraft course. Wood Badge will help you understand what this scouting movement is all about, how the different scouting programs tie together, how you can make a real difference, and will provide you with many important and useful leadership tools.

As a result of understanding your role and your personal vision you will be better at your scouting job, which means you will enjoy it more. The more you enjoy it the better your program will be. The better your program the more scouts we serve. In the end, it becomes less of a job and more of a great adventure! Remember Wood Badge is for everyone!

***Will we be walking? Camping? Sitting in a classroom?***

Yes. Yes. And, yes! We will be doing some of each. Plus, you'll enjoy singing, a couple of campfires, nightly cracker barrels, firing rockets, watching a movie, eating popcorn, taking part in game shows ... you know – FUN STUFF – and LOTS of it!!

***I have a medical condition. Will you work with me?***

As part of your enrollment we will be asking for any restrictions or limitations that you may have—physical, diet, or other. This will help us provide you the best possible experience. We want everyone to have the chance to be a part of this! So, yes, we can AND WILL work with you.

***I don't know anyone taking the course. Will I fit in?***

Gee, I don't know. Are you given to outbursts of laughter? Do you enjoy an immense sense of accomplishment? Most of the people who attend Wood Badge are there “on their own”. Don't worry! You're around fellow scout volunteers, and we have set things up in such a manner where you'll be making new friends the first few hours — minutes even. We also design the patrols to provide the best of all worlds in terms of experience, background, and skills.

***How do you get to be on Wood Badge staff? – You people have fun!!***

First, take Wood Badge. Second, finish your ticket. Some would argue that the next step is to get your brain surgically removed, but generally, you may get invited to work on staff as you get to know more of your fellow volunteers and staff members.

The hardest job a course director faces is building the staff. Feel free to ask one, they'll take a deep breath, sigh, and then say exactly what I just said and tell you why.

***Can youth take Wood Badge?***

Participants must be over 18 years old. Wood Badge is adult leader training.

***What do the Wood Badge beads and Woggle represent?***

The beads, which represent bravery and leadership, were first presented at the initial leadership course in September 1919 at Gilwell Park. The woggle is a two-strand version of a Turk's head knot, which has no beginning and no end, and symbolizes the commitment of a Wood Badger to scouting. Those that have completed their ticket wear a leather woggle.

***What's the most important thing I should know about Wood Badge?***

Ask anyone who has taken it and they will tell you that it is a "Life Changing Experience" and **FUN!**

AND...

If you've taken the time to read this far: You SHOULD be a Wood Badger!