

## **Patrol Leader Duties**

### **Work Sheet**

These pages are attempts to help “you” the Patrol Leader (PL) perform your duties better for the good of the Patrol and ultimately for the good of the Troop. Being a PL isn’t a hard job if you think about what the goals are. The Senior Patrol Leader should be setting goals for the Troop and you should be setting goals for your patrol that will fulfill the Troop goals. Sounds like a big circle doesn’t it. It is! These notes are taken from many sources, but the one book used the most is “Handbook for Patrol Leaders” (copyright 1929, twelfth printing 1943).

*“I want you Patrol Leaders to go on and train your Patrols, in the future entirely yourselves, because it is possible for you to get hold of each boy in your Patrol and make a good fellow of him. It is no use having one or two brilliant boys and the rest no good or at all. You should try to make them all fairly good.”*

Lord Baden-Powell

### **The Patrol Leader and his job:**

You have been elected a Patrol Leader. Congratulations!!

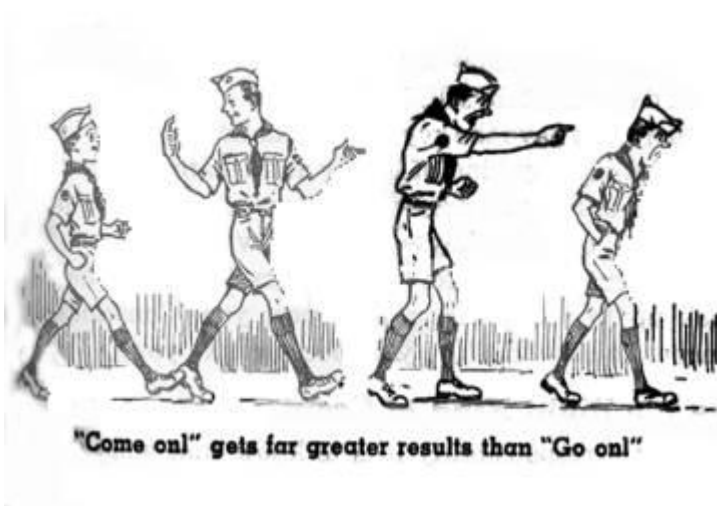
Every one of your boys is going to be a decisive factor in making the Patrol into whatever it turns out to be, while at the same time he grows into a truer Scout himself, but the biggest responsibility, the biggest trust is yours. Your leadership, your ideals for yourself and the Patrol, your example and attitude as a Scout, your sympathy with and understanding of the group, individually and as a whole, are going to make all the difference in the world to the rest of them.

Under the right king of a leader almost any Patrol can make itself into the right king of a Patrol. So, Mr. Patrol Leader, it’s up to you to get straight to the heart of this job of yours, from the beginning.

### **What Makes the Right Kind of a Patrol Leader?**

Well, for one thing, the right kind of a leader believes tremendously in his Patrol. A Scoutmaster once asked a Scout why it was that he and the other boys in his Patrol followed their PL so eagerly and loyally whatever he asked, or wanted them to do. The boy thought it over for a minute. “I don’t exactly know“ he said, at last. “But maybe it’s mostly because we feel he’s the kind of fellow we’d like to be ourselves.” That gives the key to the situation. It also leads to the next point. The right kind of leader is also the right kind of Scout. A Patrol is very much like a train. If the engine keeps moving, the whole train moves. If it stops, the whole train stops. If its gets off the track, the whole train may be wrecked. You are the locomotive in your Patrol train. If you forge ahead, so will your boys.

### **Be a Leader in Scout Spirit.**



Even more important, you will find, is to be a leader, not a lagger, in other phases of Scout training and spirit. A “grouchy” leader may and probably will have a “grouchy” Patrol, but a cheery one who does what he has to do willingly and with enthusiasm even if the job is a hard one is likely to have a Patrol that is a pride and satisfaction to lead. If you are a real leader, your boys will look to you for guidance and example not only in the activities but also in the inner spirit of a Scout.

### **Share Your Leadership**

In all this, of course, it doesn't mean that the PL is simply to be the “Big Boss” of the Patrol, planning everything that is to be done, ordering everything accomplished, as he wants it. One of your responsibilities as a PL is to help train your boys in leadership, letting them learn by doing things themselves, letting them help to plan things and put them through, seeing that they are “in” on everything that is attempted, eager for its success because it is something they want to see done and enjoy doing, not merely something you and possibly your Assistant have arbitrarily decided on. Remember: “Come On,” NOT “Go On”

### **Your Example Counts**

Leadership and understanding are important-but the example you set is probably most important of all. One of the best PLs you ever saw wasn't any great shakes to look at. He was just an average boy, with a shock of hair that never stayed in place. But he had a great smile. His pep was contagious, and his enthusiasm was tremendous.

Somehow he passed on that enthusiasm to every boy in his Patrol. The whole gang worked together. Whenever Pete said, “Let's go!” everyone was behind him.

### **Representing Your Patrol**

At the Troop Leader's Council you represent your Patrol, and are responsible for your Patrol to that Council. It is here, meeting with your Scoutmaster and the other leaders that plans for the Troop life as a whole are made, Troop problems considered. Here you will get guidance and help in conducting your Patrol affairs and from here bring over to your boys who are not present, the spirit of these leaders' meetings, your Scoutmaster's ideal and wishes for the Troop, of which your Patrol is an active

and loyal unit.



## Patrol Jobs

Believe it or not, there are a few PLs still around who like to play the “Big Boss.” You may have met one of them. He is the fellow who plans all the meetings himself, collects dues, writes the diary, takes care of the equipment, and believes he is pretty nearly perfect. You’ll soon discover that running a Patrol is not a one-man proposition. You won’t get far if you try to do everything yourself. But it is not only for the Patrol’s sake and your own that you need to share your leadership. By giving each boy an opportunity to do something in the Patrol, you give all of your fellows a chance to grow in leadership and all-round ability—and that’s one of the things we want to accomplish through Scouting.

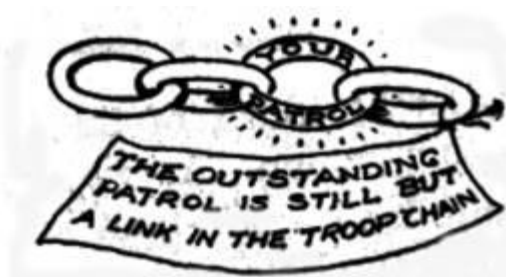
## Handling Your Boys

Now when you look over the way a PL handles his boys, you’ll discover that he follows a few simple rules that will work in your Patrol too:

- Be patient and understanding.
- Keep the boys busy with things that interest them.
- Make them responsible for specific things to do for the Patrol.

## Be Patient.

Time and time again you’ll get impatient in your Patrol job. Things don’t move fast enough to suit you! Things aren’t going right! Well, you won’t get anywhere by pushing or by scolding. That will only put the boys on the defensive and do the opposite of what you wish to accomplish. “Slowly, slowly, catchee monkey!” , was one of Baden-Powell’s slogans. Take it easy, and you’ll eventually have everyone cooperating to the best of his ability. Cooperation—working together, everyone doing his part. That’s the thing to aim for in the Patrol.



## **What is Patrol Spirit?**

Patrol Spirit isn't a thing you will find defined and analyzed in dictionaries and encyclopedias. It isn't a thing that can be confined to the pages of a book. Patrol Spirit is a little like personality, something to be felt rather than defined. It is what makes a Scout say to another boy, "Sorry, but I can't go to the movies with you tonight. It's Patrol meeting night." When two Scouts get their heads together to think out some way by which Bill, who hasn't much spare pocket money, can earn his camp fee so that the Patrol can go to camp full force, it is Patrol Spirit that is operating.

## **How Patrol Spirit Grows**

Without Patrol Spirit a Patrol is just a bunch of boys, who happen to be together at the moment, a group that may fall apart the instant the passing interest subsides. With Patrol Spirit, the thing coheres, grows, counts-in the life of the Troop and the community as well as to its members. Don't be discouraged if PS doesn't sprout up like a mushroom, over-night, in the group. It isn't a thing to be manufactured to order. Many small details go into the building up of a genuine Patrol Spirit. The PL will try to see that none of them is overlooked.

## **Believe in Your Patrol**

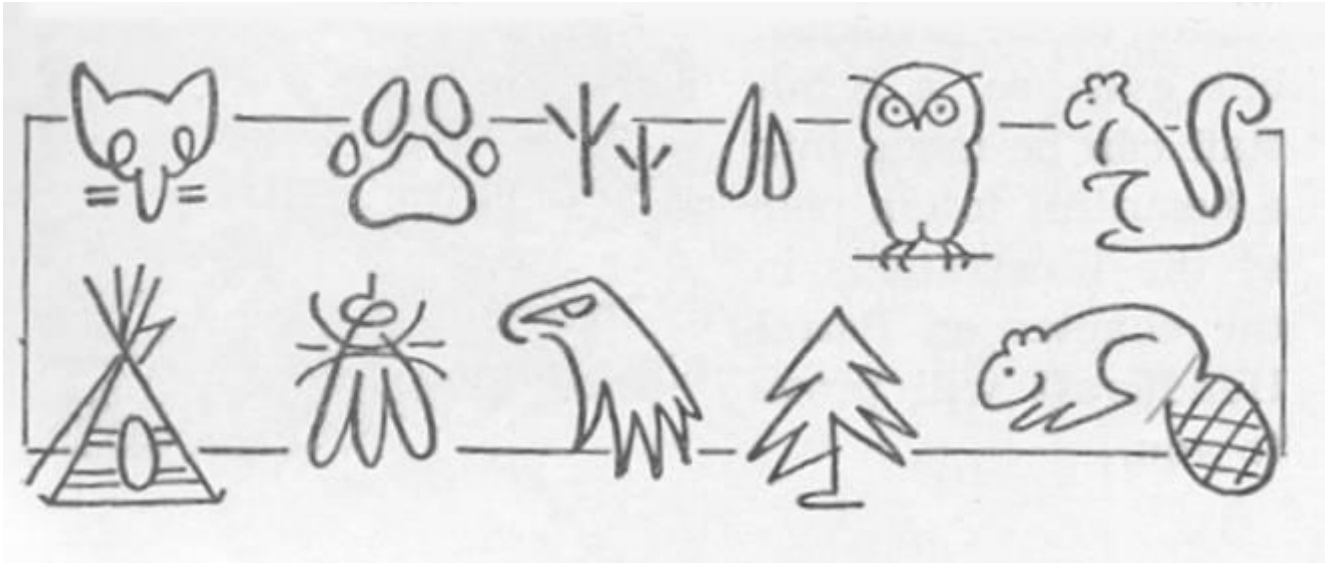
We have spoken already of the importance of a PL's own attitude for the beginning. If he believes with all his might that the Patrol can and will grow into the best Patrol in the Troop or even the community, the chances are it will. If you have the courage to stand up in front of your Patrol the very first meeting and put it up to your fellows, fair and square, what you expect of them and yourself, make a thundering speech that will serve to put them on their mettle, all set to live up to your hopes and determination for success, so much the better.

## **Patrol Flags**

You will easily understand that the wearing of the Patrol's colors or insignia will help to make the boys feel that they really "belong," which fosters Patrol Spirit, but in the long run you will soon find that a Patrol flag or a Patrol totem pole will mean even more to the boys. The designing of a Patrol flag is a very important thing. It is entirely up to the Patrol to decide upon its shape; if it is to be square, triangular, or of some fancy outline; what inscription it will bear; what design is to be put on it; whether it is to be painted or embroidered, and so forth. There is but one rule to be remembered: Whatever you put on your flag or flagpole it must have a definite meaning. If it hasn't it is rather like putting peacock feathers on a crow and telling the world it is a peacock.

## **Patrol Signatures or Totems.**

Another thing that helps Patrol Spirit to grow is to have the boys use along side their signatures, in writing letters and messages, a simplified drawing of their Patrol symbol. That will show very definitely where each boy belongs and will give him a real feeling of belonging in "the world's best Patrol." And when you do adopt one, make sure it is used as often as possible. That is the only way it can become of real meaning to the Patrol.



## What Next?

Your Scoutmaster can and will help you in every way possible. Being a PL is a learning tool for you and he doesn't want to see you fail. These reference pages are only a small sample of the resources that are available to you in the form of the PL's handbook.

Now, how to put some of these ideals into action? How about your Patrol earning the **National Honor Patrol Award**?

The National Honor Patrol Award is given to patrols whose members make an extra effort to have the best patrol possible. Your Patrol can earn the award by doing the following over a period of three months:

- Have a Patrol name, flag, and yell.
- Hold two Patrol meetings every month.
- Take part in at least one hike, outdoor activity, or other Scouting event.
- Complete two good turns or service projects approved by the Patrol Leaders' Council.
- Help two Patrol members advance one rank.
- Wear the full uniform correctly
- Have a representative attend at least three PL's council meetings.
- Have eight members in the patrol or increase patrol membership over the previous three months.

The NHPA is an embroidered star worn beneath the patrol medallion, and will spotlight a patrol as a high-standard group. Help your patrol become a National Honor Patrol.

The Boy Scout Handbook (p-23)