

Venturing Basics: a comparison to other programs for Boy Scout leaders

Venturing Crew: a traditional unit of the Boy Scouts of America.

- Members are “Venturers”, are aged 14-20 (completed 8th grade), and may be male or female (although many Crews are not co-ed).
- Adults are “Venturing Advisors (and Associate Advisors)”, are aged 21+, and may be male or female (called “Skippers” and “Mates” in Sea Scouting).
- Membership and Leadership requirements are set by the BSA and the Chartering Organization of the Crew (“Ship” in Sea Scouting).
- Unique advancement/recognition program: Bronze/Gold/Silver for all, “Ranger” for Outdoor, “Quest” for Sports, “Trust” for Religious & Community Life, “Quartermaster” for Sea Scouts, and “Eagle” for Scouts which have already earned 1st Class.
- Five general subsets: Outdoors, Arts & Hobbies, Sports, Religious & Community Life, and Sea Scouts, but individual Crews can define themselves and their programs with great flexibility.
- Standard uniform (spruce/slate) optional, custom uniform (i.e. Crew T-Shirt) optional. The Boy Scout uniform (tan/khaki) w/green shoulder loops is *not* allowed at present.
- Has Crew Officers. Does not have patrols. Leadership is shared by having “activity chairs”.

Venture Patrol: a special patrol within a Boy Scout Troop (not a separate unit).

- Members are “Boy Scouts”, aged 13-17, who join a special Patrol in their troop.
- An assistant Scoutmaster is assigned to the Venture Patrol.
- Members can also be members of regular patrols within the troop.
- Boy Scout uniform (tan/khaki w/red shoulder loops) with “Venture” strip over the right pocket standard.
- Boy Scout advancement program.

Varsity Team: a traditional unit of the Boy Scouts of America.

- Members are “Varsity Scouts” w/ the same membership requirements as Boy Scouts but must be 14-17.
- Adults are “Team Coaches” and have the same leadership requirements as Boy Scouts.
- A high adventure and sports program, predominantly used today by the LDS Scouting program.
- Boy Scout uniform (tan/khaki w/blaze shoulder loops) with “Varsity” strip over the right pocket standard.
- Boy Scout advancement program plus optional Varsity Letter (for sports or high adventure) and Denali Award (for advancement and leadership).
- May conduct Order of the Arrow elections.
- Hybrid leadership structure. Boys are still in small groups called squads, but also have program managers (similar to Venturing activity chairs), over each field of emphasis: Advancement, High Adventure/Sports, Personal Development, Service, and Special Programs & Events.
- In the current organizational scheme, a Varsity Team is essentially a special kind of Boy Scout Troop, just as a Sea Scout Ship is a special kind of Venturing Crew.

Exploring Post: a non-traditional unit of the BSA’s Learning for Life subsidiary.

- Part of the Learning for Life division primarily dedicated towards careers.
- Participants are “Explorers”, are aged 14-20, and may be male or female.
- Adults are “Exploring Advisors”, are aged 21+, and may be male or female.
- Participation and Leadership requirements are set solely by the sponsoring organization.
- No standard uniform, but some products and devices are available from National Supply.
- No standard advancement program, but units can adopt their own recognition systems.
- No mandated leadership structure, but a standard officer structure exists.

Historically, Exploring and Venturing were a combined program under the Exploring name and uniform. In mid-1998, Exploring separated from the traditional Scouting “family” and its High Adventure, Church based, Troop affiliated, and Sea Scouting units formed the new Venturing Program. Career based units remained as Exploring Posts. Arts, Hobby, and Sports based units elected to join either program.

Girl Scouting is a completely separate corporation from Boy Scouting in the United States. It is very common, however, for Girl Scouts as individuals to join Venturing Crews and Exploring Posts. Sometimes, Girl Scout Troops will form standing partnerships with Boy Scout Troops and/or Venturing Crews.