



## 5.0.3.0 Lone Scouting

Youth who do not have access to traditional Scouting units can become Lone Cub Scouts and Lone Scouts. In the following or similar circumstances, they may find this an appropriate option:

1. Home-schooled where parents do not want them in a youth group
2. U.S. citizens living abroad
3. Exchange students away from the United States
4. Disability or communicable illness that prevents meeting attendance
5. Rural communities far from a unit
6. Conflicts with a job, night school, or boarding school
7. Families who frequently travel or live on a boat, etc.
8. Living arrangements with parents in different communities
9. Environments where getting to meetings may put the Scout in danger

**Lone Scouts is limited to Cub Scouting and Scouts BSA. Venturing and Sea Scouts do not offer equivalent experiences.**

Each Lone Scout in Cub Scouting or Scouts BSA must work with a Lone Scout friend and counselor—preferably the Scout’s parent, but the counselor might also be a religious leader, teacher, neighbor, or Scouting volunteer. Regardless, even if a parent, he or she must complete Youth Protection training, be at least 21 years of age, registered with the Boy Scouts of America, and meet its adult membership requirements. More details can be found in the [Lone Scout Friend and Counselor Guidebook](#), an essential tool in carrying out this program. The guidebook can be found at [www.scouting.org/advancement](http://www.scouting.org/advancement).

To register as a Lone Cub Scout or Lone Scout, application can be made through the council service center. Lone Scout friends and counselors must register using the standard adult application. Those living abroad may inquire with the Boy Scouts of America’s Member Care Contact Center at 972-580-2489 or email [myscouting@scouting.org](mailto:myscouting@scouting.org) to learn which local council serves their location. **Lone Scouting is not an alternative for those who just don’t like the local units or cannot get along with them.** [emphasis added]

It is permissible and even beneficial for Lone Scouts to meet from time to time with others in the area, or visit a unit if possible. These meetings can provide additional





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instruction and counseling to promote further advancement, and also a more public forum for recognizing achievement.

### 5.0.3.1 Lone Scout Advancement Procedures

Because Lone Scouts are not registered with units, we can exercise some responsible flexibility with advancement. This is not to say anything goes: Lone Scouting is not a place to register a youth simply to facilitate parental approval of advancement. Requirements for ranks, merit badges, or any other advancement-related awards that can be met by one Scout working with a counselor must be fulfilled as written. In some instances, family members, neighbors, or friends can be used in place of a “den” or “troop” to increase the number of requirements that can be met as stated.

Some wording issues are simple and do not require council approval. For example, a Lone Scout may fulfill a position of responsibility by serving in school, a place of worship, a club, etc. Where it is not possible to meet requirements as written, a Lone Scout friend and counselor may suggest equal or very similar alternative requirements. These must have council advancement committee approval. Dissimilar requirements should be allowed only in extreme circumstances, or when they cannot be met without extreme hazard or hardship.

### 5.0.3.2 Lone Scouts and Merit Badges

A Lone Scout earns merit badges by working with adult counselors who meet the qualifications as stated under **“Qualifications of Counselors,” 7.0.1.1**. They can be recruited from among teachers, hobbyists, business leaders, members of various clubs, etc. Before they serve, the council or district advancement committee, according to local practices, must approve them.

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