

The months of June and July are good time to develop your unit's plan for the next year! Good unit plans will help your unit operate more smoothly. Good unit planning consists of 4 steps:

Step 1 - Gather Information

- Plan for the "academic year" - plan your unit's activities based on the school year.
- Review school calendar(s) - identify school activities that may conflict with activities your unit will plan. For example, don't plan a unit activity on a night where there are choir concerts.
- Community calendar/events - identify community events, like fall festivals and veterans day activities, that take place in your unit's community where your unit would like to participate.
- Last year's plan - review last year's unit plan. Identify what worked well (do more of those activities). Identify areas for improvement too.
- Program outlines from BSA sites - identify Scouts BSA resources that can be used to help plan your program. <https://www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/program-planning-tools/> is a great resource to find materials.
- Plan Events
 - Cub Scouts - Blue and Gold
 - Scouts BSA - Court of Honor
 - Identify volunteer needs -- including this in your unit plan will allow plenty of time to identify where you need extra help and can start to identify resources to help.

Step 2 - Plan your planning meeting

- Cub Scouts
 - Meet with the pack committee - review the information gathered in step 1.
 - Identify goals for your unit in the next year.
 - Review budget
 - Use a budget planning spreadsheet. Resources available on <https://www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/program-planning-tools/>
 - NOTE: review/adjust costs in the Excel spreadsheets. Some of the values in these tools aren't up to date (e.g., recent national dues increases).
 - Plan the program planning meeting - identify who will run the planning meeting. Identify others who will assist with the presenting/leading parts of the planning meeting.
- Scouts BSA
 - Meet with Senior Patrol Leader and troop committee - review the information gathered in step 1.
 - Identify goals for your unit in the next year.
 - Review budget
 - Use a budget planning spreadsheet. Resources available on <https://www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/program-planning-tools/>

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- Plan the program planning meeting - identify who will run the planning meeting. Identify others who will assist with the presenting/leading parts of the planning meeting.
- Recruiting plan
 - Recruiting is a year round activity. Yes, traditionally the fall is "prime" recruiting season, but plan recruiting activities throughout the year.
 - Scouting wire resources - get the word out about your unit. Let the community know who you are and what your unit is doing in the community.
 - Take advantage of online resources - <https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-membership/> has "tons" of resources available to help market your unit. Flyers, presentations, videos (that can be personalized to your unit) are available for use.
 - Plan recruiting events/themes - consider a theme for recruiting. For example, a theme could be "Rocket into Scouting". You can build in a rocket launch as part of the recruiting activities.
 - Make sure your unit's BeAScout pin information is up to date.
 - Use social media to get the word out about your unit.
- **Be Prepared**
 - With COVID-19, units need to be flexible, build in contingencies in your unit's activities.
 - Keep in mind current conditions in your community and include adjustments in your plan.
- Other online resources
 - <https://www.hoac-bsa.org/ideal-year-of-scouting>
 - https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/magazine/pdf/331-011_Calendar.pdf
 - <https://troopleader.scouting.org/annual-planning-conference/>
 - <https://www.boyscouttrail.com/docs/plannertroopyear.pdf>

Step 3 - Conduct the planning meeting

- Online resources available - slide shows available at <https://www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/program-planning-tools/> to jump start your presentation.
- Consider talent sheets to help identify volunteers for planned activities. A sample talent sheet can be found at <https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/CubScoutMeetingGuide/PDF/Appendix/34362.pdf>
- Solidify plans - lock in dates for as many activities as possible. For activities that can't be locked down to a date, plan what month the activity will take place. After the planning meeting, you can work to lock in a specific date.

Step 4 - Communicate the unit plan

- Unit calendar
 - Based on the results of your unit planning meeting, make a unit calendar for the year.

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- Share the unit calendar with your unit's families, chartered organization.
- Share the unit calendar at your recruiting events. Provide a copy of the calendar to new scouts that sign up for your unit.
- Scoutbook calendar
 - Add your unit's activities to Scoutbook.
 - Set reminders for activities to remind everyone of upcoming unit activities.
 - Urge families to subscribe to the Scoutbook calendar so it will sync with their personal calendars.