



## OPENINGS



The opening ceremony officially signals the start of a troop meeting. As in all Scouting ceremonies, it can be very simple or more complex. Many troops will start things off with a presentation of the US Flag along with repeating the Pledge of Allegiance. Very often, troops also include the recitation of the Scout Oath and/or Law. As reflected in the [Troop Planning Sheet](#), the meeting should formally begin with a ceremony.

There's no rule as to what it must be, but troops might want to consider taking measures to ensure their opening ceremonies don't fall prey to becoming repetitions of the same words and actions week after week. There are ways to vary what's presented and breathe new life into this important segment of the meeting. Besides adding meaning, doing this will spark interest. If the Patrol Leaders Council so decides, for each troop meeting a different patrol can come up with, practice, and present an impressive opening ceremony to represent the troop and do themselves proud.

What follows are some ideas for troop meeting opening ceremonies.

### Flag Ceremonies

The US and troop flag can be already positioned at the front of the room or brought in with a color guard. Bringing in the colors can be done in a simple way or in a more formal manner. [Video: Sample Posting the Colors During a Troop Meeting](#)

#### Standard Flag Ceremony

*(Flag stands are in place at the front of the room. Color guard is in position at the rear of the room. Narrator is conveniently near by. The senior patrol leader calls the meeting to order. The narrator (if other than the SPL) advances to the front.*

- Narrator: Troop, attention! (Pause.) Color guard, present the

colors! *(The narrator's commands should be loud and clear.)*

– *(The color guard advances with the colorbearers in front. The U.S. flag should always be on the marching right in the procession. As the procession begins, the narrator gives his next command.)*

– Narrator: Hand salute! *(He salutes, and the audience does likewise. The narrators eyes follow the U.S. flag until it is in position at the front of the room. Just as the colorbearers reach the front, the U.S. colorbearer and guards first cross to the left and the troop (or state) flag colorbearer and guards follow crossing to the right, positioning themselves so that each flag is in place surrounded by its respective guards. Each member of the color guard stands at attention, facing the audience, colorbearers holding the flags vertically.)*

– Narrator: Please repeat with me the Pledge of Allegiance. *(He begins the Pledge of Allegiance. The audience joins in, and the troop (or state) flag is lowered slightly. The colorbearers and other guards do not salute or repeat the pledge. When the pledge is finished, the narrator gives the signal to drop all salutes.)* Two. *(The troop flag is raised to a vertical position again.)*

– Narrator: Color guard, post the colors!  
*(The troop flag is placed in its stand first. The troop (or state) flag bearer and other guards salute it and step back into previous position. The U.S. flag is then posted. Its bearer and guards salute it and step back into their previous position.)*

– Narrator: Color guard, dismissed! *(The colorbearers lead the procession to the back of the room, with the narrator following last.)*

### **The Pledge of Allegiance with Meanings**

*(Lines are divided between different Scouts, as seen fit.)*

– I

*(me, an individual, a committee of one)*

– PLEDGE

*(dedicate all of my worldly goods to give without self pity)*

– ALLEGIANCE

*(my love and my devotion)*

– TO THE FLAG

*(our standard, Old Glory, a symbol of freedom, wherever she waves, there's respect, because your loyalty has given her a dignity that shouts freedom is everybody's job)*

– UNITED

*(that means that we have all come together)*

– STATES OF AMERICA

*(States: individual communities that have united into 50 great states. 50 individual communities with pride, dignity, and purpose. All divided with imaginary boundaries, yet united to a common purpose, and that's love for country.)*

– AND TO THE REPUBLIC

*(Republic: a state in which sovereign power is invested in representatives chosen by the people to govern, and government is the people, and it's from the people to the leaders. Not from the leaders to the people.)*

– FOR WHICH IT STANDS, ONE NATION, UNDER GOD

*(meaning, so blessed by God)*

– INDIVISIBLE

*(incapable of being divided)*

– WITH LIBERTY

*(which is freedom: the right of power to live one's own life, without*

threats, fear, or some sort of retaliation)

– AND JUSTICE

(the principle or qualities of dealing fairly with others)

– FOR ALL

(For all: which means, it's as much your country as it is mine.)

Scout salute, please repeat with me the Pledge of Allegiance.

### Two Lines

– The troop is formed by patrols in two lines facing each other. The flag is marched up the aisle between the lines, with the Scouts saluting. The flag bearers halt at the head of the lines, post the colors, and march to the rear, whereupon the troop gives the Pledge of Allegiance.

### Spot Light

– The troop is in [single-rank formation](#). The Scouts are brought to attention and all lights are turned off except a single spot or flashlight focused on the US flag. A Scout from the color guard patrol recites (doesn't sing) the first verse of "The Star-Spangled Banner". The lights are turned back on and the troop gives the Pledge of Allegiance.

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## The Scout Oath

– The Boy Scout Promise is the world's most oft-repeated oath, and its recitation is very frequently included in the opening ceremony of troop meetings.

### Three Candle Opening 1:

*(On a table in a three-candle holder at the head of the room are three candles and a lighter or matches.)*

– Leader: Like the three fingers of the Scout sign and salute, and the three pointed design of the Scout Badge, the Scout Oath has three parts: duty to God and Country (*first candle is lit*) duty to other people (*second candle is lit*) and duty to ourselves (*third candle is lit*). Please repeat with me the Scout Oath. Scout sign...Scout Oath. (*Everyone recites the Scout Oath.*)

### Three Candle Opening 2:

*(On a table in a three-candle holder at the head of the room are three candles and a lighter or matches.)*

– 1st Scout: On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to: God and my country, and to obey the Scout Law (*first candle is lit*).

– 2nd Scout: On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to: help other people at all times (*second candle is lit*).

– 3rd Scout: On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to: keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight (*third candle is lit*).

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## The Scout Law

### Single Point Focus

– Following the Pledge of Allegiance, instead of repeating the entire Law, the SPL states one point, and then another Scout reads the

explanation. If decided, this approach can be featured for twelve meetings:

1. **TRUSTWORTHY:** "A Scout tells the truth. He keeps his promises. Honesty is part of his code of conduct. People can depend on him."
2. **LOYAL:** "A Scout is true to his family, Scout leaders, friends, school, and nation."
3. **HELPFUL:** "A Scout is concerned about other people. He does things willingly for others without pay or reward."
4. **FRIENDLY:** "A Scout is a friend to all. He is a brother to other Scouts. He seeks to understand others. He respects those with ideas and customs other than his own."
5. **COURTEOUS:** "A Scout is polite to everyone regardless of age or position. He knows good manners make it easier for people to get along together."
6. **KIND:** "A Scout understands there is strength in being gentle. He treats others as he wants to be treated. He does not hurt or kill harmless things without reason."
7. **OBEDIENT:** "A Scout follows the rules of his family, school, and troop. He obeys the laws of his community and country. If he thinks these rules and laws are unfair, he tries to have them changed in an orderly manner rather than disobey them."
8. **CHEERFUL:** "A Scout looks for the bright side of things. He cheerfully does tasks that come his way. He tries to make others happy."
9. **THRIFTY:** "A Scout works to pay his way and to help others. He saves for unforeseen needs. He protects and conserves natural resources. He carefully uses time and property."
10. **BRAVE:** "A Scout can face danger even if he is afraid. He has the courage to stand for what he thinks is right even if others laugh at or threaten him."
11. **CLEAN:** "A Scout keeps his body and mind fit and clean. He goes around with those who believe in living by these same ideals. He helps keep his home and community clean."
12. **REVERENT:** "A Scout is reverent toward God. He is faithful in his religious duties. He respects the beliefs of others."

#### **Newest and Oldest Scout**

– Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the newest Scout and the oldest Scout lead the troop in reciting the Scout Law.

#### **Twelve Scouts**

– Following the Pledge of Allegiance, one point of the Scout Law is assigned to each of 12 Scouts. Each Scout, in turn, takes a step forward, salutes, recites his point of the Law, and steps back in line.

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## **The Outdoor Code**

– Featuring the Outdoor Code in addition to, or in lieu of the Scout Oath or Law is an appropriate option.

### **In Unison**

– As an American, I will do my best to:

Be clean in my outdoor manners, be careful with fire, be considerate in the outdoors, and be conservation-minded.

### **Four Candle Opening**

*(On a table in a four-candle holder at the head of the room are four candles and a lighter or matches. Lines and tasks are divided between different Scouts as seen fit.)*

1. As an American, I will do my best to: be clean in my outdoor manners *(first candle is lit)*.

2. As an American, I will do my best to: be careful with fire *(second candle is lit)*.

3. As an American, I will do my best to: be considerate in the outdoors *(third candle is lit)*.

4. As an American, I will do my best to: be conservation-minded *(fourth candle is lit)*.

### **With Explanations**

*Lines and tasks are divided between different Scouts as seen fit.)*

As an American, I will do my best to: be clean in my outdoor manners.

- I will treat the outdoors as a heritage.
- I will take care of it for myself and others.
- I will keep my trash and garbage out of lakes, streams, fields, woods, and roadways.

As an American, I will do my best to: be careful with fire.

- I will prevent wildfire.
- I will build my fires only where they are appropriate.
- When I have finished using a fire, I will make sure it is cold out.
- I will leave a clean fire ring, or remove all evidence of my fire.

As an American, I will do my best to: be considerate in the outdoors.

- I will treat public and private property with respect.
- I will use low-impact methods of hiking and camping.

As an American, I will do my best to: be conservation-minded.

- I will learn how to practice good conservation of soil, waters, forests, minerals, grasslands, wildlife, and energy.
- I will urge others to do the same.

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Prisoners Escape Video

Stand By Sixes Video

Standing Jump Relay Video

Standing Staves Video

Steal the Bacon Video

Time Bomb Video

True or False Steal the Bacon Video

Tug of War Video

Wall Street Video

### **CEREMONIES & LEADER MINUTE VIDEOS**

Sample Troop Court of Honor Video

An Eagle Court of Honor Opening Ceremony Video

Four Winds Eagle Ceremony Video

[Trail of the Eagle Court of Honor Ceremony Video](#)

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[Posting the Colors Troop Meeting Opening Ceremony Video](#)

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