



HOW TO ORGANIZE A SEA EXPLORER SHIP

Welcome to Sea Exploring

Sea Exploring is a division of the Boy Scouts of America for young men and women aged 14 through 20. Its purpose is to bring a character building, citizenship training, and fitness program to the youth of America. Sea Explorer Ships are organized by churches, civic clubs, schools, maritime organizations, businesses, unions, and other community organizations that provide adult volunteer leaders, program resources, and meeting facilities. These Ships plan programs related to maritime careers, seamanship, and service.

Today's Sea Exploring started as Sea Scouting in 1912 and has a long and colorful tradition. Thousands of young men and women have had the opportunity to follow the traditions of the sea while learning what the future holds for a career related to the sea or a lifelong hobby of recreational boating. Many Sea Explorer Ships maintain sail or power vessels; follow a challenging rank advancement program; and have nautical uniforming, customs, and ceremonies.

What Does a Sea Explorer Ship Do?

The program of a Sea Explorer Ship is based on matching the interests of the members with the skills, equipment, and resources of the chartered organization. Most Ships follow the traditional advancement program found in the *Sea Exploring Manual*. The Ship's program follows the customs and traditions of the sea and encourages members to earn the ranks of Apprentice, Ordinary, Able, and Quartermaster (equivalent to the BSA Eagle rank).

Sea Exploring advancement includes uniforms, safety, customs, swimming, boating, marlinspike seamanship, piloting, signaling, drill, cruising, galley, sailing, boats, tackle, first aid, navigation, boat maintenance, engines, sea history, lifesaving, equipment, weather, radio, customs, and ideals.

Some Sea Explorer Ships prefer to plan their program around some specialty such as sailing, careers, scuba diving, or an aquatic sport. They may not utilize Sea Explorer uniforms and advancement but offer a flexible program to those young adults having a specific career or hobby interest.



Steps to Organize

(The BSA Publication *Exploring--Post Organization*, No. 6623 contains detailed information on the following steps.)

Step One

When an appropriate organization is selected to charter a Sea Explorer Ship, the BSA council assigns an organizer to guide the following steps. This organization may be a church, civic club, school, labor union, maritime association or business, or other community group.

Step Two

The organizer and a council staff member visit the top person in the organization (pastor, president, CEO, etc.). They review the purpose and program of Sea Exploring and the responsibilities of the organization in chartering a Ship. The top person agrees to:

_Commit the organization to support a Sea Explorer Ship.

_Inform the key leaders of the organization about Sea Exploring.

_Recruit the adult Ship leaders.

_Provide program resources and a meeting location.

Step Three

The organizer meets with the organization's key leaders. This may be an executive committee, church board, department heads, etc. The purpose and program of Sea Exploring are

reviewed. The top person asks the key leaders to:

_Support their Sea Explorer Ship.

_Help secure program resources and equipment.

_Identify prospective adult leaders. These are men and women over 21 years of age who are of good character and have the ability to lead a quality Sea Explorer program for youth.

Step Four

The top person and the key leaders invite these prospective adult leaders to an organizational meeting. The purpose, program, and leadership of a Sea Explorer Ship are reviewed using the *Sea Exploring Manual*. Explorer leader basic training sessions are scheduled following the outline in *Explorer Leader Basic Training*. Sea Explorer leaders specialized training, found in *Sea Exploring--Council Guide*, is also conducted. After these training sessions are completed, the organizer guides these prospective leaders to select a Skipper, two or more mates, and the Ship Committee. The organization's top person is involved in this selection. The job descriptions for these positions are found in the *Sea Exploring Manual*.

Step Five

The Sea Explorer Ship program capability inventory is completed. This is a list of adults in the organization who can help with instruction, resources, and equipment for Ship meetings, activities, and cruises. The Ship Committee secures the use of watercraft, as needed, for the Ship program, keeping in mind that the cost of operating and maintaining a large vessel may be prohibitive for a new Ship.



Step Six

The first 3 months of meetings and activities are planned and scheduled. These would include weekly or bimonthly Ship meetings, Saturday or weekend activities or cruises, and monthly Ship Committee meetings. The program for the first few Ship meetings might include the following:

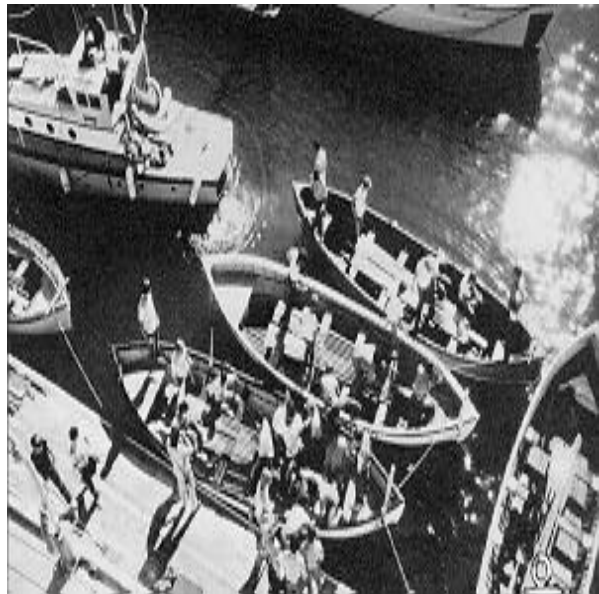
- _Introduction to the Sea Explorer program
- _Instruction related to Sea Explorer advancement, particularly Apprentice
- _Discussion of Ship uniforms
- _Election of officers
- _Boating safety - Swim checks
- _Basic nautical skill instruction

Step Seven

Young adults are recruited to join the Ship. Names from the council career interest survey may be used. Announcements and publicity are developed. Prospective members could be recruited through schools, churches, and community organizations. Sons and daughters of members of the chartered organization can be invited.



The first Ship meeting (called a firstnighter) is carefully planned to provide an exciting program to attract prospects to join. "Hands. on" maritime activities could be featured. The Ship leaders review the schedule of meetings and activities along with the structure, activities, and advancement opportunities in Sea Exploring. Leaders and members from nearby Ships may be invited to help. All new Ship members should purchase a *Sea Exploring Manual*. Sea Explorers must be 14 years of age and have graduated from the eighth grade and be under 21 years of age. The organization determines if its membership is coed, all-female, or all-male.



Step Eight

The Ship is chartered by the BSA council. All members and leaders must be registered. Registration forms and information will be provided by the organizer. The charter and membership cards will be presented to the chartered organization at an appropriate occasion.

Step Nine

The new Ship members elect officers as soon as possible. The Skipper may appoint temporary officers until the Ship members know each other well enough to elect.

Step Ten

The Skipper trains the new officers using the *Sea Exploring Manual* and *Explorer Leader Handbook*. A year's schedule of meetings and activities should be developed avoiding any conflict with school, church, or community events.

For Further Information

Full details of Explorer post organization, training, and Sea Exploring are found in the following publications available from the BSA council service center.

For new Sea Explorers and leaders:

Sea Exploring Manual, No. 33239

For Ship leaders:

Explorer Leader Handbook, No. 34637

For council organizers and trainers:

Exploring--Post Organization, No. 34623
Explorer Leader Basic Training, No. 34632
Sea Exploring--Council Guide, No. 6643A

First Ship Meeting "Firstnighter"

Sample Agenda

1. Greetings and welcome (Greet the young people at the door, welcome them, hand out name tags.)

Ship Committee members

2. Introductions and welcome

Ship Committee Chair

3. Greetings from the host (Express the chartered organization's interest in youth and enthusiasm for Exploring. It is important to coach this individual in the use of proper Exploring terms and not to say "Explorer Scout," etc.)

Head of chartered organization

4. What is Sea Exploring? (Use *Let's Go Exploring* video, AV-03VO02; have youth speak to youth about Exploring-the best way to get across the meaning of the program.)

Explorer Presidents'

Association Chair or representative

5. Ship Committee support (Explain how the Ship

Committee supports the Ship program.)

Ship Committee Chair

6. Description of the program and activities planned for the next six meetings (Give out copies of the program outline; explain how officers will be elected from membership. Briefly describe the duties of officers.)

Skipper

7. A hands-on activity in which everyone can participate

All

8. Question and answer session (Divide young people into groups of 8 or 10. Assign each group an adult Committee member who is prepared to answer questions about Sea Exploring and the chartered organization.)

Ship Committee

9. Reassemble small groups. Explain the national registration fee which includes subscription to *Exploring* magazine and participation in local and national Exploring activities. Have copies of the *Sea Exploring*

Manual for display or purchase.
Skipper

10. Invitation to join (Hand each person a membership application; collect fees from those wishing to join tonight; ask others to bring application and fee to next meeting.)

Closing comments (Be sure everyone knows date, place, time, and program for next Ship meeting.)
Ship Committee Chair

11. Refreshments and fellowship
All

NOTE: If a number of parents attend, a Ship Committee member might take them aside, explain the purpose and program of the Ship, and the tie to the BSA. Parents might be included in the program capability inventory and enlisted to provide transportation, chaperons, and support for Ship activities.

Second Ship Meeting

This meeting should be a high-powered one centered around the Sea Explorer program. Plan to get Sea Explorers involved; get them doing things in their area of interest.

Sample Agenda

(Greet members at the door and hand each a name tag.)

1. Welcome and introduction of those not at previous meeting
Temporary Boatswain or Skipper
2. Business meeting (keep brief)
Temporary Boatswain or Skipper
 - a. Complete collection of registration fees and membership applications.
 - b. Announce plans to elect officers.
 - c. (Optional) Divide members into groups by school. Each group elects a representative to serve as temporary officers and plans car pools to future Ship meetings.

d. Other business. (Might include ideas on transportation to meetings – car pools, mass transit, etc., and a discussion of Ship uniforms.)

3. Introduction of program for the evening
Temporary Boatswain or Skipper

4. Program-tour, demonstration, informative presentation, "hands-on" experience (This is the major portion of this meeting.)
All

5. Announcement of date, place, and time of next meeting
Temporary Boatswain or Skipper

6. Skipper's comments
Skipper

7. Closing

8. Refreshments and fellowship
All

After Ship meeting: The Skipper and temporary officers (or school representatives) meet to plan the election of officers and the program for the next meeting. Complete the registration materials and forward application forms and fees to the council service center.



Third Ship Meeting

(Temporary officers arrive early and greet others.)

1. Introductions, if necessary
Temporary Boatswain

2. Business meeting (keep brief)
Temporary Boatswain

a. Yeoman reads minutes of previous meeting

b. Purser collects any additional fees and membership applications.

c. Other business

3. Election of officers (Established Ships usually elect officers for a 1-year term in January. New Ships may want to adjust the term of office for their first-year officers.)
Nominating Committee Chair

a. Report of nominating committee on officers to be elected:

Boatswain

Boatswain's Mate - Administration

Boatswain's Mate - Program

Yeoman (secretary)

Purser (treasurer)

Other officers as desired

b. Election

c. Congratulations and challenge to new officers
Skipper

d. Installation of new officers and presentation of books of office (*Explorer Leader Handbook, Explorer Secretary's Records, Explorer Treasurer's Records.*)
Ship Committee Chair

4. Continuation of meeting
New Boatswain

a. Accepts position.

b. Discusses plans for term of office.

c. Review upcoming Ship programs. Members are asked to write down and turn in their interests and ideas for Ship activities.

Boatswain's Mate - Program

d. Coordinates final selection of Ship uniform.

5. Evening's program related to Sea Exploring (informative presentation, demonstration, etc.)

All

6. Announcement of date, place, and time of next meeting

Boatswain

7. Skippers comments

Skipper

8. Closing *Boatswain's Mate - Administration*

9. Refreshments and fellowship

All

After Ship meeting: Skipper conducts officers' briefing following outline in the *Explorer Leader Handbook*, No. 34637.



Suggested Program for a New Sea Explorer Ship

Meetings

Ship meetings can be held as frequently as the time of the leaders and members will permit. Many Ships meet an average of once a week, not always on the same day and not always formally. For instance, one week the members may gather at the harbor to work on boats. Another week they may get together on a Friday night to go to a show, skating, bowling, etc. At least once every 3 months a business meeting is necessary to elect officers, plan the Ship's next 3-month program in detail, make assignments, and transact other business. (See chapters 2 and 4 in the *Sea Exploring Manual*.)

Program Planning

At a program planning meeting, it is essential to have a school and council calendars available. When the Ship's members have agreed upon the program content they desire, the officers appoint chairs for the selected activities and help them name a committee. An adult officer or Committee member is selected to serve as an adviser to each committee. These committees have the responsibility for the complete planning, promotion, and conduct of the activity in their charge. (See chapter 2 in the *Sea Exploring Manual*.)

Program Content

The following program outline has been developed as a suggestion for a new Ship just getting underway. It is based on two meetings a month of the entire Ship, an officer's meeting (Quarterdeck), plus an activity or field trip. It can be modified or adapted to fit the needs and interests of members and leaders. It is also assumed that May is the first month. Modify the program accordingly for beginning in other months.

In some locations, council and/or area Sea Explorer events are conducted. These dates should be included in the Ship's calendar.

Program Outline

(For chapter and page references see the *Sea Exploring Manual*.)

First Month (May)

Ship Meetings - "Firstnighter" to recruit new members (pg. 2-20). Cover the basic organization of the Ship, election of officers, orientation on Sea

Exploring, and the planned program for the first 3 months (Chapter 1). Ship members and leaders should determine uniforms or Ship identity items such as t-shirts, jackets, etc. (pg. 3-15).

Quarterdeck Meeting - Review duties of the officers; acquaint all with calendar, training courses, etc.; prepare for next month's Ship meetings and activity (Chapter 2).

Activity - Visit another Sea Explorer Ship or conduct a boating safety program.

Second Month (June)

Ship Meetings - Safe Boating Course, three 2-hour sessions (pg. 3-11); hold orientation sessions on Ship organization and duties of the commissioned and elected officers; practice "coming aboard" and a few simple ceremonies (Chapter 2); start learning the language of the sea (Glossary of sea terms, pg. G-1).

Quarterdeck Meeting - Review Ship's meetings and their effectiveness; plan outlines of "formal" and "informal" Ship's meetings; check on arrangements for planned activity; prepare for next month's Ship meetings.

Activity - Schedule a session at a swimming pool; check the swimming ability of every member; practice simple safety and rescue techniques; review safe swim defense (pg. 5-88).

Third Month (July)

Ship Meetings - Construct a landship (pg. 2-17); conduct classes in water safety and rescue methods-rescue lines, rope work, mouth-to-mouth and artificial respiration; hold several skill-teaching contests; plan next 3 months of meetings, assignments, etc. (pg. 4-2).

Quarterdeck Meeting - Critique meetings; check on programs, activity, etc.; prepare for next month's Ship meetings.

Activity - Weekend trip to camp, lake, etc. Practice boating and aquatic skills.



Fourth Month (August)

Ship Meetings - Continue work on landship; review customs and courtesies of the sea; practice ceremonies; review advancement program and schedule classes; conduct uniform inspection; hold skill-teaching contests.

Quarterdeck Meeting - Critique meetings; check on program committees, coming activity, etc.; prepare for next month's Ship meetings.

Activity - Long cruise or superactivity (pg. 4-32).

Fifth Month (September)

Ship Meetings - Orientation on boats and boat handling; practice session on water if possible, learn boat etiquette (pg. 2-18).

Quarterdeck Meeting - Critique meetings; check on program committees, coming activity, etc.; prepare for next month's Ship meetings.

Activity - Participate in district or council activity, or plan one for Ship.

Sixth Month (October)

Ship Meetings - Orientation in marlinspike seaman ship (ropework, pg. 5-1); practice sessions in knots and knot tying; classes in advancement subjects; contests in knot tying; plan next 3 months' program, make assignments, etc. (pg. 4-26).

Quarterdeck Meeting - Critique meetings; check on program committees, coming activity, etc.; prepare for next month's Ship meetings.

Activity - Small-boat sailing or Halloween party.

Seventh Month (November)

Ship Meetings - Continue marlinspike seamanship; instruction in splicing, practice

sessions (pg. 5-6); classes in advancement subjects; skill-teaching contests; practice session at swimming pool.

Quarterdeck Meeting - Critique meetings; check on program committees, coming activity, etc.; prepare for next month's Ship meetings.

Activity - Plan a swim meet.

Eighth Month (December)

Ship Meetings - Continue marlinspike seamanship; instruction in special knots, clinches, straps, lashings, seizings, worming, parcelling, servings, whipping; practice sessions; preparation for parents' night and bridge of honor (pp. 2-16, 3-2).

Quarterdeck Meeting - Critique meetings; check on program committees, coming activity, etc.; prepare for next month's Ship meetings.

Activity - Christmas party, parents' night and bridge of honor.

Ninth Month (January)

Ship Meetings - Continue marlinspike seamanship; instruction in tackles, purchase, and blocks (pg. 5-11); practice sessions; skill-teaching contests; plan next 3 months' program, make assignments, etc.

Quarterdeck Meeting - Critique meetings; check on program committees, coming activity, etc.; prepare for next month's Ship meetings.

Activity - Winter weekend: tobogganing, skiing, ice skating, ice fishing, etc.

Tenth Month (February)

Ship Meetings - Sail training plan (pp. A-1 to A-22).

Quarterdeck Meeting - Critique meetings; check on program committees, coming activity, etc.; prepare for next month's Ship meetings.

Activity - Sailing instruction, Valentine's Day party, or Ship banquet.

Eleventh Month (March)

Ship Meetings - Sail training plan continued, skill teaching contests.

Quarterdeck Meeting - Critique meetings; check on program committees, coming activity, etc.; prepare for next month's Ship meetings.

Activity - Service project for chartered organization.

Twelfth Month (April)

Ship Meetings - Sail training plan continued, piloting (pp. 5-58); skill-teaching contests; Ship inspection and drill (pp. 4-16); plan 3 months' program, make assignments, etc. (pg. 4-26).

Quarterdeck Meeting - Critique meetings; check on program committees, coming activity, etc.; prepare for next month's Ship meetings.

Activity - Participate in council/region activity if available.

Suggested Subjects and Activities for Second Year

First Month (May)

Advanced seamanship course, eight 2-hour sessions (pg. 3-11). Continue orientation on sailing (subject: "Navigation").

Activity - Predicted log contest (pg. 4-6).

Second Month (June)

Complete advanced seamanship course. Prepare for council or area regatta if available.

Activity - Participate in council or area regatta.

Third Month (July)

Continue orientation on bridge and quarterdeck (subject: "Signaling-International Morse Code"). Build blinker and buzzer sets (pg. 5-67). Plan 3 months' program.

Activity - Beach party or cruise.

Fourth Month (August)

Continue orientation on bridge and quarterdeck (subject: "Signaling-Semaphore") also flag signals and bell signals (pg. 5-68).

Activity - Long cruise or superactivity.

Fifth Month (September)

Conduct Firstnighter to recruit new members (pg.

2-20). Continue orientation on bridge and quarterdeck (subject: "Weather Lore and Weather Forecasting, pg. 5-80).

Activity - Weekend cruise.

Sixth Month (October)

Provide orientation for new members. Continue orientation on bridge and quarterdeck (subject: "Types of Vessels," pg. 4-14. Plan 3 months' program.

Activity - Weekend cruise.

Seventh Month (November)

Orientation on boat maintenance, safety equipment, and procedures.

Activity - Swim meet.

Eighth Month (December)

Orientation on cruising (pg. 4-35).

Activity - Christmas party, parents' night.

Ninth Month (January)

Orientation on safety (pg. 5-84). Plan 3 months' program.

Activity - Winter weekend or ski trip.

Tenth Month (February)

Open House: demonstrations and recruiting (pg. 2-20).

Activity - Ship banquet.

Eleventh Month (March)

inspections: drill and uniform (pg. 3-16). Discuss construction of sailboats and sails.

Activity - Service project for chartered organization.

Twelfth Month (April)

Plan the long cruise (pg. 4-36). Begin construction of sailboats. Plan 3 months' program.

Activity - Council/region bridge of honor and dance.