

# Scouting Outdoors



It's great to be back outdoors but remember there are some limits on how we manage this.

But let's get out there! Most youth members don't return to face-to-face school till June 9, but they are hungry for Scouting and to see their friends and Leaders again.

## Limited outdoor Scouting

Regular Section meetings remain online.

There are no meetings yet in Scout halls or private homes.

But small groups of up to 10 - including Leaders and Adult Helpers - can enjoy a wide range of outdoor adventure. (But not overnight, at this stage.)

Please read the full details at <https://scoutsvictoria.com.au/media/4341/limited-outdoor-scouting-from-monday-may-18.pdf>

## When?

A short Section night activity, midweek.

Or a weekend activity. (But not yet overnight.)

## The whole Section or one Patrol at a time?

It might be easier to send out one Patrol each week. But that has its downside too.

For 3-4 weeks the Section is not whole; there's always a small group missing.

And that means the Patrol on outdoor adventure misses the Section meeting.

And there's no program efficiency for the Leaders - in addition to organising for one Patrol each week, they still have to run a full program online for the others.

It may be less work and less disruption to run the outdoor program for the whole Section at the same time - in different locations.

## Staying connected

The Patrol might like to see what the other Patrols did.

Options include:

- Emailing a link to a cloud folder (eg Dropbox).
- Printing a small set of photos and mailing or delivering a copy of each photo to Joeys or Cubs to make their own poster to show everyone else in next week's online meeting.

## Food

Food is often part of outdoor activities. But today that means no sharing.

So, for outdoor activities youth members would generally self-cater – bring a packed lunch or snacks and drink from home.

No shared plates or cups. Each person responsible for their own gear.

Hand sanitiser before and after a refreshment break.

Food safety has become a lot more serious. We can't be careful enough!

## Being prepared

What's Plan B if bad weather causes your outing to be postponed?

How and when will you advise youth members and families?

## Program

### Circular urban hikes

This is a Section meeting night activity.

Teams will appreciate that this is a common activity but they never meet.

Plot a local circular journey of 5 kms involving interesting features like bike paths, parks, bridges. Assign key points three-word descriptions using the app what3words. ([www.what3words.com](http://www.what3words.com)) It's more fun if the walk has some features of interest or surprises.

Before the meeting, email each Scout the roughly circular diagram with the key points labelled with what3words. Their job before the urban hike is to find what these points are.

Scouts are also advised which point their Patrol is to start and finish at, and confirm the direction that all Patrols are walking eg clockwise or anticlockwise.

The pre-hike email should include a reminder about appropriate clothing and footwear, and to bring water and a snack like Scroggin.



The 3-6 Patrols can temporarily share their locations as they walk if Leaders or PLs share their location with other Sixes/Patrols via Google Maps. They'll never meet up, but it's nice to know their friends are out there too.

(<https://www.online-tech-tips.com/google-softwaretips/use-google-location-sharing-to-keep-track-of-loved-ones/>)

This also allows the Leader to advise a Patrol to speed up or slow down if they're not socially distancing - they should be at least 500 metres apart.

Scouts finish at the point they started, where parents collect them.

A followup activity is to cloud-share a folder of photos so Scouts can see what other Patrols got up to.

## Heritage walk

Someone in your local area knows all the important historic landmarks - and, more importantly, their stories. Can they help map a route to visit them, and provide speaking notes for the PL or Leader to tell the stories at each stop?

Who is that road named after, and why?

What is your area's connection with WWI or WWII?

Maybe some faded old signage that still remains on some shops.

Or a few photos to show landmarks as they were in the old days. That major junction was once a narrow muddy track. That petrol station stands on an old dance hall. Etc.

Like the circular hike, this could be a giant loop. But unlike a night meeting, there is no pressure to physically space Patrols - you can do it with time. You have the whole weekend. Consult on preferred times and advise the Scouts when and where their team will meet, and when and where they will finish.

A heritage walk can count toward badgework.

## Night navigation

This is a small group activity on a clear night, preferably in a large area of land eg a park, and hopefully not flooded by nearby lighting.

Download this month's map of the night sky in the Southern Hemisphere.

<https://www.abc.net.au/science/starhunt/>

The team should try to identify as many constellations as possible.

If it's the right time of night you might even find a planet.

Check <https://www.timeanddate.com/astronomy/night/australia/melbourne> (and adjust times for other locations)

Elon Musk is currently putting up 42,000 satellites for Starlink. They are in a low orbit and very reflective.

Track them via <https://www.heavens-above.com/starlink.aspx>

Or you might be lucky to stare at dark patch of sky long enough to see a meteorite streak across the sky as it burns up on entering Earth's atmosphere. This is best in a dark sky, like at a campsite, and there are better time for meteor showers:

What's the Moon doing tonight?

<https://www.timeanddate.com/moon/phases/>

What and why are there phases of the moon?

<https://www.natgeokids.com/au/discover/science/space/the-phases-of-the-moon/>

But mostly you want to work out which way is South, and therefore which is North, East and West.

Find the Southern Cross - make an imaginary line from the top star (Alpha) through the bottom star (Delta) and keep going. Now find the pointer stars - Alpha and Beta Centauri. Run an imaginary line between them, then a line through the centre of that line, at right angles. Continue it till you hit the other imaginary line from the Southern Cross.

That point in the sky is roughly South. (There is no star like the North Star.)

Walk 100 paces south, then carefully turn 180 degrees and walk 100 paces north - you should be at your starting point.

How confident would you be navigating at night if you had a series of directions and distances?

## Bike hike

A bike hike can start at the front door of the Scout hall. Bike trails can offer an interesting perspective, away from roads and housing. Many families already use these - perhaps you can lead your small group in a new direction?

But Scouts still need to be prepared: clothing, footwear, food and drink. The Leader or PL needs to carry a phone, first aid gear, and a bicycle repair kit.

## A real hike

As there is no car sharing, parents may not want to drive too far for each youth member. But there are plenty of great walks within an hour of your home.

Check <https://www.victoriawalks.org.au> and 'find walks'.

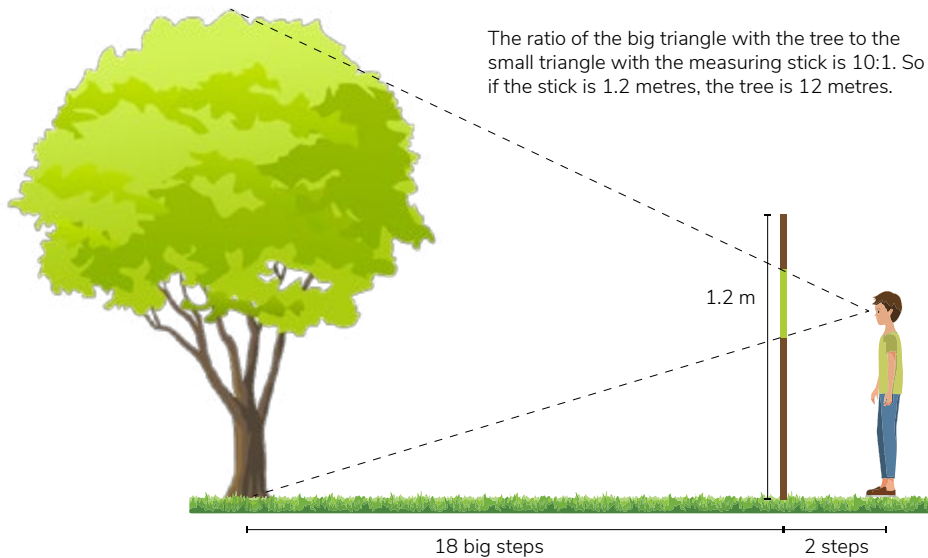
This is a one-day or half-day activity.

But Scouts still need to be prepared: clothing, footwear, food and drink. The Leader or PL needs to carry a phone and first aid gear.

Apart from building up distance toward the next Walkabout badge (10, 50, 100, 150, 200, 300, 400, 500 kms), this is a chance for all to Participate, Assist or Lead in a team project.



## Estimation



How tall is that tree?

With a stick and a tape measure you can measure the height of the tallest tree.

You'll need a friend to mark the stick while you're a bit further back.

From the base of the tree walk 18 large steps in any direction, plant the stick vertically in the ground, then pace out two more big steps.

You - the observer - are 20 steps from the tree, and 2 steps from the measuring stick.

It's a ratio: 20 to 2, which is the same as 10 to 1.

Get down low and, without moving your head, see where the bottom of the tree lines up with the measuring stick. Get your assistant to mark that point on the stick.

Without moving your head, stare up at the top of the tree and get your assistant to mark the stick at the point where your eye and the top of the tree cross.

The horizontal distance from you to the tree and you to the stick is in the ratio 10 to 1.

And so is the height you just marked on the stick.

Measure it. If the distance between the two marks on the stick is 1.5 metres, the height of the tree is 10 times that - or 15 metres.

