

Weekly Program



We're winning ... now be prepared to return

This week is about planning with your Unit.

It's been a very tough few months for all Victorians but together we have achieved a remarkable lowering of the infection rate.

This is great news for young people, for families, for schools and workplaces, and for Scouting – but we need to be prepared.

And that preparation should include every Scout contributing, offering their ideas and having fun.

Two-speed Scouting

The current government advice is that, from Monday November 2, metropolitan Scout Groups can enjoy Patrol or small-group outdoor Scouting, while Scout campsites in metro Melbourne will be able to open for household bookings and for single day Scouting activities.

And from Monday November 2, regional Groups can return to their halls (up to 20 people if space permits, for non-contact activities).

It is very likely that these dates will come forward, so be ready from week commencing October 26.

Let's celebrate this milestone by being prepared, both in program and in planning safe practices.

Regional Scouting

- In the hall, up to 20 participants, masks and physical distancing, no contact



Preparing your hall

Your hall needs a COVID-safe plan. A generic COVIDSafe Plan is available on the Scouts Victoria website

This includes:

- Unless your hall is freehold, confirm with your lessor (e.g. council) that you are able to return to the hall
- Hand sanitiser at the entrance – preferably in a fixed bracket, not sitting on a chair
- Signage to remind people to use the hand sanitiser
- [Signage](#) that indicates the maximum number of people allowed in each space in your hall (based on four square metres per person), eg "Kitchen – this space can hold a maximum of two people"
- Toilets – soap or liquid soap dispensers
- Using pre-printed Section lists to record attendance at Section meetings
- Regularly cleaning and disinfecting high touch surfaces (kitchens, toilets) and contact points (door handles, switches).
- Instructions for parent drop-off and pick-up

The current government advice is that we cannot enter our halls to do this work until Wednesday October 28.

However this date will probably change this Sunday. We will further advise.



Who will do this work?

It may be Group Support Committee or the Leaders. Or the Unit Council?

Plan beforehand

Then rock up with all the materials you need:

- Measuring tape
- Signage
- Permanent markers
- Blue tak
- Surface cleaner, disinfectant and cloths
- Hand sanitiser and a bracket to hold it
- etc

Programming for 20

How many?

The limit of 20 participants does not include the minimum number of required adults (usually Leaders) needed to run the program. So, you might have 20 Scouts and two Leaders.

But you are limited by space. Each person needs 4 square metres.

A den of 60 square metres could only have 15 participants (ie youth members)

If your Section has 30, 40 or 102 members, you will need to run multiple programs.

Patrols might rotate through hall nights and outdoor activities, supported by Leaders and Adult Helpers. Or you could run the same hall program on different nights or at different times, eg 5.70-7 and 7.30-9.

(Yes, it may be more work for some Leaders, but other Leaders and Adult Helpers can share the load. And this is – hopefully – temporary.)

No contact

Indoor programs are no-contact programs.

No contact also means keeping physically distanced, 1.5 metres apart.

How about having a “Welcome Back Party” as a program theme overlay?

Scouts could play some games, exhaust their energy, then have a party with BYO party food (each Scout having brought their own container, like school), and relax and chat with each other.

- Please note: If you have BYO food, it has to be outdoors. Currently, indoor dining is limited to 10 people.

Leaders might celebrate and remind the Scouts of their achievements during virtual Scouting. Highlight all the awards and achievements Scouts managed to achieve during virtual Scouting. All Scouts achieved, not just

those who received badges. The message is: “Hey, despite the challenges you triumphed”.

Give yourselves a pat on the back for demonstrating great resilience

Make a list of active games that can be played while distanced.

For example - Skittle War

Three Scouts in chalked zones guard skittles while the rest of the Unit throw soft inflated balls to knock them down. The rest of the Unit need to take orderly turns eg in socially spaced, small relay teams eg 3 per team. For example, one Scout in a corner guards the skittle. Two small relay teams relentlessly attack from different angles.

Leaders may help return the balls to the waiting Scouts. The winning thrower replaces the guard who lost. Fast and furious but socially distanced.

There are also games that can be played while seated.

For example - Who Started The Movement

All Scouts sit in large circle. One sits in the middle and covers their eyes while the Leader selects, by pointing, the Scout who will lead the movement. The leading Scout starts a movement (eg tapping their shoulder), then switches every 15 seconds to another (eg patting their stomach, rocking, rotating, flapping their arms, clapping etc). The rest of the Unit must seamlessly follow the leading Scout without making it obvious who is leading them. The Scout in the middle gets three tries at identifying who is leading the movement.

Target Time

Everyone sits, eyes closed. Leader calls a random time, from 10 to 75 seconds. Each Scout stands and opens their eyes when they think the time is right. Leader identifies who was closest to the target time, and also who stood up first and last – and how many seconds had then passed.

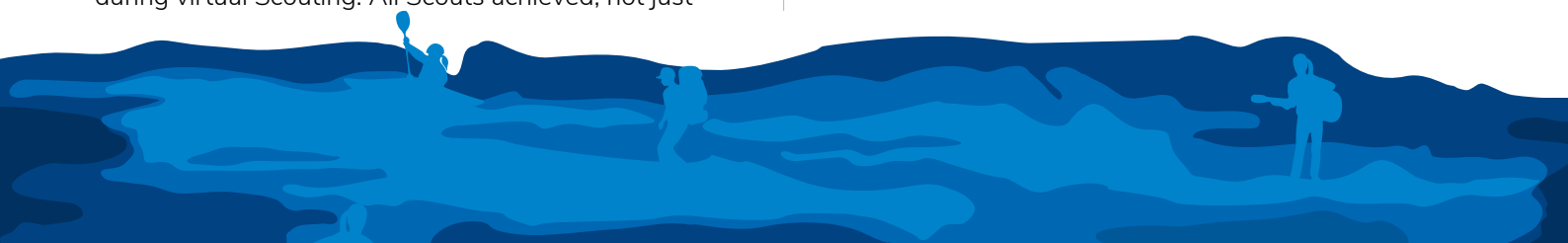
Another game is “what do you want to do at Scouts now we’re back?”

Scouts formed into two equal teams. One team forms a circle and faces outwards. The other team stands in front of a Scout of the inner circle. Remember social distancing.

Each Scout has 2 minutes to talk to the opposite Scout about their ideas for what they would like to do at Scouts; the inner circle Scout goes first. (One minute might be enough for Joey Scouts.)

After two minutes the Leader blows their whistle once. The outer circle Scout now has their two minutes of talk-time.

After four minutes in total the Leader will blow their whistle twice. That is the signal for the outer circle Scout to move one place to their left and be in front of a new Scout. The process is repeated.



Once completed, each Scout is asked to recall an activity suggestion from another Scout. These should be recorded as term program suggestions for the Unit Council.

Metro Scouting

- **Outdoors, up to 10 participants, masks and physical distancing**



Programming for up to 10

There are many ways to do this. Some ideas include:

1. Run Scout meetings as Patrol meetings, with leadership from the PL and APL.
2. If your Unit has four Patrols, your Unit Council might design a four-week program, for example on a theme like Navigation. Over four weeks your Patrols might rotate through the four activities at four different locations. A Leader or Adult Helper might be at each base to support the activity. If the Leader or Adult Helper does the same activity base for the four weeks, over that period they will catch up with all Scouts.
3. Different times. You might run the same program over a common area, but with Patrols starting 20 minutes apart. This might work for a night hike, or a nature walk for younger Sections.
You might consider running the same activity on different nights or on the weekend for small groups. This might suit some Leaders or Adult Helpers who have more time on the weekend. But it requires good communication so families know what is happening.
4. Same area but well apart. Patrols could do the same activity at the same time in a large area if they are at least 100 metres apart. But be alert. The temptation to mingle will be strong. Don't let separate Patrols drift together like small groups at an Adelaide Crows training session.

What sort of programs?

Fun

Scouts are back at school, and glad to see friends in person again. But the first few days tested the patience of some teachers.

In Scouts we need to be tolerant as excited youth members return to face-to-face Scouting.

Don't aim too high for the first week or two. Now is not the time to try something new, stick to activities that are well understood by the Unit.

Consider the Welcome Back Party detailed above under Regional Scouting.

And the game "What do you want to do at Scouts now we're back?"

A damper competition with tasty toppings could be a program of its own. (Be hygiene aware – no sharing of ingredients, utensils etc. Scouts would need a BYO list: mixing bowl, spoon, ingredients, butter, jam etc.) And rather than one crowded fire, the Patrol might need two fires, well apart for safety and distancing.

Or a night hike ending with a carpark barbecue. (Again, be hygiene aware. BYO food to cook on the hot plate. BYO drinks.)

Warrnambool Tooram ran an Amazing Race game through their local shopping area, where cryptic clues took Patrols to various "countries" (restaurants with different cuisines). (See Australian Scout, October 2020, page 20.)

Learning

Of course, in Scouts, learning is fun too.

This is a chance for the whole Section to achieve a badge as decided by the Unit Council.

Or Patrols might have separate targets. Over a few weeks of outdoor adventure, success is possible.

Having decided on the challenge, creativity is required to make the learning and any testing fun.

A timed orienteering challenge in a large park with a prize like a voucher for \$5 worth of chips at the local fish and chip shop? A construction challenge to erect a 20-metre flagpole? (See: <https://scoutpioneering.com/2013/04/17/simple-tall-pioneering-flagpole/>)



Communications – before and after

Group Council

Communication begins within the Group Council.

The Group Council needs to plan getting Group life back to normal, eg Scouts transitioning to the next Unit (mindful of new age ranges), and presenting any awards held over during virtual Scouting.

Section Leaders also need to communicate effectively to ensure all tasks are completed, there is no doubling-up of hall nights, etc.

Families

Of course, all this will be for nought, if families don't know what's going on. When, where, what to wear, what to bring, the emergency contact number for each night (PL or Leader).

Email is one way to get the word out. Some Sections use a common Gmail address for the Section so that any or all Leaders can promptly answer any queries, and there is transparency in interactions with youth.

Others supplement this with mailed programs, or a closed or private Facebook group, or phone reminders from Patrol Leaders. When the Section meets away from the hall the usual routine is disrupted, and it is easy for some families to forget.

"Think like a parent": Scouts need to imagine what information their parents would want from the Scout Group to be confident that Scouting is a safe activity for their child to participate in.

Follow up

After your event, communication continues. How do you share with the whole Unit what each Patrol did on the same meeting night? An email, closed Facebook photos, your website?

And what about those who didn't attend? Who is going to follow up – Patrol Leaders or Leaders – to check families are getting the program messages, and don't miss out on future fun?

With Youth Leading, Adults Supporting, communication to Scouts should come from the Unit Council. Some Scouts lack confidence in making phone calls, but Leader support can help young people learn to make these calls, and saves time for Leaders in the long run.

Plus, it's a lot more persuasive when a Scout gets a call from other Scouts saying "We want you in our Unit."

Questions?

For questions about COVID issues, please:

- Check our comprehensive [FAQs](#)
- Or contact coronavirus@scoutsvictoria.com.au

For questions about program, please contact scoutingathome@scoutsvictoria.com.au

