

The Path to Eagle

A Guide to Help You Through
The Steps to Eagle



Pacifica District

The Greater Los Angeles Area Council

Boy Scouts of America

Revised: January 2019



Boy Scouts of America
The Greater Los Angeles Area Council
Pacifica District

2333 Scout Way • PO Box 26910 • Los Angeles, CA 90026
Phone: (213) 413-4400 • Fax (213) 483-6472

Dear Life Scout:

Becoming an Eagle Scout is one of the most challenging yet rewarding things that you can achieve. You can excel at sports or shine in the arts. Hobbies that grab your attention at one age do not always remain interesting. Working through the requirements to become an Eagle Scout gives you invaluable experience in such a wide variety of fields of study and most of them allow for a hands-on interaction and not just a lesson from a book. It will become an important part of your life that will remain forever.

Our goal within the Pacifica District of the Greater Los Angeles Area Council is to better assist Life Scouts in their quest for Eagle and we have established procedures to help in your understanding in meeting National's requirements according to the policies and guidelines as prescribed by the Boy Scouts of America.

This guide is for both the Life Scout and Scout leaders as they prepare to travel down the trail toward the attainment of the Eagle Scout rank. We want to share some of the words of wisdom that we have learned and that will help you on your journey. While working through these steps, a scout should share this information with his Scout leaders to fully understand the procedure and ensure a smooth process. We want to give you the greatest help possible for your success.

We are here to help. Let us know if we can assist you in any other way.

Best Wishes,

Pacifica District Advancement Committee &
The Eagle Scout Character Boards



This Guide breaks down the information about completing requirements for earning the Eagle Scout Rank in the following manner:

- The Biggest Issue – TIME
- Eagle Scout Rank Requirements
- Merit Badge Basics
- A Guide to the Leadership Service Project
- Letters of Recommendation
- Creation of Your Eagle Book
- District Approval of Your Eagle Application and Eagle Book
- Eagle Scout Character Board of Review
- Eagle Scout Process Flow and District Reviewer Information

The Biggest Issue – TIME

The biggest issue that seems to cause the largest problem in the whole Eagle Scout process is usually the lack of time due to procrastination. We repeatedly see scouts who are trying to complete the process at the last minute.

There is one, almost unbendable rule in the process: **all** the requirements must be completed **before** the Scout's 18th birthday. The Eagle Character Board of Review and the Eagle book review, may be done within three months of your birthday, but it is not recommended as it is too late to add any missing requirements that may be discovered. There are exceptions made for special needs Scouts and circumstances that are beyond your control, but those are very rare and controlled by National BSA. We cannot request an extension from National BSA solely because your 18th birthday is approaching and you need more time, therefore, look at how much time is left before your 18th birthday, work with your Scout leaders to determine what needs to be done, and plan how it can be accomplished in the time remaining.

Eagle Scout Rank Requirements

In order to advance to the rank of Eagle, a candidate must complete all the following requirements. Your unit leader will need to sign your book as you complete each one.

Requirement 1: Be active in your troop, team, crew, or ship for a period of at least six months after you have achieved the rank of Life Scout.

A full six months must be completed as a Life Scout and not one day less. Your Eagle board of review date must be at least six months and one day after your Life board of review date.

Requirement 2: Demonstrate that you live by the principles of the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life. List the names of individuals who know you personally and would be willing to provide a recommendation on your behalf.

Letters of recommendations are discussed in detail in a later section.

Requirement 3: Earn a total of 21 merit badges.

Of the 21 merit badges, thirteen of them are required and the remaining eight are electives.

Requirement 4: While a Life Scout, serve actively for a period of six months in one or more positions of responsibility.

You may combine more than one position's months of service to fulfill this requirement. No leadership time **before** becoming a Life Scout counts for this requirement.

Requirement 5: While a Life Scout, **plan, develop, and give leadership to others** in a service project helpful to any religious institution, any school, or your community. The project should benefit an organization other than Boy Scouting. The project plan must be approved by the organization benefiting from the effort, your unit leader and unit committee, and the council or district **before** you start. You must use the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, No. 512-927, in meeting this requirement.

The guidelines for the leadership service project are discussed in detail in a later section.

Requirement 6: While a Life Scout, take part in a Scoutmaster Conference. In preparation for your board of review, prepare and attach to your Eagle Scout Rank Application a statement of your ambitions and life purpose and a listing of positions held in your religious institution, school, camp, community, or other organizations, during which you demonstrated leadership skills, including honors and awards received during this service.

Write your ambitions and life purpose statement and create your resume of leadership positions held and honors and awards received.

Others:

Complete the Eagle Scout Application.

Obtain signatures on your application from your scoutmaster and committee chair.

Review your Eagle Scout Application and Eagle book with a Pacifica District representative.

Successfully complete a Pacifica District Eagle Character Board of Review.

Merit Badge Basics

The requirements for Eagle Scout include earning 21 merit badges. Thirteen of these are required and the remaining eight merit badges are electives. You have likely determined which merit badges you plan to finish by now. Remember that any merit badges after the 21 merit badges can qualify for Eagle Palms.

Three of the required merit badges have time restrictions (3 months): Personal Fitness, Family Life, and Personal Management. Ensure you know what needs to be done and plan ahead so you have enough time to get it done before your 18th birthday.

For required merit badges #7, #8, and #10 on your Eagle Application, choose only one badge and cross out the other badge choice(s). If you have earned more than one required badge in those areas, list the others first as your non-required badges; the remaining elective merit badges should be listed in the date order earned.

Keep **ALL** the merit badge blue cards (and summer camp blue sheets). It will be necessary to include them in your Eagle Book in the order listed on the Eagle Rank Application; blue card facing front which allows us to quickly verify your records. Ensure your merit badges are sewn on your sash and oriented correctly. Badge orientation can be verified on the merit badge book or at:

<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/MeritBadges.aspx>

A Guide to the Leadership Service Project

The Requirement

While a Life Scout, plan, develop, and give leadership to others in a service project helpful to your religious institution, school, or your community. (The project must benefit an organization other than the BSA.) The project idea must be approved by the organization benefiting from the effort, your unit leader, unit committee, and by the district advancement committee before you start. You must use the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook as **no other form will be accepted**.

Originality

Your leadership service project does not need to be original (never been done before) but you must accept responsibility to plan, direct, and follow through to completion as it will stand alone as *your* project. If you are unsure a project qualifies, contact Winston Cortenbach at (310) 891-2301 and he will put you in touch with a project reviewer to answer your questions.

Limitations

The project selected cannot be for an individual or for a business. You need to demonstrate leadership to your team to achieve your project goal and it must make a significant impact or benefit to a community organization other than the Boy Scouts, for example a church, school, or other community based organization. Routine labor (a job of service normally rendered) or projects that are primarily maintenance in nature, are not to be considered. Painting, cutting grass, or weeding a garden may be a **portion** of your project but not the main focus. Lastly, the project cannot be a fundraiser; you may raise funds but fundraising cannot be the focus of your project.

Safety

The scout should know all safety hazards associated with each tool. A first aid kit should be available for minor injuries. Read the Guide to Safe Scouting.

<https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/34416.pdf>

Please refer to “Age Guidelines for Tool Use” on pages 75-77 for projects that require tools.

Size

The service project must be large enough to allow a scout enough time to plan and give ample opportunity to demonstrate leadership. Your unit cannot set a minimum number of hours for your project as stated in the BSA Advancement Policies and Procedures Guide. 9.0.2.12 Addressing Common Misconceptions 1. *“No unit, district, council, or individual shall place any requirement or other arbitrary standards on the number of hours spent on a project.”* Remember that two Eagle Scout applicants cannot work together to get credit for the same project.

Getting Your Project Approved

Once you have selected what you would like to do as a service project, you must follow the guidelines to get it approved **before** you can start work on it. You must use the Eagle Project Workbook as **no other forms will be accepted**. This workbook is available online at www.nesa.org National Eagle Scout Association in the “Become an Eagle” section under “Download Forms.”

Fill out, preferably type, all pages in the proposal workbook. If more room is needed in a section, type "see attached" and add additional sheets, where appropriate. The key approvals are the organization which will benefit from the project, your unit leader, and your unit committee chair. Once you receive their approval signatures on Proposal Page E of your workbook, you must obtain district approval. Contact Winston Cortenbach at (310) 891-2301 to be assigned to a district project approval person. Call your approval person to set up an appointment to discuss your project.

Bring your proposal to the appointment in addition to any photos, drawings, and plans for discussion. Bring a parent or other adult to this meeting to comply with youth protection but also to listen to possible suggestions about the project. You should be in full uniform for this meeting and when you meet with any organization regarding your project.

Start Project

Once your project has district approval, you may proceed with your project. Keep track of all your time spent on the project and all the time contributed by others in all phases of your project. Before you start, please ensure:

1. You have attained the rank of Life Scout.
2. All Eagle Service Projects **must, without exception**, be approved by an authorized member of the District Advancement Committee **prior** to the start of your project and you must notify your district approver if there are significant changes to your project as substantial changes must be **re-approved** at all levels before continuing.
3. Any **fundraising** must be approved by the benefiting organization, your unit leader and district **before** any money or materials are collected. Complete the Fundraising Application and obtain the first two signatures, then contact your district project approver to acquire district approval.

Completion

Once your project is complete, ensure the Project Report Page C has the approval signatures of the beneficiary and your Scoutmaster to show that the project was completed. Request a letter from the beneficiary organization, on their letterhead, either thanking you for the project and/or stating that you have completed your project to their satisfaction. Place the letter before the project workbook.

Letters of Recommendation

Pacifica District asks you to request letters of recommendation from those people you have listed on your Eagle Scout Application: Parents/Guardians, Religious, Educational, Employment (optional), and two other Adult acquaintances, who are preferably not troop Scout leaders as we would like to see that you are a well-rounded person. The letters must be signed and dated (the date needs to be within six months of the date of your application). Religious line must be filled in and can be a parent's name.

Step 1: Personally, speak to, call, email or write to all individuals whom you wish to include as references. Do not allow anyone else to handle this important responsibility on your behalf. Explain your status as an Eagle candidate and specifically ask if they would be willing to fill out the recommendation form for you. Inform them of any deadlines that are approaching.

Step 2: Print a set of copies for each person you are using as a reference, including the cover letter, Scout Oath and Law, and the three recommendation pages. Complete the candidate's name, phone and Troop number.

Step 3: Prepare stamped, return envelopes that has been pre-addressed to the Pacifica District Advancement Committee below:

Mr. Jim Matsushita
Pacifica District Advancement Committee
373 Van Ness Avenue, #240
Torrance, CA 90501

This envelope will allow the person writing the recommendation to complete and send the letter quickly and confidentially. Ask the person to keep a copy of form in case it gets lost in the mail.

Step 4: For each reference, hand deliver or mail: (1) the cover letter, (2) the Scout Oath and Law, (3) the three recommendation pages, and (4) the stamped, return envelope to the person writing the recommendation. Only the last three recommendation pages are submitted to Mr. Matsushita.

Note: Arrange for the Educator recommendation to be sent before summer vacation as school personnel most likely cannot be contacted during summer vacation. Your Board of Review may be scheduled when you have cleared your Eagle book check and after four letters of recommendations are in. You may contact Mr. Matsushita at (626) 395-9240 to verify which letters have been received.

Creation of Your Eagle Book

We recommend that you organize and submit your materials in a 3-ring binder, preferably with the pages in individual sheet protectors to safeguard them. The Eagle book should be in the order listed on the Eagle Rank Application and tab dividers make it easier for the reviewer to verify the necessary documents. Documents with missing signatures and/or dates will be returned to the candidate. All dates are in the following format: Month/Day/Year (i.e. 12/30/35). Below are the four sections of your Eagle book:

1. Eagle Rank Application with PID number and Advancement Report Form
2. Requirement #3 - Rank Advancements and Merit Badges
3. Requirement #5 – The Eagle Project Workbook, with pictures
4. Requirement #6 – Your Ambitions and Life Purpose Statement and your list of leadership positions held outside of scouting, including honors and awards.

Part 1 – Eagle Rank Application and Advancement Report Form

Download Eagle Rank Application form #512-728, dated 2019, which can be saved, modified, and printed. It is recommended that this form be printed in color on one page (double-sided) and typed; if you choose to print and fill in the form by hand, your handwriting must be neat and legible.

http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-728_WB_fillable.pdf

The application should be signed by the unit leaders in the proper places. The unit committee chair reviews and approves the record of the Eagle candidate before the application is submitted to district. You must review your records with your troop before you turn 18 in case any mistakes are found that would not be able to be fixed after your 18th birthday.

Print an Advancement Report form and complete the top left corner with your Scoutmaster's information. Write the Scout's name in the middle section and leave the signature area blank. This form is completed by the District Eagle Character Board for your advancement to Eagle.

<http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/34403.pdf>

Part 2 – Rank Advancement and Merit Badges

This is where you provide proof of your merit badges. The original blue cards and summer camp blue sheets are preferred, however, copies of the advancement reports are acceptable as long as they are accurate and legible. You may use baseball card collector page protectors for your blue cards. Please place the merit badge cards in the order they appear on the Eagle Scout Application, blue card date earned facing out.

You are also asked to provide proof of all your rank changes. This can be the individual advancement cards, and Advancement Report, or a photocopy of your signed scout book. Signatures and dates must be legible on any form you submit.

Part 3 – Eagle Project Workbook

You **must** use the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook #512-927 detailed in the previous section. You must download the booklet and include all the pages in your Eagle Book. Include any pages you added to complete the booklet as well as any photographs. Ensure both signature pages are complete, showing the project was approved and completed.

Part 4 – Ambitions/Life Purpose Statement and Leadership, Honors and Awards

Requirement #6 of the Eagle Rank Application form asks you to write a statement concerning your ambitions and life purpose. This requirement gives you an opportunity to share about your life, what you want to do next and your plans in life. Your values and ambitions indicate who you are and the impact Scouting has had on your life. Sharing your achievements helps the Board of Review see you outside Scouting and how well you are involved in other organizations. The board will look to your references and to this requirement to learn about the real you. Sign and date your ambition and life purpose statement.

You are also asked to provide a resume-style account of your community involvement where you have demonstrated leadership skills and achievements. Create a list of the leadership positions you have held outside of scouting as well as any honors and awards to show you are a well-rounded person who will bring benefit to the community.

District Approval of Your Eagle Application and Eagle Book

Prior to contacting District, review your book with your troop advancement chair to confirm your records agree with your troop's records and that your book is complete. You will also need to verify that your records agree with the district's records. Obtain your join date, rank advancement dates, and merit badge dates at <https://my.scouting.org>. If you find any differences between dates on that document vs your troop records, inform your troop advancement chair so they can correct the troop and council records for you. Write the join date on the document and place it at the front of your Eagle book.

Your Eagle book will be reviewed by the district. Please call Alison Arakawa, the Pacifica District Eagle Book Coordinator, at (310) 703-7180, for your next contact for verification and review. You will need to make an appointment with the person you are assigned to who will review the records contained in your book for correctness and completeness as required by National. They will also pick up your original application and copies. Once it is verified as correct, your paper work will be forwarded to the Greater Los Angeles Area Council representatives. These approval steps take time so get everything done as early as possible.

Eagle Scout Character Board of Review

Once your records are cleared, Jim Matsushita will contact you to set up your Eagle board. The board of review for an Eagle candidate is composed of at least three but not more than six members.

At the scheduled time, the Scout shall come to meet with the review board. Give special attention to how you dress when you come for your Board of Review. If you don't have proper Scout pants, you may want to invest or borrow one as you will want it for your Court of Honor. Wear your merit badge sash and all your awards. Make sure your badges are current and that you wear the Scout belt. Your troop should help you check your uniform and sash.

Bring your parents and your Scout leader. The Scoutmaster introduces you to the Board of Review panel and the parents may also say a few words, then they will be excused and your review begins.

The board members have already read your application, your references, and your personal resume. This is the highest award that a Scout may achieve and the board needs to get to know you. There are no set questions asked though you should be prepared to answer questions about your project (what you did, how it went, what you learned from the experience), your overall scouting experiences and your future involvement with Scouting.

The board's decision must be unanimous. If the candidate meets the requirements, he is informed that he will receive the board's recommendation for the Eagle Scout rank. If the candidate does not meet the requirements, he is told the reasons for his failure to qualify. A discussion should follow as to how he may meet the requirements within a given period of time.

After your Eagle board, your Eagle book will be returned, and the Eagle application and advancement report will be sent to Council/National for review. The Eagle certificate takes about six weeks from National and Mr. Matsushita will notify you when the certificate packet arrives.

While the Eagle process takes place at District/Council/National levels, the award is presented to the new Eagle Scout by the Scout's unit. When the unit receives the award, they should work with the family to conduct a Court of Honor. Work with your unit to make this a great celebration as you have worked hard to get there and everyone is proud of your accomplishments!

For questions regarding the Eagle Rank Process, contact Mr. Matsushita at (626) 395-9240.



Scout at
Life Rank

Pacifica District Eagle Scout Process Flow

Eagle Project Coordinator

Winston Cortenbach
(310) 891-2301

Scout contacts Mr. Cortenbach and is assigned Eagle Project Reviewer

Project Reviewer: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

Eagle Book Review Coordinator

Alison Arakawa
(310) 703-7180

After scout completes project, merit badges and Eagle application, scout contacts Mrs. Arakawa and is assigned Eagle Book Reviewer

Book Reviewer: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

Eagle Character Board Coordinator

Jim Matsushita
(626) 395-9240

Once Eagle book is approved, Mr. Matsushita will assign Board Chairperson, schedule board of review and contact the scout with date.

Scout informs Scoutmaster and parents and drops off Eagle Book determined by Board Chair.

Board Chairperson: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Book Turn in Date: _____

Book Turn in Location: _____

Eagle Board Date and Time: _____

Eagle Board Location: _____
