

ScoutHike 2026

Patrol Leaders Information

Information for Patrol Leaders to help prepare for ScoutHike.

The information contained within this document is provided to assist Patrol Leaders prepare for and conduct themselves and their Patrol at ScoutHike.

Updated 8/04/2026

*W*elcome to ScoutHike 2026, you are sure to have a great time! Take some time to become familiar with the information and instructions in this Patrol Leaders Information document as it will help you get your Patrol prepared.

Firstly, your **Patrol Number, Departure Point** and **Departure Time** information will be emailed to you in the leadup week, before ScoutHike. Please make sure all members of your ScoutHike Patrol know all the departure information. As Patrol Leader, you are responsible to organise and get your Patrol to the Bus Departure Point ON TIME. If they are late, there is a good possibility they will miss the bus and will therefore need to make their own way to ScoutHike.

While you are doing this, your Leaders are busy getting the activities ready, Sleep Points organised, and other essential planning to make it all happen.

You and your Patrol will be returned to the same Bus Departure Point on Sunday, 3rd of May. You should arrange for parents to be waiting to collect your Patrol as soon as you arrive back.

Find a quiet spot and read through the rest of the information in this document, organise a time with your Patrol and go through it all with them so that they are fully informed and prepared as well.

I look forward to seeing you at ScoutHike 2026. If you have any queries at all, please contact me:

email: -
scouthike.coordinator.snr@nsw.scouts.com.au

Mitchell Rath
ScoutHike Coordinator

The theme for ScoutHike 2026 is Generational Adventure

The Sleep Points and Activities are themed to Generations

Gen X, Gen Y Millennials, Gen Beta, Gen Z, Baby Boomers, Gen Alpha

Organisation:

On the buses, your Patrol will be given an envelope, which contains 2 Maps, a Passport, a Safety sheet and a green wristband for you as PL to wear for the weekend.

You and your Patrol will be delivered to a Sleep Point on Friday night where you will make camp, have supper and settle down for the night. Your Saturday night Sleep Point will be included with the information you get on the bus on the way to ScoutHike.

Between the Sleep Points there are 29 Activity Points for you to visit. You will have to plot their locations on a map from references given to you on the Bus. Before you head off on Saturday morning, you will need to have planned the route your Patrol will take over the weekend to get your Patrol to as many Activity Points as possible along the way.

On Saturday morning your Patrol will be weighed to check that you are within weight limits (packs must weigh less than 1/5th of the body weight) as individuals *and* as a Patrol. This will need to be satisfactory before your Patrol can leave the Sleep Point. Water is not included in your weight.

At each Activity Point you will be offered a challenge. All challenges will be related to the Scout Law and all activities carry the same points value.

You can earn points for

- just arriving at an Activity Point during the opening times of the Activity (25 points)
- participating in the activity (if on Saturday you arrive at least 15 minutes before the Activity closes and on Sunday before the Activity closes) up to 100 points
- Activity opening times are on the Map
- Saturday 8.00am -3.45pm
- Sunday 8.00am-11.30am for 10 bases or 8.00am -12.30pm for the other 19 bases (details in the Passport)

You'll need to :-

- As a Patrol, hike into your nominated Saturday night Sleep Point and arrive between 3.00pm and 4.30pm.
- As a Patrol, check into the Finish Point between 12.00pm and 1.30pm on Sunday.
- Otherwise we may deduct points for late arrival.

Your patrol will be penalised if any Leader offers assistance with - *except in emergencies*:

- Transport of Patrol gear.
- Supply of Patrol food.
- Map co-ordinates.
- Activity advice.

The Patrol with the most points at the end of the weekend will be awarded the ScoutHike trophy - provided that Patrol complies with all the rules and policies of ScoutHike.

Every participating Scout will be awarded a ScoutHike badge and every Patrol takes home a trophy.

The Patrol

All Scouts and Guides must be in Patrols of 4-8 members.

Sydney North, South Metropolitan, Greater Western Sydney and Hume Region Scouts must travel on the ScoutHike buses.

The members of your Patrol as registered in the on-line system, must remain together for the entire ScoutHike and bus travel (no swapping between Patrols or buses.)

- The exception is, if the number of members in your Patrol drops to 3 or less at the event, the Sleep Point Leader, will link you with another Patrol for hiking at the event.

Your whole Patrol will remain together for the entire event, including travel to and from on the buses – parents/guardians can not transport their scouts individually – even if they are in the forest helping at ScoutHike.

Scouts from regions other than the 4 noted above, can also travel on the ScoutHike buses and this year, travel is included in your registration cost (a change from previous years.)

If you are from a non SN,SM,GWS or Hume region and want to opt for independent travel please contact us – details on the website.

Non-competitive Patrols

If there are two (or more) home Unit PL's in the same ScoutHike Patrol and more than one of these home PL's are 14 yrs or older, then the ScoutHike Patrol will be non-competitive.

Any ScoutHike Patrol with a Scout who has had their 15th Birthday, will be non-competitive.

Non-competitive Patrols still have all the fun of the event –but will only be eligible for a Bronze Award.

Other Matters:

All personal and patrol gear, and food, must be shared and carried by the members of your Patrol. There is *no requirement* to bring special "Emergency Clothing". If you do, you will need to carry it with you.

Nothing is to be carried in your hands whilst hiking. All gear should be inside your pack or strapped securely to your pack

Each Sleep Point will have water and cooking facilities – firedrums with grates and washing up bowls. No cooking utensils will be provided.

There is no power available- we're in a forest! There are portaloos at each Sleep Point and the Finish Point.

Each Activity Point will have cold and hot water available.

During ScoutHike ALL Scouts must remain within the Forest confines which are clearly shown on your map. Venturing outside the Forest confines will cost your Patrol points.

Very Important Note:

Matches, lighters, or anything else capable of creating a flame/fire is TOTALLY PROHIBITED from being in the possession of Scouts at ScoutHike.

There is absolutely NO need for these types of items to be in the possession of Scouts at ScoutHike.

Any Scout found to have these items will cause their Patrol to be disqualified and removed from ScoutHike.

Remember - this is an activity for YOU as a Patrol Leader to demonstrate YOUR skills! However, if you feel you need any assistance during the weekend, see any Activity Leader or ScoutHike Official.

What to take:

Before taking any item there are four questions that you should ask:

1. **Is it necessary?** If the answer is "Yes" take it, if there is any doubt, leave it at home.
2. **Is it effective?** i.e.: Will the tent keep out the rain? Will the sleeping bag keep me warm?
3. **Is it as light as possible?** The weight of your loaded pack will have an important influence on your enjoyment. The correct pack weight is as little as possible, however it should not exceed 20% (one fifth) of your body weight.
4. **Is it compact?** If not, look around for a more compact option.

What Personal Gear Should I Take?:

(Read pages 110 to 117 of the "Fieldbook for Australian Scouting")

Pack: A framed pack will enable you to carry gear with a minimum of discomfort, as the weight is evenly distributed over your back. Carry a small length of nylon cord for pack repairs.

Sleeping Bag: A reasonable quality sleeping bag is essential for a good night's sleep. Overnight temperatures can be close to zero. A sleeping roll will also help.

Torch: A small torch should be carried - remember to check the batteries.

Toilet Gear: Carried by each person.

Eating Gear: One plate, or bowl, usually plastic, aluminium or enamel, a mug (aluminium mugs are unsuitable as the rim gets hot and burns your lips), and a knife, fork and spoon are the essential items, and should be kept in a cloth bag.

Water Bottle: A water bottle, of either plastic or aluminium, **MUST** be carried by each member of your patrol.

Whistle: A whistle is worth carrying for emergency use as its sound will carry much further than the human voice.

First Aid Kit: The Patrol, as a whole, must carry a suitable First Aid Kit for hiking. A kit put together in a plastic lunch type box is often more versatile than a commercially packed kit. See later page in this handbook for recommended First Aid Kit contents.

Boots: These need not be expensive but need to be in good condition, and comfortable. Remember that feet swell when walking and when a load is carried the foot lengthens and widens. A rubber sole with heavy tread will provide good grip on most surfaces.

Socks: Thick woolen socks are needed to absorb moisture and to cushion the feet.

Trousers: Long trousers are essential in cold weather, however, shorts are comfortable in most conditions and could be worn whilst hiking. Tight fitting jeans **should not** be worn. Track suit pants are good for around the camp at night.

Shirt: Your shirt should have long sleeves and a collar for both warmth in cold weather and protection from sunburn. A light "T"-shirt could be carried.

Jumper: A light weight long sleeved jumper, or equivalent, is necessary.

Parka: A parka or waterproof jacket is your main protection against wind and rain. The best type is a hooded japara type. Padded ski type, sailing jackets or ponchos are not suitable.

Hat: A hat **MUST** be worn for sun protection. Your HAT is your best friend.

Scout Uniform: IS NOT REQUIRED to be worn to/from/at ScoutHike. However your Patrol will require their correct Troop Scarf.

Tents: Proper and separate tents must be provided for both male and female members of the Patrol. 'Proper' tents does not include just sleeping under a ground sheet or similar and cheap nylon tents are not suitable either. The tent should have an external fly - and do not forget the ropes, poles and pegs! Most tents today contain built-in floors; if yours does not, do not forget a ground sheet.

Food: See section on Hike Food.

Compass: **ESSENTIAL** A simple 'Silva' type is sufficient and relatively inexpensive. It should be worn on a cord around your neck, tied to your belt, or strung through a buttonhole.

Map: You will be supplied with copies of the map during the Friday night bus trip. Every member of your Patrol should become familiar with the intended route and be encouraged to follow progress on the map. Your map should be carried in a plastic folder (not supplied) for protection.

Note Pad/Pencils etc: A small selection of coloured pens are useful for marking your map.

Billy: Usually two small nesting billies will suffice between three people (though you should consider what you have to cook).

Fry pan: A small aluminum fry pan should be carried, if needed.

Cleaning: Pot cleaners, steel wool pads, tea towels.

What Must NOT be Taken

- **Stoves** – of any kind what-so-ever. You **MUST** use the cooking facilities provided at each Sleep Point.
- **Hand-held two-way radios.**
- **Electronics, radios, players, mobile phones etc.**
- **Matches, lighters, or anything else capable of creating a flame/fire**

Packing:

Use a check list that includes every item you will require.

A pack liner should be used inside your pack to keep the contents dry. Clothing and other items should be kept in plastic bags inside this liner. The sleeping bag in particular must be kept dry under all circumstances.

Dry foods are best packed in individual zip lock bags. Wet foods such as margarine, honey, spreads etc are best stored in small plastic or aluminum containers and then stored in a plastic bag.

A pack's comfort depends on how you organise its weight distribution when packing. Place all the heavy items at the top of the pack and as close to your back as possible. Place the lighter and less frequently used items, such as spare clothing, at the bottom. Items most frequently used should be placed close to the top of the pack. Fill your billy etc with smaller items.

Everything **MUST** be inside your pack or strapped securely on your pack with nothing hanging loosely on the outside.

Hike Food Hints

Keep these things in mind:

- Make your menu light-weight, remember, you have to carry it.
- Make sure you can cook what you take. Practice at home first.
- Cook as a Patrol. It is much easier than everyone catering for themselves.
- Make sure your menu is balanced to provide energy, fluid and nourishment.
- Make sure everyone carries a full water bottle.
- Keep your billies in a bag to keep the rest of your pack clean.
- Honey, vegemite and peanut butter have more food value than jams.

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- Dried fruits are light to carry. They can be eaten raw, cooked or soaked overnight.
- Carry all rubbish and litter with you. Do not drop anything in the bush. There will be rubbish bins at the "Finish Point". Do NOT bury any rubbish.
- Your Patrol Menu - must be approved by your Unit Council.

Instant noodle packs OR meal replacement drinks are NOT acceptable as a COMPLETE meal

Meals to plan:

1. Friday Supper - optional - a hot drink and snack bar is a good idea
2. Saturday Breakfast - could be a hot meal but should always include a low GI cereal or bread
3. Saturday Lunch
4. Saturday Dinner - it is important to make this meal hot, substantial, and something each Patrol member will actually eat.
5. Sunday Breakfast - could be a hot meal but should always include a low GI cereal or bread
6. Sunday Lunch

Handy Hints

- Make a list of everything you take, but remember, everything you take you must carry -- so choose carefully. Share common items between Patrol members (e.g. tents, food, cooking utensils, etc.).
- Pack things you are likely to need first at the top of the pack (e.g. lunch, raincoat).
- Do not leave anything hanging or dangling from the outside of the pack. They are easily lost and their swinging can make your walking difficult.
- Pack your First Aid Kit where it is easily accessible. Make sure all members of your Patrol know where it is.
- Do not take glass jars or bottles, nor canned foods or foods that need refrigerating.
- Do not buy expensive (or cheap & nasty) equipment. It is better to make do, hire, or borrow equipment.
- *Never let parents, or anyone else for that matter, pack your pack.* Pack it yourself - you are going to carry it and use it, so know what is in your pack and where it is.
- After the hike, cross off all the items from your list that you have not used. Next time, leave them behind.
- As PL, it is your responsibility to make

sure that all members of your Patrol have packed their packs correctly and that weight is evenly distributed according to the age and stamina of each member.

- As PL, it is your responsibility to make sure that all members of your Patrol have NOT had their packs tampered with by Parents. Often Mum or Dad think they are helping by adding extra clothes and equipment that may not be required or is just too heavy.

- Members of your Patrol may have special health or medical needs, including allergies. You need to ask each of the parents/guardians of the Scouts in your Patrol if there is anything they consider you need to know, and if there is, ask them for written details of the situation. This information will stay with you during ScoutHike.

You do not need to understand what to do about the situation, just that it exists and how best to avoid it.

The online registration system has a section where Parents/Guardians need to enter this information.

First Aid

A personal First Aid Kit should be carried by each member of your Patrol. It should include:

- 1 triangular bandage;
- 1 x 75mm elastic crepe bandage;
- 1 sealed sterile dressing;
- bandaids or similar;
- safety pins;
- Sun Blockout Cream;
- **any personal medications.**

In addition to the above each Patrol should carry, as a Patrol Kit, the following:

- Roll of adhesive dressing strip;
- Pair of scissors;
- Packet of gauze squares;
- 2 Non-stick dressings;
- Roll of adhesive tape (25 mm) ;
- Wound Dressings (2 x No 14) ;
- Fine point tweezers;

Vandalism and the Scout Law

ScoutHike actively encourages the Patrol System and operates under the Scout Law.

“State Forests of New South Wales” allow Scouts to use State Forests for Scouting activities and we all must help protect the forest from vandalism. If you see anyone damaging property in any way please report it to the nearest Scout Leader.

We also need to be very careful of newly planted saplings and endangered species of plants that the Ranger has identified for us – if an area is taped off or out of bounds – respect and follow the instructions.

Any Scout or Patrol who is caught stealing, damaging or vandalising private or forestry property, touching the white poles, saplings or endangered plants will be:

- Disqualified from ScoutHike.
- Sent home, after your parents have been called to pick you up.
- Made to make good the loss or damage
- Could face Police Action

Weight Chart

Use this chart to know the maximum weight each Scout in your Patrol can carry:

Your weigh? (kg)	Your pack weight (20% of body weight)	Total weight with Pack on
40	8	48
41	8.2	49.2
42	8.4	50.4
43	8.6	51.6
44	8.8	52.8
45	9	54
46	9.2	55.2
47	9.4	56.4
48	9.6	57.6
49	9.8	58.8
50	10	60
51	10.2	61.2
52	10.4	62.4
53	10.6	63.6
54	10.8	64.8
55	11	66
56	11.2	67.2
57	11.4	68.4
58	11.6	69.6
59	11.8	70.8
60	12	72
61	12.2	73.2
62	12.4	74.4

Your weigh? (kg)	Your pack weight (20% of body weight)	Total weight with Pack on
63	12.6	75.6
64	12.8	76.8
65	13	78
66	13.2	79.2
67	13.4	80.4
68	13.6	81.6
69	13.8	82.8
70	14	84
71	14.2	85.2
72	14.4	86.4
73	14.6	87.6
74	14.8	88.8
75	15	90
76	15.2	91.2
77	15.4	92.4
78	15.6	93.6
79	15.8	94.8
80	16	96
81	16.2	97.2
82	16.4	98.4
83	16.6	99.6
84	16.8	100.8

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Trouble Shooting - a.k.a problems that can occur
(Also read pages 329 to 339 of the "Fieldbook for Australian Scouting")

IT STARTS TO RAIN:	Always anticipate rain. Be prepared and always carry wet weather gear. Remember, in the case of bad weather, your destination or objective suffers - not the members of your Patrol.
SORE BACKS:	Stop and check the back pack. Check for hard objects which rest against the spine and repack the pack. Check that the load is being carried as high as possible on the shoulders. If the straps are rather slack the pack will sag down and rub against the lower part of the back. The pack might feel right when you start out, but if it is not adjusted properly the back will soon hurt. If some packs are heavier than others share the load or take turns in swapping packs.
BLISTERS:	A blister can always be treated if you catch it early, at the stage when it's just red skin. Stop immediately and strap sticking plaster across the red area to stop it developing. If you do develop a blister - cover it, do not break it..
PATROL MEMBERS KEEP STOPPING AND WANT TO SIT:	Let them to a point. Don't push needlessly or you will put them off hiking for life. There is no need to be too ambitious. Change your plans if possible to something shorter and easier.
PEOPLE KEEP GETTING LEFT BEHIND:	This can happen to any member of the group. Somebody only has to stop to tie a boot-lace, everyone else walks on, and by the time the lace is tied a considerable gap has developed. The pace of your Patrol should be as fast as the slowest person. It is the responsibility of the person in front to stop at reasonable intervals for the rest of the Patrol to catch up.
WATCH OUT FOR VEHICLES:	When vehicles approach, the whole Patrol should move to the same side of the road to allow maximum room for the vehicle.
ABDOMINAL PAIN:	This is often caused by not using the toilet and/or by drinking unclean water.
FEELING GIDDY:	This is usually caused by wearing too many clothes. Remember that even moderate exercise with a pack will increase the body's heat production markedly. A rule of thumb is that, if before moving off, you feel barely warm enough then you have sufficient clothing on.
FEELING THIRSTY	This is natural. The body's normal turnover is 2 - 5 litres per day - but, in hot and strenuous conditions, it can be five times this amount. Drink as much as you need.
FEELING CHILLED:	Immediately you start to feel cold put on a jumper and if this still is not enough add another or a parka. Feeling cold can be caused by a change in the weather or just stopping to eat, which is often the time for extra clothing. But remember to take it off when you start walking again. Another tip is to keep nibbling high energy food. Nuts, raisins, glucose, barley sugar, chocolate, etc, are ideal.
NAUSEA AND HEADACHE:	Heat, tiredness and not eating properly are the usual causes. If a member is feeling sick - stop and rest. Do not try to push on. If you have a headache drink plenty of fluids and rest. If dizziness occurs seek assistance. As P.L. you are responsible for all of your Patrol members.
BITES AND STINGS:	Repellents will usually do the trick. Stingose will reduce itchiness.
LEECHES:	Leeches are best removed by applying salt. Do not pull them off as the wound will bleed constantly.

Using Your Map

(Also read pages 60 to 67 of the "Fieldbook for Australian Scouting")

Navigation is the most important skill required for the weekend. Knowing how to use a compass will save you time and walking further than you need. Pay attention to your Topography. Features can change.

THE MAP:	This is like an aerial photograph of the terrain taken from high above and reduced to an accurate scale.
THE SCALE:	When we say that a map has a scale of 1:25,000 (one to twenty five thousand) it means that one unit on the map represents 25 000 units on the ground, i.e. 1 cm on the map equates 25 000cm or 250m on the ground. A handy tip to remember is to remove the last three zeros from the map (when it is in thousands) and the number left is the actual distance on the ground in metres represented by one millimetre on the map. Remember 1 grid square = 1 kilometre
CONTOUR LINES:	Hills and slopes are always the most obvious features when viewed from the ground. Contour lines are lines drawn through points of equal height above sea level. When the slope of any hill is gentle, the contour lines will be widely spaced; if steep, they will be closer together.
GRID REFERENCES:	Topographical maps are covered with a network of lines forming what is known as a grid. The object of the grid is to make it easy to describe the position of any point on the map. Each grid line is identified by a number at each end in the border around the map. To describe any position on the map – the numbered grid lines must be read first from west to east and then from south to north. The square in which the point is situated must then be mentally subdivided into tenths in order to give a pin-point accurate reference.
A BEARING	This is a clockwise angle measured in degrees from north to any point in question. It can however be measured from either true North or Magnetic North and therefore should always be stated from which it was measured.
MAGNETIC VARIATION:	<p>This is the angle between true north (the direction of the north pole) and magnetic north (the direction in which the compass needle points). The magnetic variation changes slightly from year to year and considerably from place to place. Around Sydney magnetic variation can generally be taken as about 12 degrees east of true north. In the eastern states of Australia magnetic variation is always east of true north and so permits the rule:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">When converting from magnetic (compass) bearing to a true (map) bearing add the variation; and When converting a true (map) bearing to a magnetic (compass) bearing subtract the variation.</p> <p>NOTE: Holding a compass near metallic objects (fences, belt buckles etc.) will disturb the accuracy of the compass.</p>
ROUTE PLANNING:	When deciding where to go you must ensure that the trip will be within the capability of all members of your Patrol.
AIM:	Have a close look at what you want to achieve and where you want to go. Having defined your objectives tell your members about them well in advance. They will be much more psyched up to get there than just walk on and on.
ROUTE:	<p>In planning your route the most important consideration is a realistic assessment of the capability of your Patrol and, in particular, its weakest member. Be careful not to over estimate the distance you can cover. Forget about the distance that you feel you should be able to cover in a day and think in terms of hours you wish to spend on foot. Allowing for Activities, lunch, breaks and rests along the way.</p> <p>The best advice is the "Naismith"s Rule" which states:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"For an average walker with a medium pack allow 1 hour for every 5 km of easy going, 3 km for easy scrambling and 1.5 km for extremely rough country, plus 1 hour for every 500m up and 1 hour for every 1000m down. For every hour over 5 hours add up to 1 hour to allow for fatigue."</p> <p>Another rule of thumb states that youth (up to say 14 years) can walk with a pack for as many kilometres per day as their birthdays in good weather and level track.</p>

