

The Scouting Experience

A young person experiences Scouting in many ways. It is a combination of different experiences and interactions that present the game of Scouting to young people.

In the current COVID crisis it provides all sections with the opportunity to review the Scouting experience. Scouting is a lived experience highlighted in outdoor activity and camping. The intensity of the Scouting experience is the camping experience as presented in annual and weekend camps.

The outdoor environment is the Scouting environment and therefore we should exploit our programme by creating programmes that are based outdoors. If possible all 'meet ups' should be held at the weekend in local parks or open spaces (there are no restrictions in these spaces other than grouping of 15 people or multiples of 15 with suitable social distancing). Weather is only a problem if you have the wrong clothing and Scouts are supposed to **be prepared**. So, the focus should be, in the main, centered around outdoor meet ups and activity.

A young person therefore has the potential to experience Scouting for 360 hours a year or approx. 24 - 30 hours a month.

This approximate is based on the suggested model:-

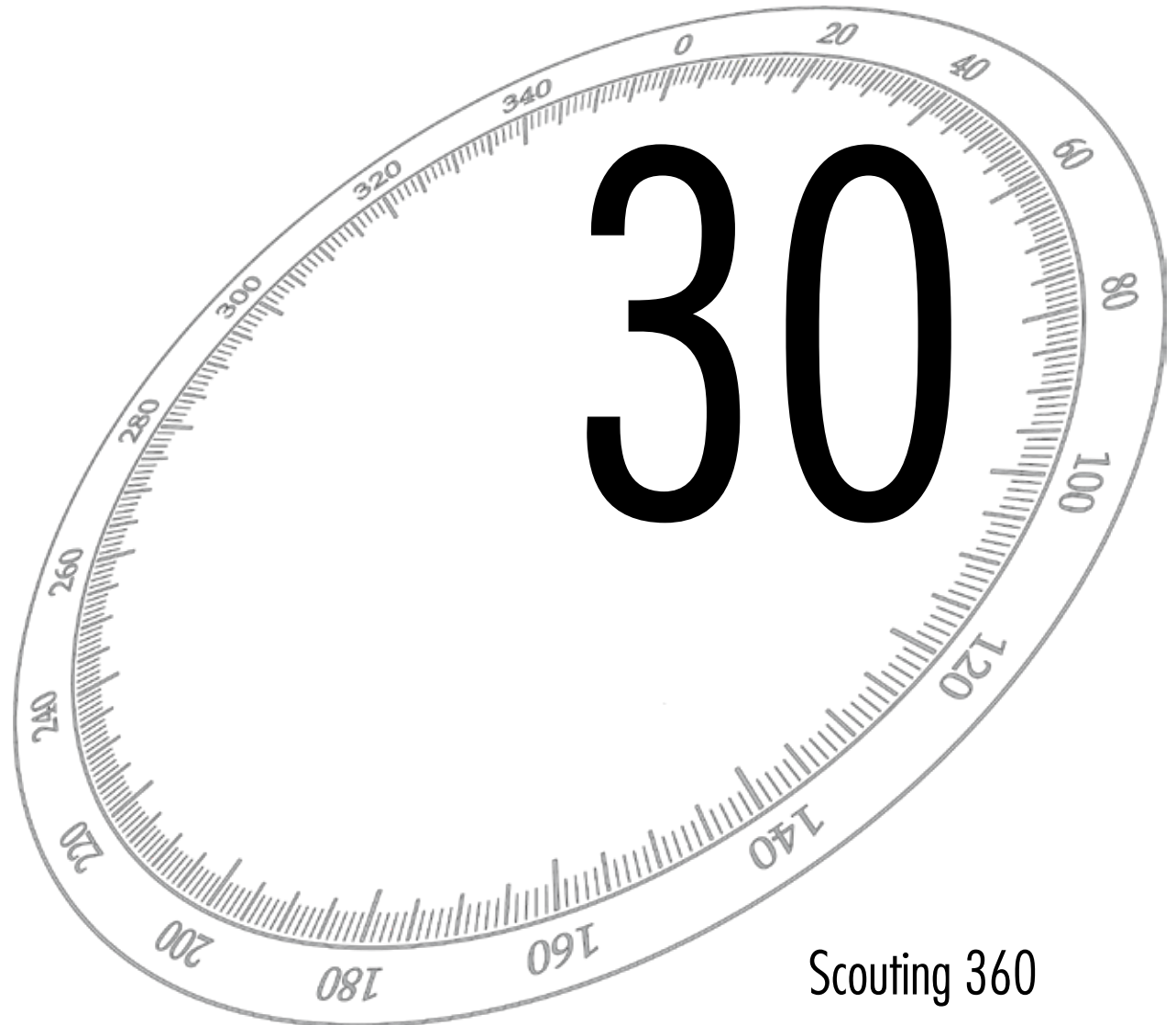
Weekly

Virtual on-line meeting	30 minutes
Individual challenges	1- 2 hours (4 per month)
Team based challenges	1- 2 hours plus (variable on challenge)
Meet up - outdoors	90 minutes

Monthly (activities)

- 1 no. 6 hours activity period (day)
- 1 no. 4 hours activity period (afternoon)

This model is not focused on weekly meetings but rather the potential or programme presents to provide Scouting to our members no matter what the circumstances.



How the model works

COVID restrictions will impact all of our sections. Those with Scout Halls and Dens will have to set up access and usage plans for their meeting spaces. Those sections who use school halls and community halls will be directed by the owners of these spaces. It is likely that a good number of school halls may not be available for use as schools try and provide extra space for students.

Within this context we need to think beyond the restrictions so that Scouting can resume and provide programme to young people. Key to this thinking is outdoor activity and the unique learning space that an outdoor environment provides.

Virtual Meeting

Throughout the COVID situation virtual meetings have evolved. Many families and workplaces have embraced the 'Zoom' and 'Teams' online spaces to meet up and keep in touch. Many Scout Groups have also used these technologies to keep Scouting alive for Scouts. Some have run virtual camps and challenge based activities online with great success. www.scouting360.ie provides programme ideas and resources to assist sections.

In the '30 hour Model' - we suggest a 30 minute virtual chat each week. This would be conducted in reference to the guidelines for virtual meetings. (here) The purpose of this meeting is communications - allowing Scouts to interact and be involved in the coming programme activities. The virtual chat is a preliminary interaction to the 'Meet up' that will take place that week in a local park or open space. It is also the place where individual challenges are presented to the Scouts and Teams.

Individual Challenges

Individual challenges are activities that Scouts do in preparation for the 'meet up' or activity. In essence, these will be skills based, so for example, Scouts might be challenged to make a small survival kit, or learn how to use a compass. This activity is done at home and resources are available to assist this process - individual challenge sheets, The Scouting Trail, The Adventure Skills Handbook and skills online resources. The Scout then arrives at the

'meet up' prepared for action. They can use their survival kit to make fire etc. or use their compass skills for the orienteering challenge during the 'meet up'. The completion of the individual challenges also assist in the progress and proficiency in adventure skills.

Team Challenges

Team challenges are similar to individual challenge but more focused on the development of the team within your section (Lodges, Sixes, Patrol, Crews). Some challenges will be immediate - the team must do or produce something for an activity taking place in the near future. Others are long term challenges - for example, walking 2 million steps which can be completed over a few months. A team of 6 scouts walking 10,000 steps a day will conquer the challenge collectively in just over a month.

The idea of team challenges is to encourage the interaction of members of the team and provide challenge and some competition with other teams in your section.

Meet ups

Meet ups are activity based meeting that are held outdoors in a local park or open space. Under COVID restrictions the maximum group size together is 15 - 12 young people and 3 scouters or two teams of 6 scouts and 3 scouters. So, in an open space teams can be apart from each other and the scouters can split up into teams of 3. Using this model numbers can be scaled up so 30 people operate in two groups of 15. The 'meet up' can comprise some team based games and team challenges. (see games handout and team building challenge handbook for ideas and suggestion). Teams can operate in team 'bases' for example (under a tree or at a park bench or particular space. Scouters will interact within the confines of two agreed teams and not circulate around all Scouts present at the 'meet up'. Social distancing, masks, hand sanitizer and if required work gloves may be used depending on plans. Meet up should last for a minimum of 90 minutes to create a worthwhile 'meet up'.

Activities

In support of the 'adventure programme cycle' it is suggested that there are two activities as the need arises and required in your programme plan. It might be a day or cycle hike

for example and a treasure hunt for an afternoon activity around your community. The activities conducted will be determined by the 'youth led' programme planning process. The Activity Handout and other resources on www.scouting360.ie will provides loads of ideas. Camping is also possible but within the COVID restrictions, it is suggested you contact our national centers who will help you with arrangements and provide guidelines.

Plan, Do, Review

As with all our Scouting the Plan, Do, Review process is employed.

First steps are to get team leaders together to arrange your section for action. You will need to have a virtual meeting to create the programme cycle and get the ideas following.

As the ideas develop the workload should be shared around the Scouter team and section teams. While most open spaces are open to the public; if you think you need permissions then they should be organised.

Parents will need to be informed, Virtual meetings will need the permission of parents and they should be present in the home of your members as per the guidelines.

With some creative thinking it will be easy to work out a plan for your section and how you will operate. The bottom line is to provide the opportunity of Scouting to our members. The model provides loads of opportunities for young people to engage and continue on their scouting trail journey.

Reach out

There will be Groups and sections in your county who have maintained their Scouting during these COVID times and they will be able to help you by sharing their experience to date.

Share your adventure also with others by posting your activity on social media - Scouts in Action.



Maintain social distance of 2 meters

Wear a mask where required

Cough and sneeze into your elbow

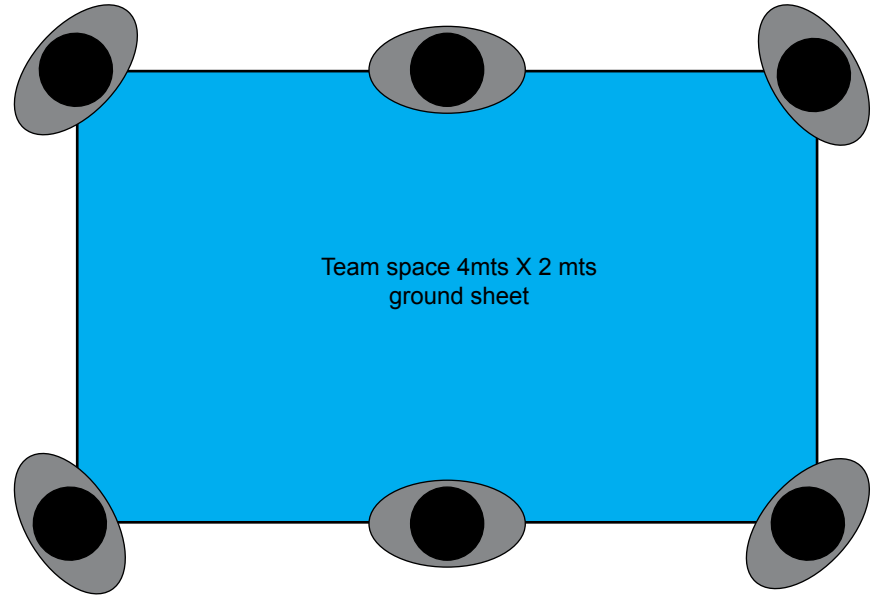
Wash your hands regularly

Be aware

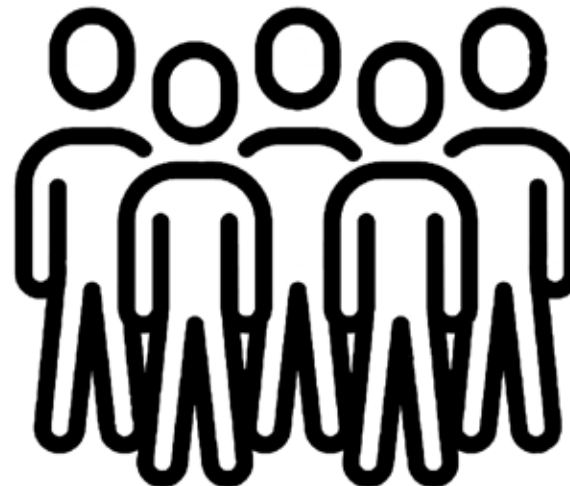


When attending 'meet ups' and activities make sure you have
Mask,
Personal hand sanitizer
Personal equipment
Personal eating equipment
Personal 'tools' - pens, rope, notebook.
Light work gloves - pioneering etc.

Similar to school based requirements.



A blue 4 meter by 2 meter tarp can be useful for defining a team space. Place the tarp on the ground and pin down with some tent pegs. by positioning team members on the corners and mid way position it maintains social distancing and provides a work base for the team. The tarp should be wiped clean after use with surface cleaner.



Group size in outdoors working together is 15. In Scouting terms this means 12 young people (two section teams of 6) working with three Scouters.

In open space multi contained working groups (as above) can operate with suitable distance.

Indoor meetings follow COVID guidelines 6 people per house or meeting place.