

back into action!

Getting your Colony together and into its first adventure

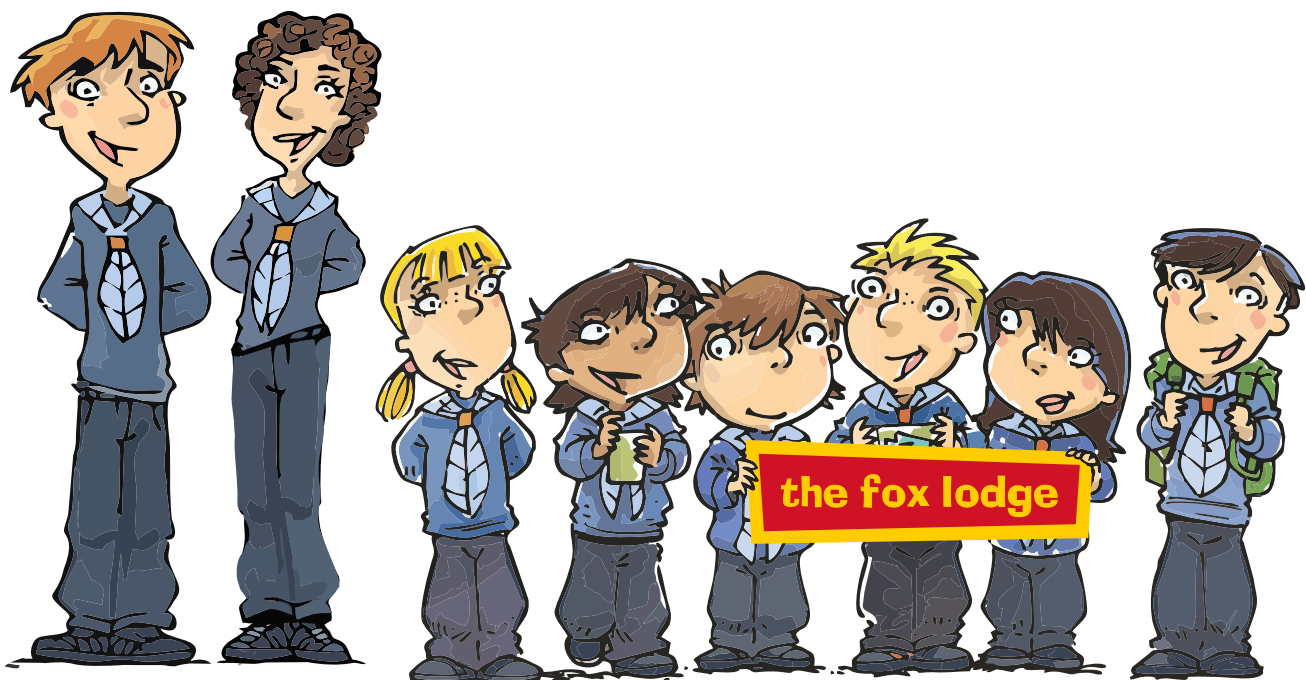
The start of the Scouting year usually brings a mixture of returning Beaver Scouts, new members joining and Beaver Scouts getting ready to move on to Cubs.

Use the first few meetings to help everyone settle in, form the Lodges, hear what the Beaver Scouts want to do and get the Colony into its first adventure.

Keep meetings active and varied. Games, Lodge activities, outdoor challenges and short Log Chews will usually work better than trying to explain the programme to Beaver Scouts.

This resource gives you practical activities to help you:

- Welcome new and returning Beaver Scouts
- Form Lodges and get them working
- Create a Colony Agreement
- Introduce the Beaver Scout programme through activities
- Gather programme ideas from the Beaver Scouts
- Prepare new members for Investiture
- Get the Colony out on its first adventure



1. GET EVERYONE INVOLVED

The first few meetings are a chance for new and returning Beaver Scouts to get to know each other, make friends and settle into the Colony.

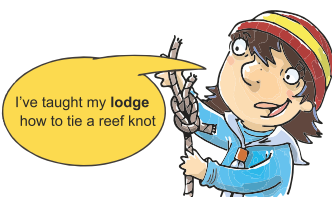
Keep everyone active. Use games and short challenges to help Beaver Scouts learn names and mix with different people rather than relying on introductions alone.

MAKING NEW FRIENDS

Try a few of these during your first meetings:

- **Name Ball** - Stand in a circle. A Beaver Scout says their name and throws a ball to someone else. Once everyone has had the ball, try it again faster. Add a second ball for a challenge.
- **Find Someone Who...** Call out things such as “find someone who has been camping”, “find someone who has a pet” or “find someone who likes swimming”. Beaver Scouts have to find somebody who matches before the next one is called.
- **Balloon Partners** - In pairs, move a balloon from one end of the room to the other without using hands. Change partners after each round.
- **Islands** - Place hoops or sheets of newspaper around the room. Beaver Scouts move around until “islands” is called and must get everyone onto the available islands. Remove one each round so they have to work together.
- **Tower Challenge** - Give small groups the same collection of cups, newspaper, spaghetti, blocks or recycling materials. Give them ten minutes to build the tallest free-standing tower.

Mix the groups regularly. Avoid letting the same friends stay together for every game. This gives new Beavers a chance to meet different people before forming the Lodges.



GIVE RETURNING BEAVERS A JOB

Returning Beaver Scouts play an important part in helping new members settle in.

Give them a small, specific responsibility rather than just asking them to “help”.

They could welcome a new Beaver Scout when they arrive, show them where coats and equipment go, explain the opening or closing, partner with them for a game, demonstrate an activity or introduce them to other Beaver Scouts.

Rotate these jobs so different returning Beaver Scouts get the opportunity to help. It gives them some early responsibility and helps new members become part of the Colony.

2. GET THE LODGES WORKING

Lodges are at the heart of Beaver Scouts. Each Lodge is a small team of Beaver Scouts who work and play together. It is in their Lodge that Beaver Scouts make friends, share ideas, learn new skills and take part in adventures.

FORMING THE LODGES

Try to create a mix of ages, experience and personalities. This allows newer Beavers to learn from more experienced members and helps friendships develop across the Colony.

Once Lodges have been formed, give Beavers the chance to spend time together and get to know the other members of their Lodge. Use the Lodges regularly for games, activities, skills and discussions so that Beavers become used to working together.

STAR'S LODGE CHALLENGE

Help each Lodge create its own identity.

Ask them to:

- Choose a Lodge name
- Design a Lodge flag or sign
- Create a Lodge cheer
- Complete a team challenge together.



For the team challenge, try something quick and practical. They could build the tallest tower from newspaper, get the whole Lodge across an imaginary river using three hoops, complete an obstacle course together or build a simple shelter from the materials provided. Finish by giving each Lodge the chance to introduce itself to the rest of the Colony.

LODGE TIME

Use Lodge Time for Log Chews, sharing programme ideas, preparing for activities and reviewing adventures. Keep it short and give each Lodge a clear question or task to discuss.

CHOOSING LODGE LEADERS

A Lodge Leader helps the Lodge work together and encourages everyone to take part. Rotate the role regularly so different Beaver Scouts get the opportunity to lead and take on responsibility.

JOBS IN THE LODGE

Give every Beaver Scout a chance to help. They could look after equipment, carry the Lodge flag, welcome new members, help set up a game, share the Lodge's ideas or lead part of an activity.

3. AGREE HOW THE COLONY WILL WORK

Rather than starting with a list of rules, involve the Beaver Scouts in agreeing how the Colony will work together.

CREATE YOUR COLONY AGREEMENT

Give each Lodge a sheet of paper and ask:

“What things will help everyone enjoy Beaver Scouts?”

Each Lodge can write or draw its ideas. Bring the Colony back together, compare the answers and agree on five or six simple points.

Keep them positive and easy to remember, for example:

- We listen to each other
- We include everyone
- We help each other
- We look after our equipment
- We try our best



MAKE IT THEIRS

Put the agreed points on a large poster and let the Beaver Scouts add drawings, signatures, handprints or fingerprints.

Display the Colony Agreement and refer back to it during the year. If something isn't working, use the agreement to remind the Colony what they decided together.



4. BRING THE BEAVER PROGRAMME TO LIFE

The Crannóg, Fox Lodge characters, Beaver Scout Map and Memory Bag will become familiar through the activities and adventures of the Colony. Older and more experienced Beaver Scouts can help newer members get to know how these are used.

JOURNEY TO THE CRANNÓG

Set up a trail around your meeting place, with Lodges travelling from station to station and completing short challenges along the way.

Challenges could include following tracking signs, tying a knot, identifying animal tracks, an obstacle, building something or solving a puzzle.

Give older Beavers a part to play - show a skill, help run a station or pair up with newer members to learn.

Finish the trail at the Crannóg, where you can talk about some of the things the Colony will use and do.



THE BEAVER SCOUT MAP

Show new Beaver Scouts the Beaver Scout Map and how it is used to record their progress. Ask a returning Beaver to show their own Map and talk about one or two things they've already done.



THE MEMORY BAG

Use a Memory Bag containing reminders of previous adventures - a photograph, leaf, piece of rope, shell, badge or something else.

Let returning Beavers choose an item and tell the Colony what it reminds them about. New Beaver Scouts can then start adding memories from the adventures they take part in.



FOX LODGE

There is no need to introduce all the Fox Lodge characters at once. Use them as they come up in games, stories, Log Chews and activities, with older Beaver Scouts helping newer members get to know them.

5. LET THEM CHOOSE THE ADVENTURE

Beaver Scouts should have a real say in what their Colony does. Use Lodge Time and Log Chews to gather their ideas, help them make choices and involve them in building the adventure from the start.

GATHER THE IDEAS

Give each Lodge a few simple questions to get started:

- Where would you like to go?
- What would you like to do?
- What would you like to try that you haven't before?



Let Beaver Scouts talk, draw or use pictures to share their ideas. Ask each Lodge to choose its favourites and bring them back to the Colony.

Use stickers, dots or a show of hands to help the Colony decide which ideas it wants to take forward.

Returning Beavers can help newer members take part in planning. Ask them to share adventures they have enjoyed, help with Lodge discussions and make sure everyone gets a chance to contribute. They can also help the Colony build on previous adventures. If they camped last year, you could ask what could we try this time that we didn't before?

SHAPE THE ADVENTURE

Once the Colony has chosen an idea, keep the decisions going. Help the Beavers decide what they want to do when they get there and what they need to do beforehand.

If they choose a woodland adventure, they might decide to follow a trail, build dens, look for wildlife, cook outdoors or organise a woodland game.

If they choose a camp, they could choose something to cook, games to play, what to do around the campfire and some of the things they will need to bring.

Give them realistic choices when they need help deciding but leave room for their ideas.

GET READY FOR IT

Use the meetings before the Adventure to help the Colony prepare. Ask each Lodge what they need to learn or practise, what they need to bring or make, and what their Lodge can do to help.

One Lodge might practise a skill, another prepare a game and another help organise equipment. Returning Beavers can show the things they already know and help newer members learn them. Keep involving the Beaver Scouts right up to the activity itself.

By the time the adventure arrives, they will see that their ideas and choices shaped what the Colony is going to do.

6. GET OUT ON A FIRST ADVENTURE

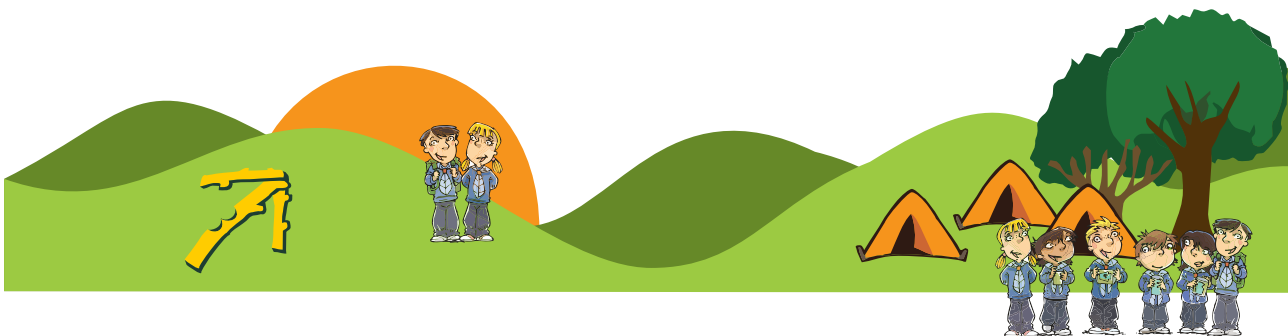
Get the Colony out on an adventure early in the year. Choose one of the ideas the Beaver Scouts have been working towards and put a date on it.

It doesn't need to be complicated. A woodland adventure, treasure hunt, nature trail, picnic hike, campfire evening, outdoor cooking activity or visit can make a great first adventure.

GET THE COLONY READY

Use the preparation the Beaver Scouts have already done in their Lodges. Give them jobs that contribute to the adventure, such as choosing a game, preparing equipment, helping with food or making something they will need.

On the adventure, keep the responsibility going. Beaver Scouts can carry Lodge gear, help follow the route, prepare food, lead a game or take responsibility for their Lodge flag.



REVIEW THE ADVENTURE

Keep the review short, active and visual. Try different ways of finding out what the Beaver Scouts enjoyed and what they would change.

- **Emoji Review** - Put up three large faces - Loved it, It was OK, Not for me. Beaver Scouts stand beside the face that matches how they felt. Ask a few what made them choose it.
- **Thumbs Up** - Call out different parts of the adventure and have everyone give a thumbs up, sideways or down. This works well for a very quick review.
- **Four Corners** - Put a different part of the adventure in each corner of the room. Ask Beaver Scouts to move to the part they enjoyed most and tell their Lodge why.
- **Memory Bag** - Add a photograph, drawing or small reminder from the adventure to the Memory Bag. Use it to get Beaver Scouts talking about what happened and what they remember.
- **Draw It** - Give each Lodge a sheet of paper and ask them to draw their favourite part of the adventure and one thing they would do differently next time.

Finish by asking "What should we do next?" Use their answers to start the next Log Chew and begin shaping the Colony's next adventure.

7. INVESTITURE – WHEN THEY'RE READY

Investiture doesn't need to happen in a particular week. Give new Beaver Scouts time to settle into the Colony, become part of their Lodge and understand the Beaver Scout Promise before they make it.

GETTING READY FOR THE PROMISE

Help Beaver Scouts explore what the Promise means through games, stories and situations they can understand.

Try Promise Corners.

Put up three signs around the room:

YES – This follows our Promise

NO – This doesn't follow our Promise

NOT SURE

Read out simple situations about helping others, including someone, telling the truth, sharing or looking after things.

Beaver Scouts move to the sign that matches what they think, ask a few of them to explain their choice.

Returning Beavers can help by talking about their own Investiture, and helping newer members practise the Promise.

When Beaver Scouts complete 6 challenges they can colour in the dots on their map to bring them to the crannóg.

MAKE IT SPECIAL

When a Beaver Scout is ready, make their Investiture something to remember. It could take place around a campfire, during a Colony adventure, at a favourite outdoor location or as part of another special Colony gathering.

Involve the Lodge too. They could carry their Lodge flag, welcome the new Beaver into the Lodge or stand with them while they make their Promise.



To become a beaver scout:

-  Make some new friends
-  Take part in a **beaver** activity
-  Know how **scouting** started
-  Help to **plan** an activity
-  Take part in a **beaver** activity
-  Know the **beaver promise** and law

