

VENTURE SCOUTS – BACK INTO ACTION

Getting your Venture Unit together and your programme underway

The start of a new Scouting year is a chance to get everyone back together, welcome new Venture Scouts and start deciding what you want to do.

You might have Venture Scouts returning, Scouts moving up or new members joining the Unit.

You may already know each other well, or you may be starting with a fairly new group.

Your Venture programme should be built around the things you want to do, the skills you want to develop and the challenges you want to take on. You don't need to plan the whole year straight away.





1. GET BACK TOGETHER

Start by finding out who is returning and who may be joining the Unit. Keep in contact with the Scout section so that Scouts approaching Venture age know what Venture Scouts has to offer.

New members should be put in contact with the Group and complete the registration process before taking part in Scouting activities.

START WITH A CHALLENGE

Don't spend the first night sitting around talking. Get everyone involved in something straight away. Split into small teams and choose a challenge that gets everyone talking and working together.

- **Ready, Steady, Cook** – split into teams, agree a budget or set of ingredients and see who can produce the best meal.
- **Navigation Race** – plan a route with checkpoints, clues or challenges and see which team can complete it.
- **Escape Room** – create puzzles, codes and practical challenges for another team to solve against the clock.
- **Photo Challenge** – make a list of photo challenges and see which team can complete the most within the time.
- **Blind Tent Pitch** – see if your team can pitch a tent with some people blindfolded and the others giving instructions.
- **Build It** – choose a problem, agree what materials can be used and see which team can come up with the best design.

Keep the competition friendly. The idea is to get everyone involved, particularly if new Venture Scouts have joined or people don't know each other well yet.

AGREE HOW YOU'LL WORK

Once everyone has settled in, agree or revisit your Unit Code of Conduct.

Give everyone five minutes in small groups to come up with the five things they think the Unit needs to work well. Bring the ideas together and agree the points that matter to everyone.

This might cover how you treat each other, turning up when you have committed to something, communication, phones, looking after equipment and doing the jobs you have agreed to do.

Once you have agreed your Code of Conduct, write it up, have everyone sign it and display it in your meeting place. If something isn't working during the year, come back to it and agree what needs to change.



2. GET YOUR UNIT WORKING

Venture Scouts should be involved in deciding what happens in the Unit and in making it happen. Your Scouters are there to support you, but the programme should be shaped and organised by the Venture Scouts.

FORM YOUR CREWS

Now that everyone has had a chance to get to know each other, form your Venture Crews.

Crews give you a smaller team to work in. Depending on the size of your Unit, your Crews might stay together for a while or change for different activities and projects.

Agree your Crews and choose a Crew Leader for each one. Mix things up so that Venture Scouts with different skills and experience are working together.

If there are only a few of you, work together as one Crew rather than creating Crews that are too small.

GIVE YOUR CREW AN IDENTITY

Once your Crew is together, make it your own. Choose a Crew name and create an identity that represents your team.

You could design a badge or logo, make a Crew flag, choose a motto or come up with something unique to your Crew. Your identity could come from your local area, a shared interest or simply an idea everyone in the Crew likes.

Then put your new Crew to the test.

LEAD HEARTS & MINDS BETTER WORLD





2. GET YOUR UNIT WORKING

YOUR FIRST CREW CHALLENGE

- **Marble Run** – build a working marble run from cardboard, tubes and whatever other materials you can find. Longest successful run wins.
- **Egg Drop** – design something that will protect an egg when dropped from a height. Increase the height each round.
- **Water Carrier** – build something that can transport water over a set distance using limited materials. Most water delivered wins.
- **Communication Challenge** – one person can see a model or picture and has to guide the rest of the Crew to recreate it without showing it to them.
- **Scavenger Hunt** – create a list of unusual objects, clues or tasks to find and complete around your meeting place or local area.

ELECT YOUR VENTURE EXECUTIVE

The Venture Executive helps to run the Unit. This can include a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Quartermaster, along with any other roles your Unit needs.

Agree what each role will actually involve and then elect your Executive. A role should come with a real job. The Chairperson might run Unit meetings, the Secretary keep everyone informed, the Treasurer look after the Unit's money and the Quartermaster keep track of equipment.

The Executive doesn't have to do everything. Crew Leaders and other Venture Scouts should also take responsibility for activities, projects and jobs throughout the year.

CHANGE
INFLUENCE
TRANSFORM



3. DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT TO DO

It's your programme, so start with what you actually want to do.

BUILD YOUR PROGRAMME

Give everyone a few minutes to come up with ideas:

- DO – activities, adventures and challenges you want to take on.
- LEARN – skills you want to learn or improve.
- GO – places, events or camps you want to visit.
- ACHIEVE – something you want to work towards or complete.
- GIVE BACK – something you could do for your community or for others.

Put all the ideas together. Give each Venture three votes to choose the ideas they most want to do. Take the most popular ideas and start turning them into your programme. Don't try to plan everything at once. Choose a few things you can get started on and something bigger to work towards.

PUT YOUR SPICES INTO THE PROGRAMME

Complete your SPICE Wheel at the start of the year.

It will help you see where you are now and choose something you would like to develop.

Look at your wheel and choose one area you want to work on. It might be leading an activity, improving your fitness, learning a new skill, organising something for the Unit, speaking in front of a group or taking on a challenge you've never tried before.

Write it down and look for an opportunity in your programme to actually do it.

CHOOSE A BIGGER CHALLENGE

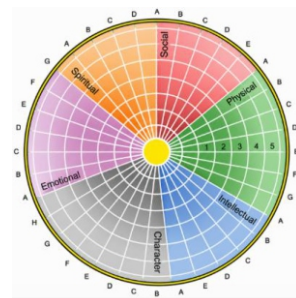
Give your Unit something bigger to work towards. This could be an overnight or weekend activity, a service project, a Venture event or a Venture Expedition. If an idea interests you, split into your Crews and develop an idea to pitch to the Unit.

Your pitch should cover where you want to go, what you want to do, how you will travel, how long it will take, the skills you will need, roughly what it will cost and why your Unit should choose it.

Hear the different pitches and decide which idea or ideas you want to explore further. #

BEFORE YOU FINISH

By the end, your Unit should have a few activities to get started on, something bigger to work towards and something each Venture Scout wants to develop personally.





4. GET OUT AND DO SOMETHING

Use some of your first few weeks back to plan an activity that gets the Unit out and doing something together.

Choose something you are interested in, set a date and work out what needs to happen to make it possible. It doesn't need to be a major expedition or camp. Your first activity could be something you can organise over a couple of meetings and then get out and do.

PICK YOUR FIRST ACTIVITY

- **Night Hike** – choose a route, plan the navigation and head out after dark.
- **Bivvy Night** – choose a suitable location, plan what you will need and spend a night out.
- **Canoe or Kayak Trip** – plan a trip on the water and work out the skills, equipment and support you will need.
- **Geocaching Challenge** – choose an area and see how many caches you can find in an evening or afternoon.
- **Climbing or Bouldering** – organise a session and take on a new challenge.
- **Bike Adventure** – choose a destination or route and organise a day or evening on the bikes.
- **Survival Night** – plan an overnight with limited equipment and put your outdoor skills to the test.

GET READY

Use your Unit meetings before the activity to prepare for it. You might need to practise navigation, learn a new skill, check equipment, plan a route or organise food and transport.

Don't leave all the organising to one or two people. Work out what needs to be done and share the jobs across the Unit.

Before you go, check:

- **Plan** – Does everyone know what you're doing, where and when?
- **People** – Who is responsible for each job?
- **Equipment** – Have you got everything you need?
- **Skills** – What do you need to learn or practise beforehand?
- **Transport** – How are you getting there and home?
- **Money** – Are costs, bookings and payments sorted?
- **Information** – Does everyone have the details they need?
- **Scouters** – Have you agreed the plan and support needed with your Scouters?

Set the date, divide up the jobs and use the next few meetings to get ready.

Then put your plan into action.



5. REVIEW & PLAN WHAT'S NEXT

Once you've completed your first activity, take a few minutes to look back at how it went.

QUICK REVIEW

Keep it simple. Get everyone together and answer some questions - What worked well? What didn't go to plan? What would we do differently next time? What should we do next?

You could also give the activity a score out of 10. If everyone gives a different score, find out why.

Use what you learn when you organise your next activity.



YOUR OWN PROGRESS

Look at the part you played as well. Maybe you planned the route, managed some of the money, led part of the activity, learnt a new skill or took responsibility for equipment.

Go back to your SPICES wheel and look at the area you chose to work on. Did the activities you took part in help you develop it? Would you change anything on your SPICE Wheel now?

Choose what you want to work on next and look for an opportunity in the programme to do it.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Go back to the programme ideas you came up with earlier. Choose what you want to do next and start putting dates against some of your ideas.

Don't let the same people organise everything. Change the jobs around. If you organised food last time, try planning the route, leading a Crew, managing the budget or taking responsibility for another part of the next activity.

You might also be ready to start working towards something bigger – an overnight, expedition, service project, Venture event or another challenge your Unit has chosen. #

MAKE YOUR INVESTITURE MEMORABLE

If you're new to Venture Scouts, your Investiture marks your joining of the Unit and making your Scout Promise. Before your Investiture, take time to understand the Scout Promise and what you are committing to when you make it. Talk it through with your fellow Venture Scouts and Scouters and ask about anything you are unsure of. When you're ready to make your Promise, work with your Unit and Scouters to choose a place and occasion that will make your Investiture memorable.

- **Sunrise Investiture** – set off in the dark to a viewpoint, make your Promise as the sun rises.
- **Campfire Investiture** – gather around the fire, make your Promise under the night sky.
- **Summit Investiture** – go on a hike together, make your Promise on the summit.
- **Expedition Investiture** – choose a memorable point along your expedition and make your Promise as part of the adventure.
- **On the Water** – paddle, swim, sail or row to a memorable location and make your Promise on or beside the water.

FIONTAR – YOUR PERSONAL JOURNEY

Fiontar is your personal progression programme in Venture Scouts. It uses the SPICES to help you see where you are now, create challenges for yourself and see how you develop through the things you do in Ventures. For the SPICES questionnaire, SPICES Wheel, Inspiration Pages and full Fiontar programme, check [here](#).

THE TWO PHASES

SUAS	TRASNA
Taking part and working within the Crew.	Taking more of a lead within the Crew.

There are 18 challenges in Suas and 18 challenges in Trasna. Each challenge is based on a SPICES Key Idea, but you decide what the challenge will be. Your challenges can be built around activities, skills and experiences that form your Venture programme.

HOW IT WORKS

1. **Complete your SPICES Questionnaire** - Answer the questions honestly and rate yourself from 5 to 1.
2. **Plot your SPICES Wheel** - Use your answers to complete your SPICES Wheel. This is personal to you – you are not comparing yourself with anyone else.
3. **Choose your Key Ideas** - Your wheel will help you identify areas where you have room to develop. Include some areas where you are already strong too.
4. **Create your Challenges** - Use the Fiontar Inspiration Pages to help turn your chosen Key Ideas into challenges that interest you.
5. **Do Them** - Bring your ideas into the Unit programme. Different Crews can work on different challenges and you don't have to take part in every challenge.
6. **Map your Progress** - When you have completed your challenges, complete another SPICES Wheel and see how you have developed.

CREATE YOUR CHALLENGES

Your SPICES Wheel will help you identify the Key Ideas you want to explore. Use the Fiontar Inspiration Pages to help you come up with challenges that interest you. Your challenge could involve learning a skill, organising an activity, taking on a physical challenge, providing service, leading others, exploring something new or doing something you haven't tried before. There isn't one correct challenge for a Key Idea. You decide what will challenge you and what you want to get from it.

Bring your ideas to the Unit. Other Ventures will have their own ideas, and together you can choose a variety of challenges to include in programme. Different Crews can work on different challenges at the same time.

REMEMBER

- **Your SPICES Wheel is yours.** Be honest when completing it.
- **You create the challenge.** Fiontar isn't a list of challenges someone else gives you.
- **Keep your programme varied.** Your Unit can have several different Fiontar challenges happening at the same time.