

BALOO

November 15-16, 2025

Welcome Letter for Participants

September 15, 2025

The Accotink Bay District training team welcomes you to Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation (BALOO)!

1. Times, dates, place

- a. The location is U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Station TISCOM, 7325 Telegraph Road, Alexandria, VA 20598
- b. Please bring your driver's license or government ID to access the base.
- c. Check-in is on Saturday, November 15, beginning 8:00 a.m.
- d. **The first event starts PROMPTLY at 9:00 a.m.**
- e. Plan to arrive around 8:00 a.m. so you'll have time to set up your tent.
- f. We should finish before noon on Sunday, November 16.

2. Course content

- a. The BALOO course is in two parts: an online prerequisite component, with introductory and basic information, and an in-person, council-instructed, overnight, hands-on practical. The Scouting America overview is [here](#).
- b. The online component **must be completed prior** to the practical component. Log into my.scouting.org and take [ALL FOUR prerequisite courses](#) online:
 - 1) Introduction To Cub Scout Outdoor Program V2;
 - 2) Pack Camping Program;
 - 3) Planning Your Cub Scout Outdoor Event V2; and
 - 4) Planning Your Event.
- c. Please **SEND** your online course completion documents to Tom Scala at tom.scala@gmail.com OR bring proof of completion to USGC TISCOM. Hint: [Print your Training Completions page](#).
- d. We will cover the entire [BALOO syllabus](#).
 - a. Read page 17 first. Read page 57 second.

3. Medical record. Please **BRING** your completed Scouting America Health and Medical Record **WITH YOU** to USCG TISCOM.

- a. The Scouting America form (Parts A, B1, and B2 only) is required for ALL participants for events less than 72 hours in duration.
- b. You can find the form at <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/ahmr/>
- c. **We can't let you take the course without a completed Scouting America Annual Health and Medical Record form.**

4. Logistics

- a. Wear your "Class-A" field **uniform** to check-in if you have one. After flags you can change to a Scout-related activity shirt or T-shirt.
- b. **CPAP users:** There is no electricity at the campsite. You'll need to bring a battery or similar power source.

5. Gear checklist. What to **bring**.

- a. See the [BALOO syllabus](#), p.17, for the "Suggested BALOO Training Gear List." The following items of gear are emphasized because you'll be able to function without some items (camera, towel) but not without others.
- b. Basic overnight camping stuff: tent; ground cloth; sleeping bag; sleeping pad or cot; sleeping clothes; hat; warm jacket; rain jacket. **BACKUP CHANGE OF SHOES AND CLOTHES IN YOUR CAR.**
- c. Cub Scout Six Essentials (personal first aid kit; filled water bottle; flashlight; trail food or snacks; sunscreen SPF 30 or greater; whistle). **MAYBE A BAG OR SMALL DAY PACK TO CARRY THESE AROUND.**
- d. Mess kit to use for eating, not cooking. Typically, a mess kit includes a shallow plastic or metal bowl, a cup, and utensils. Anything you have around the house will do. You'll clean your mess kit after every time you use it. We'll teach you the three-pot method.
- e. A standard, portable, outdoor or camp chair because you'll be spending time sitting down. **YOU WILL BE MISERABLE WITHOUT THIS.**

- f. You'll have to get your gear from the parking lot to the campsite. It's not far, about 200 meters. **YOU WON'T HAVE TO USE A BACKPACK.**
- g. Personal hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes.
- h. Tongs and heavy work gloves to lift, turn, and carry your foil dinner.
- i. Your Scouting notebook. This is the dedicated, spiral-bound or loose-leaf binder that every good leader keeps for all Scout training and activities, with plenty of blank pages so you can take careful notes.
- j. Something to write with.
- k. Pocket knife, if you have one. We'll show you how to sharpen it.
- l. Compass, if you have one. We'll show you how to use it.

6. Food

- a. **Bring your own bag lunch** for Saturday.
- b. Any snacks and hot/cold beverages you may want during the course. We're trying to save you money by you bringing your own.
- e. Bring a **foil dinner** that you will make at home. **THIS WILL BE YOUR SUPPER ON SATURDAY.** Read page 57 from the [BALOO syllabus!](#)
- c. Important for the foil dinner:
 - 1) You can find foil dinner recipes on the internet.
 - 2) Substantially **pre-cook and season** your ingredients before you put them in foil. Otherwise, vegetables will typically burn and meat/protein and potatoes will typically be undercooked.
 - 3) Microwave the potato and slice it.
 - 4) Wrap the dinner with two layers of (preferably heavy duty) aluminum foil.
 - 5) Write your name on the foil with a Sharpie.
 - 6) Put your foil dinner **INSIDE A ZIP LOCK BAG THAT SEALS**, with your name written with a Sharpie on the bag. The zip lock bag has to seal to comply with proper food storage standards.
 - 7) All the bags will go in our cooler at registration.
- d. We will make a Dutch oven cobbler for Saturday, after the campfire.
- e. You will make a Dutch oven breakfast on Sunday.
- f. Tell Tom in advance if you have any food allergies or dietary restrictions. tom.scala@gmail.com.

7. Fees

- a. Your \$25 registration fee covers the following: per-person fee to use USCG TISCOM; course materials, which you keep; porta-johns; and the fees to NCAC for admin and insurance.
- b. We won't know the final costs until we buy the consumables. Consumables include: ice for the coolers; charcoal; cracker barrel cobbler; and Sunday breakfast food.
- c. To pay for consumables, please bring \$15 in small denomination bills or be ready to Venmo; because we're not sure at this moment who will be buying the consumables or the exact amount (which is typically around \$15).
- d. **If you cancel after we buy the consumables, you'll still be on the hook for that expense** because it would not be fair for others to pay your share of the costs incurred.

You're welcome to review the syllabus in advance, download it for your Scouting library, print it if you like, and refer to it during and after the course. Here is the [BALOO syllabus](#).

The next course you should register for is Wood Badge. Go to <https://ncacscouting.org/training/wood-badge/>, sign up, earn your beads, and do great things for the youth of our nation.

If you have any questions, contact Tom Scala.

The course staff are looking forward to seeing you on November 15. Expect to have fun and do your best.

Tom Scala
tom.scala@gmail.com
703-582-5044