

Race Format and Eligibility 2026

The competition format will be "15th Burlington", or "bubble sort". The race uses multiple tracks to provide the Scouts the opportunity to race their car 10+ times in a very short timeframe. The track at one end is labeled the Gold Track and the other end is called the Silver Track.

Format Summary: There are 3 stages to the race

Preliminaries (approximately first 45 min of racing): 3 racers per heat. During the preliminaries, the 1st Place Finisher will move one track towards the Gold Track, 2nd Place Finisher remains on the current track, and 3rd Place Finisher moves one track towards the Silver Track

Finalist Selection: During the finalist selection period (about 15 min), racing will continue as before, however, only the 1st place finisher will move tracks. He will move one track closer to the Gold Track. At the Gold Track, the first place finisher will leave the Track and become a Finalist. At the end of the Finalists Selection, Scouts remaining on or between the Gold thru Silver tracks will have completed their racing.

Finalists' Race: This race will take place on a neutral track and finishing place will be based on best cumulative time. Each car will race once in each lane. Awards will be given to the top 3 competitors in the Finalists' Race.

Eligibility:

The Heartland Pinewood Derby is open to ALL registered Cub Scouts, and Webelos Scouts. Participation or placement in a Pack Derby **IS NOT REQUIRED** to compete in the district derby. Only Scouts registered in a Heartland District Pack will be eligible for the Finalists' Race.

Classes of Racing:

Cub Scouts will compete based on their "Cub Scout Year." There will be only one class for Webelos and AOL. In most cases this aligns with their year in school: Lion = Kindergarten; Tiger = 1st grade; Wolf = 2nd grade; Bear = 3rd grade; Webelos/AOL = 4th and 5th grade.

Sportsmanship:

How we act and behave while participating in the Pinewood Derby is of the utmost importance. This is called **sportsmanship**.

The first thing to remember about sportsmanship is that everyone's skills are a little different. Your car building skills may be just developing, while someone else may have more experience. Parents have different skill levels too. Whether or not you feel you have good car-building or racing skills, remember, you and your fellow scouts are individuals first and racers second. **Have respect for others.**

The second thing to remember is to follow the rules. Without rules, there would be no Pinewood Derby. You will never know if you are really good at doing something unless you follow the rules. This is **being honest**.

The third thing to remember about good sportsmanship is that there are winners and losers in every competition. You accept this when you choose to compete. There may be times when you win and feel happy, and times when you lose and feel unhappy. Being a winner is easy while losing is sometimes hard. If you win, you must not brag or gloat. If you lose, you must not feel jealous or bitter. To be a good sportsman, you must be able to say, **"I did my best"** and be satisfied with the results. You must appreciate and feel happy for someone else who builds a good car and runs a great race.

Good Luck Scouts!



Car Design and Construction Rules

General:

1. Cars **must** be built after June 1, 2025 using the materials in the Official Pinewood Derby Racing Car Kit (part# 17006) or the Official Wheel/Axle Kit (part# 17553, 647054-647056, 647826, or 647053) as sold by the Scout Service Center or scoutshop.org. Kits and parts may be purchased elsewhere if they are of the exact type specified above. For these rules, substitution parts of identical geometry are considered to have been contained in the kit. Precut kits with the BSA logo are acceptable. Hobby shop parts such as Pinecar precut car bodies, Pinecar axles, Pinecar wheels, axle tubes, bearings and springs are prohibited.
2. Cars **must** have been built by the Cub Scout entrant. (Some parental or other adult assistance is permitted.)
3. After checking in, no adult is allowed in the race area except the starting gate personnel and the judges. All racing will be conducted by the scout using the car he built.

Size and Shape:

1. The pine wood block may be shaped in any way desired as long as it follows the Car Design and Construction Rules outlined here.
2. Overall **length** cannot exceed 7 inches.
3. Overall **width** cannot exceed $2\frac{3}{4}$ (2.75) inches.
4. Overall **height** cannot exceed 4 inches (**To fit under the electronic timer at Finish Line**).
5. Underside clearance of at least $\frac{3}{8}$ (0.375) inches and inside wheel-to-wheel clearance of at least $1\frac{3}{4}$ (1.75) inches is required so that the car will run on the racetrack. Adequate clearance is the responsibility of the race car builder.
6. The front of the car must have a minimum of a $\frac{1}{4}$ " flat surface in the center to be placed against the starting mechanism (i.e., it cannot have a cutout notch). No part of the car may extend beyond the starting mechanism.
7. If you choose a narrow body design, make sure the areas where the axles are inserted into the body remain $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide.

Weight:

1. "Weight" is considered to be any material on the car that is not provided in the kit. Race cars may weigh no more than five (5) ounces (total weight) at the time of registration on Derby Day using the official scale and judged by a member of the race staff. The official scale will have (2) two places after the decimal point (example 5.00).
2. Weight may be added to the car and will be considered part of the car for purposes of all measurements. Added weight must be of a solid material (e.g., metal, plastic, wood, etc.).
3. All weight must be securely fastened to the car, e.g. by permanent glue, nails or screws and not by "sticky substances" such as tape or tack spray. Weights shall be passive, i.e. non-moveable, non magnetic, non-electric, non-sticky, etc.

Decorations:

1. Moveable (i.e., loose) parts are not permitted.
2. Added design features are permitted if they comply with all other Car Design and Construction Rules.
3. Cars must be clean and dry. (No wet glue, paint or lubricant).



Wheels:

1. Wheels **must** be the Official B.S.A. wheels provided in the Pinewood Derby Kit.
2. Removal of any material from the wheel sidewalls or face is not allowed. The outside wheel sidewalls and face must remain intact. All wheels must have the "BSA" and "Pinewood Derby" words on the sidewall completely intact.
3. Wheels may be lightly sanded to remove seam or other 'bumps' for truing. Be careful not to reduce the wheel diameter or round the tread face.
4. The width of the wheels cannot be altered. Wheels must remain FLAT. Rounding or thinning of the wheels is prohibited.
5. Wheels must be able to come into direct contact with the body of the car.
6. All cars **must** have four wheels; at least three need to touch the track surface. Underside clearance must be maintained at all times.
7. Hubcaps are not permitted.

Axels:

1. Axles (nails) **must** be the Official B.S.A. axles provided in the Pinewood Derby Kit. **Solid axles are not permitted.**
2. Bearings, washers, sleeves or bushings on the wheels or axles are prohibited.
3. Springs or suspensions of any kind are prohibited.
4. The axle nails shall be firmly affixed to the wood of the car body. The outside surface of the axle head (the non-contact surface) may not be changed, such as, by polishing, painting or filing down. **It must be obvious to the judges that the wheels and the nails from the kit are being used.**
5. The axles/wheels **should** be placed in the slots provided. If you choose not to use the provided slot, you are still responsible to maintain all clearance requirements.
6. Removing the pinch marks and mold ridges on the axles by sanding and polishing the axles is allowed. The axle dimensions may not be changed.

Lubricant:

Dry powdered graphite is the only lubricant permitted. Many other lubricants have been used over time however graphite has been proven to work best and cause the fewest problems. **Liquid lubricants are not permitted.**

Repair during race:

1. If, during the race, a wheel falls off or the car becomes otherwise damaged, the SCOUT may perform repairs to the best of his ability. The SCOUT may seek advice for repairing the car, but may receive no other assistance. If a car is damaged due to track fault or due to fault of another car or SCOUT, then the track chairman, at his sole discretion, may allow additional repair assistance. Only in this instance can replaced wheels be re-lubricated.
2. A repaired car must be re-inspected and meet the registration requirements before continuing to race.
3. If repairs are required to the track, the previous heat may need to be re-run.

Interference during a race:

1. If a car leaves its lane and, in so doing, interferes with another racer, then the cars will be reset and raced again. If a particular car jumps the track a second time without being interfered with, that car will be disqualified.
2. If a car leaves its lane but proceeds down the track in a manner that does not interfere with its opponents, the car will be placed in the order it crosses the finish line.
3. If a car leaves the track without interfering with its opponent, it shall be considered to have ended its heat at that point and be given last place.

