

# Instructions to Scout







Choose references carefully. A good reference is someone who knows you well, can speak to your character, and will complete the recommendation promptly. You want someone who answers “yes” enthusiastically when you ask.








Use the most appropriate communication channel. Does the other person (not you) prefer email, text, phone call, in person...? Using their preferred method of communication is courteous and will enhance your chances of getting a good recommendation.

Start early. Soliciting references does not have to be the last requirement you complete – and in fact should not be. You can start soliciting months before you anticipate having your Eagle board of review.

Make it easy for them. Provide your potential reference with:

-  Thanks for their time, even if they are not able to help you.
-  Explanation of what the recommendation is for, and how it will help you.
-  Reminders of your joint interactions, and how they affected you.
-  Instructions on how and where to submit their recommendation, and a form if your council provides one. Include details on deadlines or any other timing issues.

Councils may want to prepare a template document for Scouts to give to potential references, especially ones who are not familiar with Scouting America. This document should include information such as:

-  Thank you for agreeing to help this Scout.
-  BSA's mission: To prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes.
-  Scout Oath
-  Scout Law
-  Ask the reference to share their perspective on how the Scout has internalized the values of the Scout Oath and Law, and demonstrated them in their daily life.
-  How to submit the letter (online form, email, hand-delivered in sealed envelope) and to whom (to Scout, Scoutmaster, council/district volunteer....)
-  Inform the reference that letters will be destroyed after the Board of Review, and will never be shared with the Scout or their family.

# Eagle References & Letters of Recommendation

(Guide to Advancement 9.0.1.3 and 9.0.1.7)



Function	Old	New (January 1, 2025)
Responsible for requesting and following up	Council advancement committee members or designee	Scout
Number of references	Six (five if not employed)	Four
Can the current unit leader (Scoutmaster, Advisor, Skipper) or Committee Chair serve as a reference?	Not preferred	No. Their signature on the application is the endorsement.
Can the parent/guardian serve as a reference?	Not preferred	Strongly discouraged
Religious Recommendation	Strongly recommended. If not affiliated, parent/guardian provides	Allowed
Method	Council determines methods of contact: letter, form, or phone call	Councils choose the method letter, email, online form, etc.
Electronic submissions	Discouraged	Allowed only if confidentiality at all stages is guaranteed.
Can Scout collect?	Yes	Yes, but only if in a sealed envelope; otherwise sent to a designated unit, district, or council adult.
Impact on Scout if references not obtained	If after a reasonably diligent effort no response can be obtained from any references, the board of review must go on without them. It must not be postponed or denied for this reason, and the Scout shall not be asked to submit additional references or to provide replacements.	If after diligent effort four recommendations are not received, the board of review can go forward without them. If the Scout chooses to go forward, the board may ask about their efforts, but may not deny advancement based only on lack of references.
Disposition	Letters destroyed after Board	Letters destroyed after Board