

Planning Camp Timeline

PHASE 1: THE VISION & FOUNDATION (10–12 Months Out)

Goal: Secure the spot and build the "Hype."

- **Select the Destination:** Research camp options with Scout and leader input. Choose a camp that challenges your current roster's skill level.
- **Secure the Dates:** Make your unit reservation as soon as the window opens (usually 12–18 months before).
- **The "Internal Deadline" Hack:** Set your unit's payment and paperwork deadlines 14 days before the official dates. This creates a stress-free buffer for late-comers.
- **Financial Blueprint:** Calculate the "all-in" cost per Scout. Identify 1–2 key fundraising opportunities and share scholarship (Campership) info immediately.
- **Designate Leadership:** Elect a "Camp SPL". If your primary leaders aren't attending, finalize the "on-site" leadership team now.

PHASE 2: RECRUITMENT & COMMITMENT (6 Months Out)

Goal: Commit the people and finalize the roster.

- **Secure Adult Leadership:** Recruit at least three registered, SYT-trained adults. This protects the trip if one leader has a last-minute emergency.
- **Medical Form Launch:** Distribute Scouting Medical Forms

Pro Tip: Remind parents that "Part C" (72+ hours camp) requires a doctor's signature and can take months to schedule.
- **Recruitment Push:** (Scouts BSA) Visit your "feeder" Cub Packs. Host a "Camp Info Night" for crossover families to answer gear and cost questions.
- **Special Needs Audit:** Collect info on dietary restrictions, allergies, or mobility needs. Input these on the online registration early so staff can prepare.
- **Financial Commitments:** Set all internal unit payment deadlines at least 14 days prior to any deadlines. This ensures the unit treasury is never on the hook for a family that drops out last minute.

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PHASE 3: PROGRAM & MOMENTUM (3–4 Months Out)

Goal: Move from "Logistics" to "Adventure."

- **Program Selection:** (Scouts BSA) Have Scouts choose Merit Badges and high-adventure tracks.
Pro Tip: Encourage a mix of "hard" badges and "fun" activities to prevent burnout.
- **Preview the Rotation:** (Cubs) Review the camp's daily schedule. Explain to the Cubs and parents how "Station Rotations" work (e.g., Archery at 9:00 AM, Nature at 10:30 AM).
- **Skills Assessment:** Start "Swim Tests" or "Shakedown Hikes" locally. Don't wait until Monday morning at camp to find out a Scout can't swim or their boots don't fit.

PHASE 4: THE LOGISTICAL SPRINT (1 Month Out)

Goal: Finalize the "Unit Footprint" and transportation.

- **The Final Invoice:** Collect all remaining fees.
- **Transportation & Rides:** Finalize who is driving, who has the trailer, and where the "Drop-off/Pick-up" rally points are.
- **Unit Phone Tree:** Make a phone tree so that all families can be contacted quickly and easily.
- **The Parent Quick Reference Page:** Give parents a quick reference page with: Unit Phone Tree, Camp address/Phone (for emergencies only), Mailing instructions for care packages.
- **Unit Gear Check:** Inspect the trailer, tents, and lanterns. Order any missing bulk supplies (paracord, first aid kit refills).

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PHASE 5: THE FINAL ASSEMBLY (7–2 Days Out)

Goal: Finalize the "Unit Go-Bag" so you aren't scrambling at the trailhead.

- **Build the Master Binder:** This is your "Golden Ticket" for check-in. It should contain:
 - Medical Forms: Sorted alphabetically (A–Z) for every youth and adult.
 - Backup Roster: A printed copy of the official Scouting roster and YPT certificates *only* if the online registration is not showing them as verified.
- **Medication Audit:** Verify that all medications (prescription and OTC) are in their original containers and labeled with the Scout's name.

Pro-Tip: Use a gallon-sized Ziploc bag for each Scout's meds to keep them organized in the medication lockbox.

- **The 48-Hour Buffer:** Send a final blast to parents: "If your Scout has a fever or stomach bug within 48 hours of departure, stay home." This is the time to start any refund paperwork for medical drops.

THE DAY OF DEPARTURE

Goal: Load up and roll out.

- **The "Dashboard" Folder:** Grab the Master Binder you built in Phase 5. Ensure it's in the lead vehicle, not buried in the trailer.
- **Personal Gear Check:** One last visual "sweep"—does everyone have closed-toe shoes? Rain gear? A full water bottle?
- **Final "Healthy" Roll Call:** As Scouts arrive, a quick verbal check: "Everyone feeling 100%?" Verify any last-minute medication hand-offs.
- **Vehicle Logistics:** Confirm who is in which car. Ensure drivers have the camp address and any toll/gas money needed.
- **The "Missing" Check:** Confirm the reason for any "no-shows" so you can report them immediately to the Camp Director for potential partial refunds or safety tracking.

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