

The Meaning of the Boy Scout Oath.

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Before you pledge yourself to any oath or promise, you must know what it means. The paragraphs that follow will help you understand the meaning of the Scout Oath.

On my honor . . .

By giving your word, you are promising to make every effort to live by the high ideals of the Scout Oath. Your success is a measure of your honor. AS a Scout, you must hold your honor sacred.

. . . I will do my best . . .

You have many talents, skills, and interests. Do your best with them, and use them for good purposes. Don't be satisfied with less than your best effort even when less is required of you. Measure your achievements against your own high standards, not against the performance of others. As a Scout and through-out your life, you will have opportunities to learn and to help many people. You will also be faced with challenges that may severely test you. Use your abilities to do your very best. That is what Scouting requires.

. . . To do my duty to God . . .

Your family and religious leaders teach you to know and love God and the ways in which God can be served. As a Scout, you do your duty to God by following the wisdom of those teachings in your daily life, and by respecting the rights of others to have their own religious beliefs.

. . . and my country . . .

As you study our country's history, you learn about the men and women who toiled to make America great. Most contributed in quiet ways. Others sacrificed their lives for our country. All of them did their part to build the nation we have today. Help keep the United States strong by obeying its laws. Learn about our system of government and your role as a citizen and future voter. Do all you can to help your family and neighbors live happy, productive lives. The land itself is an important part of our national heritage. Work for the conservation of our natural resources. Teach others respect for the land. Your efforts really will make a difference.

. . . and to obey the Scout Law; . . .

The twelve points of the Scout Law are the rules of Scouting. They are also rules you can apply to your whole life. The Scout Law sets forth ideals to live up to. By using the Scout Law as a guide, you will know you are always doing your best. Others will respect you for the way you live. Most importantly, you will respect yourself.

. . . To help other people at all times; . . .

There are many people who need you. Your young shoulders can help them carry their burdens. A cheerful smile and a helpful hand will make life easier for many who need assistance. By helping whenever aid is needed and by doing a Good Turn daily, you prove yourself a Scout. You are doing your part to make this a better world.

. . . To keep myself physically strong, . . .

Take care of your body. Protect it and develop it so that it will serve you for an entire lifetime. That means eating nutritious foods and being active to build strength and endurance. It also means avoiding drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and any other practices that can destroy your health.

. . . mentally awake, . . .

Develop your mind. Strive to increase your knowledge and make the greatest use of your abilities. Be curious about the world around you. Learn all you can both in class and beyond school. With an open attitude and the willingness to ask questions, you will get the most out of your life.

. . . and morally straight.

To be a person of strong character, guide your life with honesty, purity, and justice. Respect and defend the rights of all people. Your relationship with other should be honest and open. Be clean in your speech and actions, and faithful in your religious beliefs. The values you follow as a Scout will help you become virtuous and self-reliant.
