

# Introduction to the OUTDOOR ADVENTURE SKILLS

## What is the Outdoor Adventure Skills Program?

The Outdoor Adventure Skills program is an invitation for Scouts to try something new—to be outside more, testing themselves with progressive challenges while always staying within their capabilities to stay safe. In short, it's about having life-changing experiences.

Each Outdoor Adventure Skills pathway is divided into nine stages with a badge awarded for each stage. However, the purpose of the OAS program is **not** the badge. Rather, the Outdoor Adventure Skills should be seen as tools to support the **Plan-Do-Review** process.

### PLAN-DO-REVIEW

**PLAN** – When planning an Adventure, Scouts need to think about competencies they have and new competencies they will need to develop. A quick check with the Outdoor Adventure Skills resources will help them plan for the Adventure.

**DO** – Scouts may decide to build specific skills into their Adventure, and they can prepare by practising the skills they're going to use.

**REVIEW** – When youth complete their Adventure, they should complete a review by asking themselves: What knowledge, skills and abilities do I have now that I did not have before? They then can assess their new knowledge, skills and abilities against the appropriate Outdoor Adventure Skill list to determine which competencies they have achieved. When a list of competencies has been completed, all of the Scout's hard work and bold exploration is recognized with an Outdoor Adventure Skills badge. Sections should celebrate and present Outdoor Adventure Skill badges immediately after they are earned—just like any other badge.

### Great Outdoor Adventures

The Outdoor Adventure Skills are an exciting part of the Canadian Path. Our youth now have a framework for developing their adventure abilities from Beaver Scouts through to Rover Scouts.

**STAGES** – Each Adventure Skill pathway is organized into nine stages. Each stage builds on the previous stage and leads to the next. The stages are not aligned to any Section. While a Beaver Scout would naturally start at stage 1 and move through the stages during his or her time in Scouting, a new Venturer Scout with no Scouting experience would also be expected to start at stage 1 and move up. The Outdoor Adventure Skills present a progressive standard for all youth members.

**COMPETENCIES** – The Outdoor Adventure Skills stages are presented as a set of competency statements. "I know how to pitch a tent" or, "I can now plan for a week-long hiking trip"—that kind of thing. These specific statements outline the knowledge and skills that the youth need to display to move up the next stage.

**RISK ASSESSMENT** – The Outdoor Adventure Skills are not certifications. Scouts should not be excluded from an Adventure because they have not reached a certain stage. Rather, the decision of whether a youth should take part in a particular Adventure should be based on risk management; as always, youth and Scouters should ask themselves, "Am I in the Right Place at the Right Time with the Right People and the Right Equipment?"

**ASSESSING COMPETENCIES** – Competencies need to be assessed. This can be done by the Scouter, a mentor, an external specialist or instructor or through a peer assessment. For a peer assessment, one youth assesses a less experienced youth in a given Outdoor Adventure Skills pathway. When using peer assessment for Outdoor Adventure Skills, the assessing youth must be two stages further along than the youth being assessed. What about if a youth has learned new skills outside of Scouting? Of course, that's great! The Scout can review his or her competencies with the other youth and Scouters.

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