

THE PARTS OF A DEN MEETING

Along with the Cub Scout's family, the den meeting is critical to the Cub Scout's success and enjoyment of the Cub Scouting program. It is in and through the den that the boy makes social connections, has fun, and completes his advancement. Den meetings that are fun, organized, and interesting make a great environment for the boys. The den meeting is divided into seven sections.

1. PREPARATION AND MATERIALS NEEDED

Read the pages in the handbook for each new adventure before you start to work on it. The handbook provides background information, instructions, or suggestions for many activities. This allows you to prepare what you need in advance, or arrange an outing. Encourage Scouts to bring their handbooks to each meeting.

2. GATHERING

This part of the meeting is designed to keep boys occupied and prepare them for the meeting as the rest of the den arrives. Leading the Cub Scouts in a 10–15 minute active game makes for a great Gathering activity, helping to jump-start the meeting and allowing boys to release energy and improve focus.

3. OPENING

The opening is usually ceremonial in nature, and it often connects with patriotic practices, such as flag ceremonies, or connects the boys with the ideas of Scouting, such as a shared recitation of the Scout Oath or Law. This can be an appropriate time for a prayer. The opening tells the boys that the meeting has begun.

4. TALK TIME

This is where the business items of the den take place. Talk Time should be brief so you and the boys can get right to the fun at the heart of the meeting. Business items can include any of the following:

- Recording advancement (a second adult)
- Notification/reminder for upcoming trips or tours
- Notification/flier for upcoming events
- Introducing a new adventure
- Meeting information: Telling Cub Scouts what to expect at this meeting
- Setting the groundwork for future advancement
- Notes for the upcoming pack meeting

5. ACTIVITIES

This is the heart of the adventure in each den meeting. This is where fun and learning take place, and the boy completes most of his advancement requirements.

6. CLOSING

The Closing provides a ceremonial moment to wrap up the meeting. The Closing, especially as boys grow older and more mature, is often led by the *denner*, the youth leader of the Cub Scout den.

7. AFTER THE MEETING

This is a place to review the success of the meeting, to note the need to follow up with additional parts of the meeting, to communicate with parents, and to record what was completed during the den meeting. Many dens enjoy refreshments or snacks at the close of the den meeting. If you do serve a snack, set an example of healthy eating and offer a nutritious snack of fruits or vegetables. And good Scouts always tidy up at the close of the meeting.