Scouts Canada Quick-Reference Style Guide

Imagery

Scouts Canada’s program, The Canadian Path, is about adventures: amazing first-time experiences. Images must be inspirational, action-driven and empowering.

Scouts Canada is a diverse organization: we are non-denominational, co-ed and national. We facilitate programs for youth aged 5-26, and we our members share adventures all year round. In our imagery, we aim to showcases both our diverse membership and our diverse programming. Most importantly, we aim to showcase the fun of Scouting!

For examples of Scouts Canada brand imagery, click the following links:

* [Camp Impeesa](https://www.instagram.com/p/B5LPEkpFNQ3/)
* [6th Richmond Hill Beavers](https://www.flickr.com/photos/scouts_canada/15081925143/)
* [1st South Porcupine Scouts](https://www.instagram.com/p/BtENqqpBNoG/)
* [23rd Nepean Venturers](https://www.instagram.com/p/B5YE_dAlqy5/)
* [Youth Spokesperson program](https://www.instagram.com/p/BbIGoFKAb2K/)

Voice

Your verbal and nonverbal communication skills become foundational tools that set the tone of

communications. It’s important our audiences connect with Scouts Canada, so our language must be familiar and showcase that we are keeping pace with the times.

Scouts Canada’s voice reflects our organization’s Mission and Vision, as well as our program, The Canadian Path. Scouts Canada’s program is an example of non-formal learning—consequently, our voice reinforces the distinction between Scouting and classroom learning. For example, we write “Discover more” rather than “Learn more”.

**Scouts Canada’s voice is human.** It’s friendly, factual and straightforward, but it is also

inspirational, action-driven, inclusive and empowering.

Tone

Write for the audience and the medium. Formal content written for Scouters should be put differently for youth or parents.

Consider the following sentence from the [Winter Sport Standards](https://www.scouts.ca/resources/bpp/policies/winter-sports-standard.html) (Scouters are the primary audience): “Periodic rests while building snow caves and engaging in other strenuous cold-weather activities will help prevent accidents and overheating.”

The same advice could be shared in a *Scouting* Life article intended for youth, but would be put differently: “Take a break now and then when digging out your snow cave. If you heat up too much, you will begin to sweat. This will make you chilly when you stop. When you rest, have a snack and drink some water.”

Note that the latter version addresses youth directly, and that all of the words are only one or two syllables. While this version is a bit longer, it’s still easier to read and more appropriate for its audience.

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| **Channel** | **Audience** | **Tone** | **Example Tone by Channel** |
| **From…** | **To…** |
| Scouts.ca | All Scouts Canada members, staff and the general public | Conversational, inspirational, professional, inclusive | Scouts Canada is a Canadian Scouting association providing programs for young people, aged 5 to 26, to experience well-rounded development. | As part of a global Scouting Movement, Scouts Canada helps boys and girls aged 5 to 26 develop into well-rounded individuals, better prepared for success in the world. |
| Social Media | **Facebook:** SC members**Instagram:** SC members, parents, general public**Twitter:** SC members, parents, general public**LinkedIn:** SC staff, general public, SC volunteers, senior SC youth members**YouTube:** SC members, parents, general public | Playful, helpful, relatable, inspirational, inclusive | Did you know Scouts Canada offers well-rounded programming to girls, boys and young adults aged 5-26? Discover the Scouting adventure today. #ItStartsWithScouts#ScoutsDoStuff |
| *Scouting Life* | All Scouts Canada members, staff and the general public | Conversational, fun, informative, inspirational  | Scouts Canada offers exciting programs for youth aged 5-26—discover the amazing adventures Scouting youth enjoy from coast to coast to coast! |
| Corporate | Government, private partners | Professional, informative, commercial | Scouts Canada is one of the country’s largest bilingual youth organizations, with members aged 5-26 in every province. Our programs support our Mission: To help develop well-rounded youth, better prepared for success in the world.  |

Spelling

Scouts Canada uses Canadian spellings, as per *The Canadian Press Caps and Spelling*.

Note that this can sometimes mean following British spelling conventions (e.g. colour—*not* color), and can other times mean following American spelling conventions (e.g. program—*not* programme).

Capitalization and the Four Elements

All Scouting-specific terms should be capitalized. When a word is used generally rather than in a Scouting-specific way, it should *not* be capitalized. This helps readers distinguish between Group/group, Section/section or Scouting/scouting—among other examples.

The Four Elements must be capitalized when they are in their original forms.

**For example:**

“When using the Plan-Do-Review method. . .”

Or

“In the context of The Canadian Path, Adventure means exciting first-time experiences…”

However, when not using the Four Elements in the true form, letters will not be capitalized.

**For example:**

“Cub Scouts must **plan** and **do** their own activities, but we must remind them to **review** their experiences and reflect on how they have grown.”

or

“A Troop doing a good deed in its local community builds upon its **character**.”

Notice in the second phrase **character** was spelled with a lowercase ‘c’. While character is a component of the SPICES acronym, it does not require a capital when used as a singular word.

Formatting

The name of Scouts Canada’s program is “The Canadian Path”—note that the word “The” is part of this name, and must be capitalized when appearing as a noun. When used as an adjective, the word “the” should be lowercase or omitted (e.g. Canadian Path resources; the Canadian Path resources).

Scouts Canada does not use the Oxford comma—also called the serial comma. (Those who feel Scouts Canada should adopt the Oxford comma have compelling arguments to bolster their case; however, in the interest of consistency and to align with a number of reputable style guides, this remains the organization’s position on this practice at time of writing.)

Social Media

When sharing all the great things about The Canadian Path on social media, use the #canadianpath hashtag. This way, users can follow along the conversation and can contribute.

Glossary of Common Terms

General

* **Adventure:** One of the Four Elements, an adventure is an exciting first-time experience that develops youth by providing unique opportunities to explore one’s self and the world
* **Badge:** An accolade signifying personal progress in the core program or celebrating a member’s personal interests and achievements
* **The Canadian Path**: Scouts Canada’s revitalized program, driven by the Four Elements (SPICES, Youth-led, Plan-Do-Review and Adventure)
* **Chief Scout of Canada:** A volunteer role, the Chief Scout of Canada is an active promoter of the Scouts Canada program to both members and the general public; the current Chief Scout of Canada is Terry Grant
* **Crest**: A memento of a camp or event; a crest is not earned—it is a keepsake that typically signifies participation (not necessarily accomplishing particular goals) in a Scouting activity
* **Four Elements:** The foundation of The Canadian Path, the Four Elements are: Youth-led, Plan-Do-Review, Adventure and SPICES
* **Group**: A local collection of affiliated Sections
* **Group Administrator**: The administrator of the non-program activities relating to the wellbeing of the Group, as directed by the Group Commissioner
* **Group Commissioner**: The principle person of contact for a Group, primarily responsible for ensuring the safety and program quality of all Sections in the Group
* **Group Committee**: The volunteer leadership team of a Group—members may include: a Group Commissioner, a Group Administrator, a Group Fundraiser, a Group Quartermaster, a Group Registrar, a Group Secretary, a Group Treasurer, Section Scouters and a Group Youth Commissioner; multiple roles may be taken on by single individuals
* **Investiture**: The official induction of a member into a Section and, by extension, into the worldwide Scouting movement
* **Linking**: Specifically, the continuation of membership from one Section to the next; more generally, any activity that encourages this continuation
* **Meeting**: The regular (typically weekly) mustering of a Section from a specific Group
* **Outdoor Adventure Skills:** Nine progressive, competency-based outdoor skill areas, running through all of the Sections, including: Camping, Aquatics, Vertical Skills, Paddling, Trail, Scoutcraft, Winter Skills, Sailing and Emergency Aid
* **Patrol (Team) System:** Part of the Scout Method, the concept of dividing youth into smaller units within a Section (for example, in a Scout Troop, its Patrols); these teams should be made up of 6-8 youth
* **Patron Scout of Canada:** The Governor General of Canada, currently the Right Honourable Julie Payette; David Johnston is the first Patron Scout of Canada, as previous Governors-General were Chief Scouts
* **Personal Achievement Badges**: Patches worn on the uniform, presented in recognition of fulfilling a number of personal goals related to a particular theme; these are pursued individually, often on a youth’s own time out of a meeting or outing context
* **Personal Progression:** Part of the Scout Method, the concept of encouraging individual growth through a structured set of expectations
* **Plan-Do-Review**: One of the Four Elements, this is the process that Scouting youth and Scouters in all Sections should apply to all Scouting activities
* **Program Areas**: The Canadian Path activities that help Scouting to impart the SPICES fall under six categories: Active & Healthy Living, Beliefs & Values, Citizenship, Creative Expression, Environment & Outdoors and Leadership
* **Scout Law**: Part of the Scout Method, the Scout Law is a code of living to guide Scouts: “A Scout is helpful and trustworthy, kind and cheerful, considerate and clean, wise in the use of all resources.”
* **Scout Method**: A non-formal education process unique to Scouting, made up of seven elements: The Scout Law and Promise, Learning by Doing, The Team System, A Symbolic Framework, Nature, Personal Progression, Adult Support
* **Scout Promise**: Part of the Scout Method, the Scout Promise is a pledge to follow the Scout Law
* **Scout Salute**: The Scout Sign, raised to one’s temple (palm out) as a sign of respect (as to the flag)
* **Scout Sign**: The index, middle and ring fingers of the right hand held up alongside one another, raised to the level of one’s face; the Scout Sign is used to silently call the attention of any collection of the Scouting community
* **Scouter**: Any trained and screened Scouting volunteer
* **Section Contact Scouter**: The lead Scouter for any given Section (for example, typically in Cubs this will be the Pack’s Akela)
* **SPICES**: The attributes that Scouting aims to foster in its youth members: **S**ocial, **P**hysical, **I**ntellectual, **C**haracter, **E**motional and **S**piritual
* **Symbolic Framework:** Part of the Scout Method, the theme of a Section (for example, in Cubs, *The Jungle Book*)
* **Top Section Award**: The most difficult honour to attain in each Section, the Top Section Award challenges and engages youth at a high level, encouraging their personal progression
* **Trail Cards**: Program activity cards providing guidance in the Plan-Do-Review model for short and long games, projects and adventures
* **Youth-led**: One of the Four Elements, Youth-led Scouting demands the influence and direction of youth membership in all Sections, for all activities