

PLC Guidebook

Your Guide to Planning and Running the Troop Program

For: Senior Patrol Leader, ASPL, Patrol Leaders, and Troop Youth Leaders

You're in charge now. Not in a ceremonial way — for real. The PLC plans what this troop does, where it camps, and how meetings run. Adults are here to advise and keep things safe. But the program is yours.

This guidebook gives you the tools:

- Run PLC meetings that actually accomplish something
- Plan troop meetings and campouts worth showing up for
- Templates and checklists so nothing falls through the cracks
- Activities, games, and ideas to pull from
- Troop 221's traditions and how they work

Bring this guidebook to every PLC meeting.

THIS GUIDEBOOK BELONGS TO

NAME

POSITION

YEAR

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Part 1 — The PLC: Your Leadership Team

What is the PLC?

PLC = Patrol Leaders' Council

The PLC is the group of youth leaders who plan the troop's program. You decide:

- What we do at troop meetings
- Where we go camping
- What activities and themes we focus on
- How to make the troop better

The PLC is youth-led. The Scoutmaster is there to advise and guide, but the decisions are yours.

Who's on the PLC?

REQUIRED MEMBERS

Position	Role in PLC
Senior Patrol Leader (SPL)	Leads PLC meetings, sets agenda
Assistant SPL (ASPL)	Supports SPL, leads if SPL absent
Patrol Leaders	Represent their patrols, bring ideas
Scoutmaster	Advisor — guides but doesn't decide

OTHER MEMBERS (WHEN NEEDED)

Position	When to Include
Quartermaster	Equipment discussions
Scribe	Takes meeting minutes
Historian	Planning special events
Other Youth Leaders	As topics require

PLC Meeting Basics

WHEN WE MEET

First Tuesday of every month

- Time: 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM
- Location: Mike Onka Hall
- Note: No regular troop meeting on PLC night. The committee meets immediately after at 7:30 PM.

WHAT TO BRING

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ This PLC Guidebook | ☐ Calendar |
| ☐ Patrol Book (Patrol Leaders) | ☐ Ideas from your patrol |
| ☐ Pen or pencil | ☐ Minutes from last meeting |

GROUND RULES

1. **Come prepared** — Review the agenda, gather patrol input beforehand
2. **Be on time** — We start at 6:30 PM
3. **Participate** — Share your ideas and your patrol's ideas
4. **Listen** — Respect others when they're speaking
5. **Make decisions** — We leave with a plan, not more questions
6. **Follow through** — Do what you commit to do

Part 2 — Running PLC Meetings

PLC Meeting Agenda Template

SPL: Use this template to run every PLC meeting. Keep it moving — we have 60 minutes.

DATE

SPL

SCRIBE

1. Opening

5 min • SPL

- Call meeting to order
- Scout Oath
- Roll call — who's here?

2. Scribe's Report

5 min • Scribe

- Read minutes from last PLC meeting
- Any corrections? Approve minutes

3. Patrol Reports

15 min • Each PL (2–3 min each)

- How is your patrol doing? Any concerns or issues? Ideas from your patrol?

Patrol	Report	Issues	Ideas
Hawk Patrol	Going well, 4 attended...	Need duty roster...	Want a cooking night

→ Full printable table in Workbook (back of guide)

4. Old Business

10 min • SPL

- Follow up on action items from last meeting; status of ongoing projects

Item	Assigned To	Status
------	-------------	--------

*Update campout flyer**Marcus (SPL)**In progress*

→ Full printable table in Workbook (back of guide)

5. Upcoming Events

15 min · SPL

- Next troop meeting — theme, who's planning, what's needed
- Next campout — location, coordinator, status
- Other upcoming events

6. Planning Session

20 min · SPL

- Plan next month's troop meetings
- Plan upcoming campout
- Annual calendar or special event planning
- Problem solving as needed

7. New Business

10 min · SPL

- New ideas or issues to discuss
- Items for next PLC meeting

8. Scoutmaster's Minute

5 min · Scoutmaster

- Guidance, reminders, or advice

9. Action Items Review

5 min · SPL

- What did we decide? Who is doing what? By when?

Action Item	Person	Due
<i>Book campsite for October</i>	<i>Tyler (PL)</i>	<i>Sep 20</i>

→ Full printable table in Workbook (back of guide)

10. Closing

2 min · SPL

- Next PLC meeting date:

Scout Law Meeting adjourned

How to Run a Good Meeting

Before the meeting:

- Create the agenda using the template
- Text PLs the day before
- Know what's on the calendar
- Talk to Scoutmaster in advance

During the meeting:

- Stick to the agenda and watch the time
- Call on quiet people by name
- Table discussions that run long
- Summarize every decision clearly

After the meeting:

- Review minutes with Scribe
- Follow up on action items
- Announce decisions at next troop meeting
- PLs update their Patrol Books

Making Decisions

Most decisions: **discussion and consensus**. Talk it through, find agreement, SPL summarizes: "So we're going to [decision]. Everyone good?"

When there's disagreement: **vote**. Majority wins. Everyone supports the decision once made.

The Scoutmaster advises but doesn't vote. They can veto for safety or BSA policy reasons — but that's rare. Usually they say "that's your call."

Decision	Who Decides
Where to camp	PLC
Meeting themes and activities	PLC
How to spend troop funds	PLC (committee approval for big purchases)
Who is SPL / PL	Elections (all Scouts vote)
Safety concerns	Scoutmaster has final say
BSA policy issues	Scoutmaster has final say

Keeping Records

The Scribe records: date and attendance, key decisions, action items (who, what, when), next meeting date.

Patrol Leaders record in their Patrol Books: decisions affecting their patrol, upcoming events, patrol action items.

PLC MINUTES TEMPLATE**DATE****ATTENDED****Key Decisions:**

1. _____

1. _____

1. _____

Action Item**Who****When****NEXT MEETING****MINUTES TAKEN BY**

Part 3 — Planning Troop Meetings

Troop Meeting Structure

Meetings are every Tuesday **except the first Tuesday** (PLC/Committee night).

Time	What	Who Leads
6:30–7:30 PM	Advancement meeting (First Class and under)	SM / ASMs
7:30–7:45 PM	Pre-opening game	SPL assigns
7:45–7:50 PM	Opening ceremony	SPL
7:50–8:00 PM	Announcements	SM, then SPL
8:00–8:40 PM	Main activity / skill	SPL or assigned leader
8:40–8:50 PM	Currency (if applicable)	SPL
8:50–9:00 PM	Closing circle	SPL / SM
9:00–9:30 PM	Cleanup	Everyone

The Currency Program

Every other year, Troop 221 runs Currency — one of the troop's most competitive traditions.

Throughout the year, Scouts earn fake money (**\$100 and \$1,000 bills**) for: rank advancement, merit badges, wearing the correct uniform, attendance, winning competitions, trivia, and more. At the end of meetings, Scouts line up by patrol and receive their earned currency from the SPL.

At year-end (April/May, just before summer camp): the **Currency Auction**. Committee members and adults bring items — camp gadgets, Scout gear, and usually a few genuinely ridiculous things. Scouts bid with their accumulated bills. The Scouts who've been most consistent all year win the best stuff.

SPL's role in Currency years: Manage distribution at meetings, keep it exciting, announce what was earned and why. Coordinate the auction setup with the committee.

Monthly Themes

During annual planning, the PLC picks a theme for each month's troop meetings. A theme gives meetings focus — every game, skill activity, and discussion ties back to the same idea — and makes planning easier because you're not starting from scratch each time.

The PLC chooses. The table below is a starting point, not a schedule. Some themes work better in certain seasons (outdoor skills in spring, first aid in winter). Pick what fits your troop's goals and what Scouts are actually interested in.

Month	Theme Idea	Why It Works
September	Physical fitness	Scout/Tenderfoot requirements
October	Wilderness survival	Fall camping prep
November	Citizenship	Service projects, Veterans Day
December	First aid	Safety, winter activities
January	Knots and lashings	Pioneering skills
February	Navigation	Maps, compass, GPS
March	Cooking	Campout prep
April	Camp preparation	Summer camp skills
May	Outdoor skills review	End of year
June	Water and weather	Summer camp prep
July	Summer Camp	Merit badges, high adventure

The PLC picks themes — these are just ideas!

Troop Meeting Planning Template

DATE

THEME

PLANNED BY

PRE-OPENING GAME (7:30–7:45 PM)

GAME

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

WHO'S LEADING

Rules / setup notes:

OPENING CEREMONY (7:45–7:50 PM)

- ☐ Formation: hollow square by patrol
- ☐ Pledge of Allegiance
- ☐ “ Scouts to attention! ”
- ☐ Scout Law

ANNOUNCEMENTS (7:50–8:00 PM)

SM Announcements:

SPL / Leader Announcements:

—

—

—

—

—

MAIN ACTIVITY (8:00–8:40 PM)

ACTIVITY

Learning objective — what should Scouts be able to do?

Materials needed:

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Time	What Happens	Who Leads
8:00		
8:10		
8:20		
8:30		

Backup plan if activity finishes early:**CLOSING CIRCLE (8:50–9:00 PM)**

- ☐ Final announcements
- ☐ Scoutmaster's Minute
- ☐ Bad joke
- ☐ Advancement recognition (who advanced?)
- ☐ Scoutmaster's Benediction

AFTER MEETING (9:00–9:30 PM)

- ☐ “Grab a chair!” — cleanup call
- ☐ Sweep floor
- ☐ Lock up
- ☐ Chairs and tables put away
- ☐ Take out trash

Activity Ideas by Theme**Physical Fitness**

- Fitness challenge relay race
- Personal fitness plans
- Timed challenges (pushups, situps, mile)

Wilderness Survival

- Build emergency shelters
- Fire starting competition

Knots and Lashings

- Knot relay races
- Build camp gadgets
- Lashing competition (tripod race)

Cooking

- Menu planning for campout
- Cook a simple dish (if facilities allow)

- Survival kit building

First Aid

- Mock emergency scenarios
- Bandaging relay race
- First aid kit inventory

Navigation

- Compass course in parking lot
- Map reading challenge
- GPS treasure hunt

- Dutch oven demo

- Food safety quiz

Team Building

- Marshmallow tower (spaghetti, tape, string)
- Blindfolded tent setup
- Bridge building (paper and tape)
- Human knot

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Part 4 — Planning Campouts

Annual Calendar Planning

Best done at the start of the troop year (August/September) with the full PLC and Scoutmaster.

1. **Block out fixed dates** — summer camp, high adventure, major holidays, school breaks
2. **Plan monthly campouts** — where to go, what's available each season, what skills to practice
3. **Plan special events** — Courts of Honor (2/year), service projects, fundraisers, Cub Scout events

SAMPLE ANNUAL CALENDAR

Month	Campout / Event	Theme
September		Physical fitness
October		Wilderness survival
November	Service project	Citizenship
December	No campout (holiday)	—
January		Winter camping
February		Navigation
March		Spring camping
April		Camp prep / Currency Auction
May		End of year
June		Summer fun
July	Summer Camp	Merit badges
August		New Scout welcome

Campout Planning Checklist

4–6 WEEKS BEFORE

- ☐ PLC decides location; check availability and make reservation
- ☐ Set dates and announce to troop
- ☐ Identify campout coordinator (usually SPL or assigned PL)

2-3 WEEKS BEFORE

- ☐ Plan activities and program
- ☐ Create duty roster assignments
- ☐ Patrols plan menus
- ☐ Equipment check with Quartermaster
- ☐ Parent signature forms ready (signed day-of at drop-off)
- ☐ Transportation arranged
- ☐ Adult leader coverage confirmed

1 WEEK BEFORE

- ☐ Confirm headcount with parents
- ☐ Patrols shop for food
- ☐ Equipment loaded in trailer
- ☐ Weather check — any concerns?
- ☐ Final announcements at troop meeting

DAY BEFORE

- ☐ Final equipment check
- ☐ Weather update
- ☐ Departure time confirmed with drivers
- ☐ Emergency contacts collected

AT THE CAMPOUT

- ☐ Check in all Scouts
- ☐ Review campout rules
- ☐ Execute program
- ☐ Run campfire — songs, skits, Scoutmaster's Minute
- ☐ Ash tradition — if first-timers present, SM tells history; they sprinkle ashes into fire
- ☐ SPL collects ash sample from fire before it goes cold

AFTER CAMPOUT

- ☐ Return all equipment; clean trailer
- ☐ Report any damaged or missing equipment to Quartermaster
- ☐ Debrief at next PLC: what went well? What to improve?

Campout Planning Template

CAMPOUT NAME	DATES	LOCATION	COORDINATOR
DEPARTURE TIME / PLACE	RETURN TIME / PLACE	COST PER SCOUT	

TRANSPORTATION

Driver	Vehicle	Capacity	Passengers

ADULT LEADERS

Name	Role	Phone
	SM	
	ASM	
	ASM	

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Friday

Time	Activity	Who Leads
	Arrive, set up camp	SPL
	Dinner (patrol cooking)	PLs
	Campfire + Ash tradition	SPL / SM
	Lights out	

Saturday

Time	Activity	Who Leads
	Wake up / Breakfast	PLs
	Morning activity	
	Lunch	
	Afternoon activity	
	Dinner	PLs

Campfire

SPL

Lights out

Sunday

Time	Activity	Who Leads
	Wake up / Breakfast	PLs
	Break camp	Everyone
	Campsite inspection	SPL
	Depart / Arrive home	

PATROL MENUS

Patrol	Fri Dinner	Sat Breakfast	Sat Lunch	Sat Dinner	Sun Breakfast

Campout Ideas**By Season**

Fall (Sept–Nov): State parks with fall colors · Haunted campout (October) · Service project campout

Winter (Dec–Feb): Cabin camping · Winter survival skills · Snow activities if available

Spring (Mar–May): Hiking focused · Fishing campout · Canoe/kayak trip

Summer (June–Aug): Summer camp · Water activities · High adventure prep

Activity Ideas**Patrol Competitions:**

- Fire starting race
- Cooking competition
- Knot tying relay
- Camp setup speed challenge

Skill Building:

- Orienteering course
- First aid scenarios
- Pioneering projects

Fun:

- Night hike · Capture the flag
- Wide games · Star gazing

Part 5 — Games & Activities

Pre-Meeting Games (7:30–7:45 PM)

Get everyone active and ready before the meeting starts. These run themselves.

OUTDOOR GAMES

Capture the Flag — Two teams, two flags. Classic, always works, any size group.

Sharks and Minnows — One shark in the middle; others run across. Tagged scouts become sharks. Last one standing wins.

Ultimate Frisbee — Two teams, score by catching in end zone; can't run while holding.

British Bulldog — Similar to Sharks and Minnows, more physical. Watch for injuries.

Soccer / Kickball — Simple, everyone knows the rules, quick to set up.

INDOOR GAMES

Four Corners — Number corners 1–4; "it" calls a number; those in that corner are out.

Human Knot — Circle up, grab hands across; untangle without letting go. Good team builder.

Silent Ball — Throw ball silently; out if you make noise or miss.

Mafia / Werewolf — Larger groups; builds strategy and reading people.

Relay Races — Crab walk, wheelbarrow, balloon between knees. Adapt to indoor space.

Skill Activities (Main Meeting)

Knots Station Rotation — 4–5 stations, each teaching one knot. Patrols rotate through. Quiz at the end.

First Aid Scenarios — Mock emergencies. Patrols respond and are judged. Debrief what worked.

Compass Course — Bearing challenges indoors or out. Follow directions to find clues.

Lashing Competition — Patrol builds a structure. Timed challenge judged on quality and speed.

Fire Safety Quiz Show — Jeopardy-style. Categories: fire safety, fire types, match safety. Patrols compete.

Skill Relay Races — Any skill can become a relay. First aid, knots, signals, etc.

Campfire Program Ideas

SONGS

- "Little Red Wagon" (**Troop 221 favorite!**)
- "Sippin' Cider"
- "Ravioli"

- “Boom Chicka Boom”
- “Herman the Worm”

SKITS

- “The Viper” (classic)
- “Invisible Bench”
- “The Enlarging Machine”
- “Going on a Hike”
- Create your own!

RUN-ONS (QUICK JOKES)

Keep them simple and clean. Less is more.

CAMPFIRE FLOW

Order	What
1	Opening song — get energy up
2	Skit or two — humor
3	Song — more energy
4	Skit
5	Ash tradition (if first-timers present) — SM tells history; first-timers sprinkle ashes
6	Story or Scoutmaster’s Minute — bring energy down
7	Closing song — reflective
8	SPL collects ash sample before fire goes cold

Part 6 — Quick Reference

Contact Information

For current phone numbers and emails, see the troop directory on **TroopWebHost**.

Role	Name
Scoutmaster	Jeff Martin
Committee Chair	Nick Dodson
Advancement Coordinator	Devon Smith
SPL	<i>(current — see TroopWebHost)</i>

Meeting Schedule

Meeting	When	Time	Location
Troop Meeting	Every Tue except 1st	7:30–9:00 PM	Mike Onka Hall
Advancement	Every Tue except 1st	6:30–7:30 PM	Mike Onka Hall
PLC Meeting	1st Tuesday	6:30–7:30 PM	Mike Onka Hall
Committee Meeting	1st Tuesday	7:30 PM	Mike Onka Hall

Troop Traditions Quick Reference

Opening Ceremony:

1. Hollow square by patrol
2. “Scouts to attention!”
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Scout Law

Closing — Scoutmaster’s Benediction:

- “May the blessings of heaven rest on each of us...”
- “Scouts, are we well prepared?” → **“We are prepared, sir!”**

- “Have we done at least one good turn?” → **“It has been done, sir!”**
- “...Scouts to the trail!” → **“Scouts on the trail!”**

Other Traditions: “Grab a chair!” · “EAGLE REQUIRED!” · Bad joke at closing (Jackson McGee or Jeff Martin)

The Ash Tradition

On the troop’s very first overnight, the SPL was sharp enough to save some ashes from the campfire in a bucket before everyone packed up. That bucket has come to every overnight since. Every fire is connected back to the first one.

The SPL is personally responsible for the ash bucket. It travels with the troop and does not get forgotten.

At every campfire: The SPL adds some ashes from the bucket to the current fire.

When Scouts attend their first overnight:

1. The Scoutmaster tells the history of the tradition
2. Each first-timer takes a small handful of ashes and sprinkles them into the fire — becoming part of the chain
3. After the tradition, the fire continues

Before leaving: The SPL collects a fresh ash sample before camp breaks. These ashes go into the bucket for the next overnight.

The Currency Program

Every other year, Troop 221 runs Currency — a year-long competition.

Scouts earn **\$100 and \$1,000 bills** (not real money) for rank advancement, merit badges, correct uniform, attendance, winning competitions, trivia, and more. Currency is distributed at the end of meetings — patrols line up and receive their bills from the SPL.

At year-end, just before summer camp: the **Currency Auction**. Committee members and adults bring items (gear, Scout stuff, and things that are just fun). Scouts bid with their accumulated currency.

Useful Checklists

PLC MEETING (SPL)

- ☐ Prepare agenda
- ☐ Send reminder to PLs
- ☐ Check upcoming calendar
- ☐ Talk to SM beforehand
- ☐ Bring guidebook and calendar
- ☐ Make sure Scribe is ready

TROOP MEETING (SPL)

- ☐ Know the theme/activity
- ☐ Assign game leader
- ☐ Prepare announcements
- ☐ Check with SM on Scoutmaster's Minute
- ☐ Arrive early

CAMPOUT (SPL)

- ☐ Location confirmed
- ☐ Parent signatures (day-of)
- ☐ Transportation arranged
- ☐ Equipment ready
- ☐ Program planned
- ☐ Menus done by patrol

- ☐ Know who's earning currency (if applicable)

- ☐ Weather checked
- ☐ Ash bucket packed

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Workbook — Printable Templates

Print one set for each PLC meeting. The SPL runs from the Agenda page; the Scribe fills in the Notes page.

TROOP 221 · PLC MEETING

PLC Meeting Agenda

DATE

SPL

SCRIBE

1. Opening

5 min · SPL

- Call meeting to order
- Scout Oath
- Roll call

2. Scribe's Report

5 min · Scribe

- Read and approve minutes from last meeting

3. Patrol Reports

15 min · Each PL (2–3 min each)

- How is your patrol doing? Any concerns or issues? Ideas to bring?

Patrol	Report	Issues	Ideas

4. Old Business

10 min · SPL

- Follow up on action items from last meeting

Item	Assigned To	Status

5. Upcoming Events

15 min · SPL

- Next troop meeting — theme:

- Who's planning:

- Next campout — location:

- Coordinator:

PLC MEETING AGENDA · continued · Date:

6. Planning Session

20 min · SPL

- ☐ Plan next month's troop meetings
- ☐ Plan upcoming campout
- ☐ Annual calendar planning
- ☐ Special event planning
- ☐ Problem solving

Planning notes:**7. New Business**

10 min · SPL

- New ideas or issues to discuss
- Items for next PLC meeting

8. Scoutmaster's Minute

5 min · Scoutmaster

- Guidance, reminders, or advice

9. Action Items Review

5 min · SPL

- What did we decide? Who is doing what? By when?

Action Item	Person	Due

10. Closing

2 min · SPL

NEXT PLC MEETING DATE

- ☐ Scout Law
- ☐ Meeting adjourned

TROOP 221 · PLC MEETING · SCRIBE

Meeting Minutes

DATE

ATTENDED

Key Decisions Made

1.

1.

1.

Action Items

What

Who

By When

NEXT PLC MEETING

MINUTES SUBMITTED TO SPL BY