

# Applying the Promise and Law in daily life.



The Scout Law and Promise are the basic elements that underline Scouting. The Scout Promise is a personal commitment to live by the Scout Law, do one's duty to one's beliefs and acceptance of a spiritual reality, and to the service of others.

## The Scout Promise

On my honour I promise that I will do my best, to do my duty to God, to serve my community, to help other people and to live by the Scout Law.

## Alternative Scout Promise

On my honour I promise that I will do my best, to further my understanding and acceptance of a Spiritual Reality, to serve my community, to help other people and to live by the Scout Law

## The Scout Law

Scouts are Friendly - They always say Hello, Please and Thank You!  
Scouts are Kind - They work hard and help their family and friends.  
Scouts are Honest- They always tell the truth.  
Scouts can be Trusted- They always keep their word.  
Scouts are Respectful- They care for themselves and for others.  
Scouts are Brave - They stand up for right and good.

The Scout Law is a code of behaviour that members of Scouting are expected to do their best to live by, an invitation to live your life based on solid and fundamental values. Respect for, and solidarity towards, others (Scouts are friendly, to be a friend to all, to be helpful and considerate of others, to respect others); Protection of life and nature (to respect nature and the environment); a positive attitude to life's uprightness and loyalty (is to be trusted, is to be loyal, and to keep your word, Scouts Honour); a sense of one's own dignity (respect for self); to be brave (to stand up for what is right and good, to be a 'leader and not a follower', to think for yourself).

The Scout Law does not forbid anything. It is an invitation or code to develop oneself, to become more humane. The Scout Law promotes the ideal of 'scout like' behaviour and attitude. It is practiced and learned in real life situations within your Patrol and Troop, and in your daily life. You don't keep the Scout Law you live it.



The Promise is the starting point of our understanding and a real belief that the doing of one's best to live by the Scout Law is what a person chooses to do when they become a Scout. It is because he/she wants to live according to the Scout Law that he/she will set personal goals and achievements to reach through Scouting activities and everyday life.

As you grow within Scouting, you acquire and develop certain character strengths: sound judgment, a sense of responsibility, personal confidence and courage. These habits are built upon with the addition of the Scout Law in your life as an underlying code of commitment.

The Scout Law is not a rulebook but more a personal challenge. As an underlying principle of Scouting it will be reflected in many aspects of Scouting. The way we behave with others, the rules of conduct we draw up and also the measure by which misdemeanours are judged.

*The Scout Law is the foundation on which the whole of scout training rests (B.P. Aids to Scoutmastership)*

*The boy is not governed by D'ONTS, but led on by DO. The Scout Law is devised as a guide to his actions rather than as repressive of his faults (B.P. Aids to Scoutmastership)*

## The Scout Law and Promise in practice

Friendship and fellowship are essential elements of Scouting, how we work with and interact with others in a Scout like fashion. The Scout Law expresses this as – A Scout is friendly, A Scout is Kind, A Scout is Honest, A Scout is Respectful . In the Scout Promise – to help other people. So, 4 parts of the six-part Scout Law and one part of a four-part commitment within the Scout Promise relate to how we work and interact with others.

The original Scout Law as contained in Scouting for Boys listed 10 points of the Scout Law, which included

- A Scout is to be trusted
- A Scout is loyal
- A Scout's duty is to be useful and to help others
- A Scout is a friend to all, and a brother to every other Scout, no matter to what country, class or creed the other may belong.
- A Scout is courteous
- A Scout is a friend to animals
- A Scout obeys orders of his parents, Patrol Leaders or Scout Master without question.
- A Scout smiles and whistles under all difficulties
- A Scout is thrifty
- A Scout is clean in thought, word and deed.

Again we can see from the list above the importance of friendship, fellowship and the working with and care of others. With friendship comes love and kindness and through friendship it is easier to practice the principle – 'do on to others as you would have done on to you'. Friendship is the key to this whole process. The Patrol system/Team structure within Scouting allows this feature of scouting to blossom. Young people and adults join Scouting as a result of friendship and remain in Scouting through friendship. Friendship is the glue that bonds people of many backgrounds and interests together.

### Nature and the environment

Baden Powell was a great believer in arousing a sense of wonder by contact with nature and this can be experienced most vividly in camp. The feeling of wonder in nature may be the first step to a realisation of God or Supreme Spiritual Reality. Nature and our environments will provide tons of opportunities for you to explore nature, and the Scout Law in context. We are the carers of the environment for future generations; ( Leave No Trace) a Scout should be encouraged to care of nature and the environment by offering personal time in service for other people and the world around them.



### Doing a daily good deed or act of kindness

The ideal of 'Doing good deeds and acts of kindness for others' is a keystone of Scouting in building bridges to friendship and providing unselfish service to others.

*Whether one believes in a religion or not, and whether one believes in rebirth or not, There isn't anyone who doesn't appreciate kindness and compassion.*  
Dalai Lama

The good deed, act of kindness idea is perhaps the biggest spiritually fulfilling act that we can do. The Scout Law and Promise is written around this ideal. The beauty of this idea is that it is easy for everyone to understand no matter what age he or she are. So, from an early age a child can be encouraged to do a good deed every day, this deeds can be small, but completed unselfishly. Later, the good deed will become a feature of their daily life undertaken at any opportunity. In a collective group such as a Patrol or a section the good deed can have greater impact as a result of the size of the project/service to others.

Leadership is about example and encouragement and we need to ensure that the good deed idea is maintained and becomes part of what we are and what Scouting is – 'to give and not to count the cost', 'to serve my community and help other people'.

The promotion and practice of this ideal will lead young people to better understand Scouting and place the Scout Law and Promise in a practical context in their daily lives.