

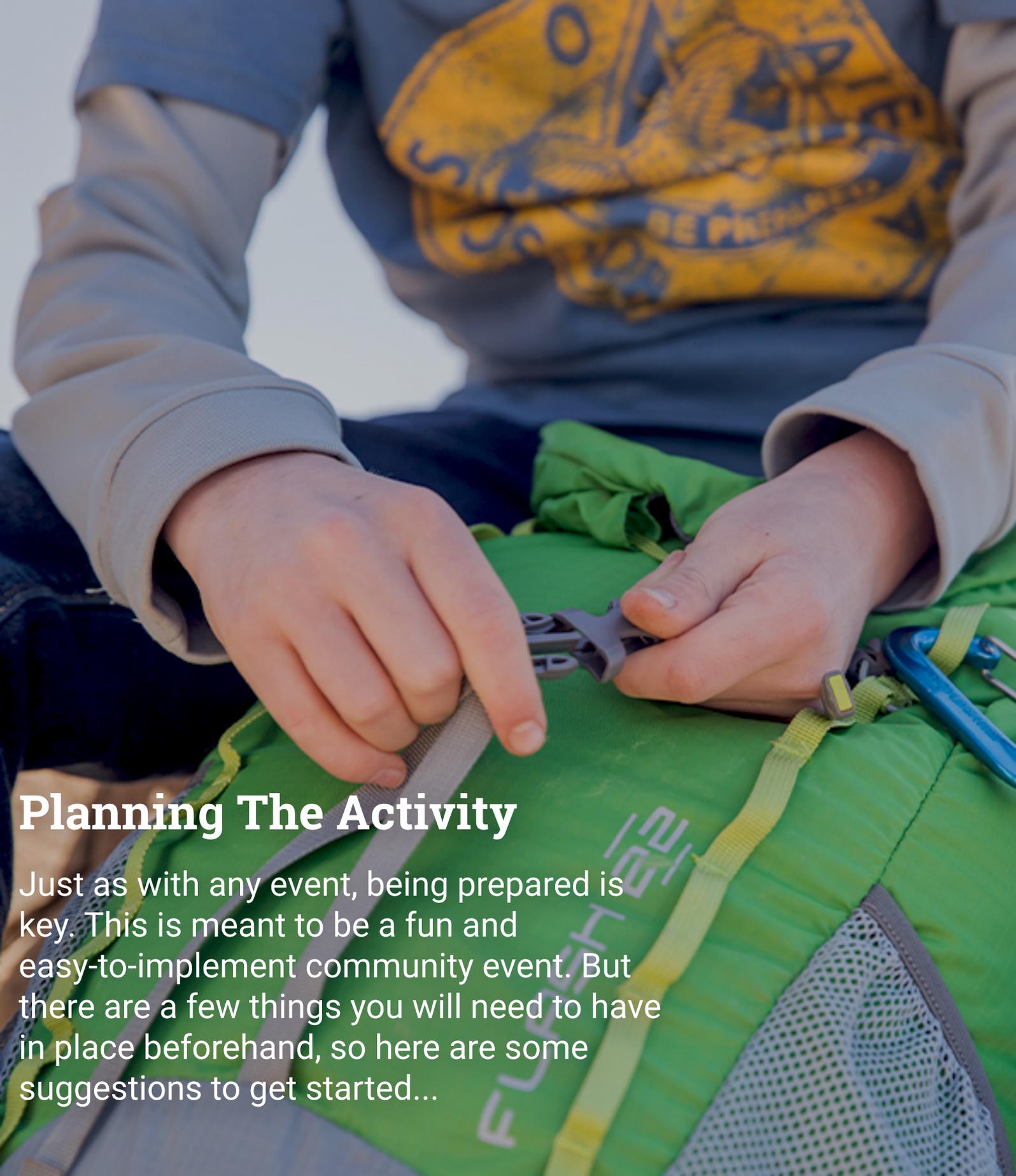


CHESS PLAYBOOK



OVERVIEW

Playing chess is one of the many great sports that allows participants to solve challenges while exercising and developing the brain. The game of chess increases creativity, helps to develop problem-solving skills, and allow for a friendly sense of competition to develop. These various aspects make the game of chess a great fit for Scouts of all ages. This Sport of Chess playbook is designed to support your Scouts BSA recruiting efforts by introducing to potential members the spirit of Scouts through a timeless classic - chess.



Planning The Activity

Just as with any event, being prepared is key. This is meant to be a fun and easy-to-implement community event. But there are a few things you will need to have in place beforehand, so here are some suggestions to get started...

PLANNING THE ACTIVITY

1. Determine Your Strategy

The Sport of Chess recruiting event can be used as either a single, stand-alone event or as part of a broader recruiting effort. For example, the program could be promoted at troop open houses or you could plan to host it as an open community event and be prepared to recruit at the event itself. The choice is yours, but this playbook will act as a guide for how you implement your chess activity.



2. Set a Budget

Having an outlined budget will make the event planning process a breeze. Once you have committed to holding a chess event, you'll need funds to provide adequate equipment such as tables chairs and chess sets. Other miscellaneous event costs will be venue space, food & drink, awards, and prizes.



3. Pick a Date

The great thing about chess is that it's an activity that can virtually happen during any time of the year and can easily be held indoors. Specify a beginning and ending time but advertise the event as an "open time" for when families can show up and participate.



PLANNING THE ACTIVITY (CONT.)

4. Reserve a Venue

The most important things to keep in mind when choosing a venue are that it's easy to get to and that the venue has plenty of space for those who attend. Select a family friendly location such as the council office, a city park or if possible — a nearby Scout camp.

5. Secure Materials

Be sure to check with your local council or local chess club before purchasing any materials. They'll usually have a supply of various equipment including chess sets, tables, etc.. Your most basic need will be actual chess sets and ensuring you have enough for all participants to play.

6. Safety

Scouting.org can assist leaders and volunteers in discussing safety conditions specific to their area. Follow all Youth Protection guidelines as outlined in the Youth Protection Training at my.scouting.org.





PLANNING THE ACTIVITY (CONT.)

7. Provide Hospitality

Plan to have a meal service run throughout the event. Hotdogs and an assortment of snacks can be a delicious and cost-effective solution. Plan on having a designated lunch time in your promotion, but also keep in mind that depending on when families show up, some may want to eat before and some after. Tip: Pull in the Scouts. This is another great opportunity to showcase the troop's cooking skills.

8. Organize Staff and Volunteers

As with any effort in Scouting, this event will only work with the help of our dedicated volunteers and professional staff. This will be a great opportunity to rally parents, alumni, and donors and get them involved in ushering in the next generation of Scouts. The Troop Committee should be present to help with logistics, food, etc. as well as to provide an information table for parents. Scoutmasters should be guiding scouts, as well as answering questions about the Troop program.

Promoting the Activity

Now that you've planned, budgeted, and secured the venue for your event – it's time to switch gears into promotion. Below are a few tried and true tactics you can use to get the word out. Remember to think outside the box and apply them to your community's specific situation.

Tip: Consider promoting it as a "Troop Open House" or "Scout Saturday" where Scouts that bring a new friend earn the "Recruiter" strip.



PROMOTING THE EVENT

Current Members

One of your most powerful recruiting tools is always going to be current members. Encourage your troops family members to join the event and bring their friends along.

Social Media

A free marketing tool we all have access to is social media. Be sure to promote the event on your council, district and troop's social media channels. If it's unintrusive, encourage parents and adults to share photos from the event on their personal social channels.

School Outreach

School outreach is a great opportunity to promote your Sport of Chess event. Back to School recruiting nights provide an opportunity to invite new scouts to the event and allow youth who are not signed up yet to see Scouts BSA in action.

Printed Materials

Go to <https://scoutingwire.org/scouting-tools/> for downloadable resources that can be customized for your council, district or troop event.





HOLDING THE ACTIVITY

Game time! You've successfully planned, promoted, and executed on getting a recruitment event held. Now, it's the fun part. The event itself is organized into stations that families and their Scouts will move through.

Station 1 - Check-in

At the check-in station, families will be able to ask questions and receive additional information about Scouts, BSA and units closest to them. Access to "BeAScout.org" and the unit locator feature will be very helpful to the parents and staff at this station. If held as a troop event, this will be your opportunity to highlight the troop, the leadership of your troop and meeting dates/times.

HOLDING THE ACTIVITY (CONTINUED)

Station 2 – Introduction to chess

Here, you'll learn the basics of chess. Scouts in the troop who have earned the Chess Merit Badge and volunteers will teach participants the basics of chess and the various components of the game.



Moving and Capturing Opponents Pieces: You will learn that there are rules about how each type of piece is allowed to move on the board. If a player moves their piece to a square occupied by an opponent's piece, the opponent's piece is 'captured' and is then removed from the board. The player's piece takes its place.

Players Take Turns: The players take turns moving their pieces. A player must move one piece per turn. Players are not allowed to "pass" on a turn. A move by a player is always required in the game of chess.



HOLDING THE ACTIVITY (CONT.)

Station 3 – The Goal of Chess & First Game

Scouts in the troop who have earned the Chess Merit Badge and volunteers will teach participants how to win at a game of chess.

Goal of Chess: The goal of chess is to maneuver so that the opponent's king cannot avoid being captured. If an opponent's piece could capture the king in the next move, this is considered either "check" or "checkmate".

Check: If a player's king is under direct attack, but it can move out of harm's way, the king is in what is called "check".

Checkmate: If there is no way for a player to move their king out of "check", then the opponent has now accomplished a "checkmate" and won the game.

Draw: It is possible for the game to end in a tie and that is considered a "draw"





HOLDING THE ACTIVITY (CONT.)

Station 4 – The Goal of Chess & First Game

Learn the overall goal of chess and how to become a master of the game.

Goal of Chess: The goal of chess is to maneuver so that the opponent's king cannot avoid being captured. If an opponent's piece could capture the king in the next move, this is considered either "check" or "checkmate".

Check: If a player's king is under direct attack, but it can move out of harm's way, the king is in what is called "check".

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Draw: It is possible for the game to end in a tie and that is considered a "draw"

Station 5 – Ready. Set. Play!

Scouts and their families and friends may then play as many games as they'd like to until the close of the event or until they are ready to leave. Your troop may consider giving each youth an award or an event patch for the event.



RECRUITING AT THE EVENT

During

Recruiting at the event itself should occur organically. When parents and youth have the opportunity to participate in Scouting and see what it's all about, they tend to be much more responsive to recruiting messages. Be sure to have plenty of recruiting material on-hand and provide opportunities to sign up - but remember to keep it light and informal. Families came here to have a good time and not to hear a sales pitch.



After

After the event, be sure to follow up with the parents and families that attended and include them in future council and troop communications. It's always nice to send an email to new families thanking them for their time and sharing photos or recaps from the event. Include an invitation to join the troop if they haven't already and be sure to let them know when your next event is.