

# Scouts!

Easily recognised by their shirts and scarves. However, many people don't know what they are actually up to. Making fires, camping and being outside even in the worst rain is what is usually associated with the term Scouts. However, to be a Scout means more: to properly romp about for once, to do things with people of the same age, to experience community and great friendships...

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## THE SCOUT MOVEMENT.

The Scouts are intended for children and youths of school age and above. They are open to boys and girls from all groups of the population and from all countries. They are neutral in terms of politics and religion. The Scout movement is divided into four age groups, enabling the development of children, youths and young adults relative to their ages.

There are single-sex and mixed groups in the Scouts. When implementing the various activities, the particular needs of each age group are considered. In all age groups young people learn to live together in a group, taking on an active role and various responsibilities. Through the principle of «young lead young» they take on leading roles at an early age.

For leaders, all four age groups are a great challenge. The trust placed in them by the children and their parents is taken very seriously. In everything they do, they try to be a role model for the children and youths. The leaders are not alone in this, they are supported and helped by older and more experienced leaders. In order to prepare them for their leader roles and their responsibilities there are regular courses on offer.

## ACTIVITIES OF THE VARIOUS AGE GROUPS.

Scout activities mostly take place on Saturday afternoons, and the children and their leaders meet in their area – usually at a tram or bus stop. The children and youths regularly spend weekends together, where they sleep in nearby camp houses. Such weekends are a good way to initiate children, who have never spent nights away, into camp life. As well as this there are one or two-week camps during the summer and autumn holidays. «Bienli» and «Wölfli» stay at camp houses for these periods, while the «Pfadi» usually camp in tents. These camps are often the highlights of the Scout year.

## OBJECTIVES.

The Scouts further the development of children, youths and young adults in a holistic way. It supports their members in gaining self-confidence and becoming self-critical. The children and youths learn about their physical and emotional needs, their possibilities and limits. Of utmost importance is the relationship between fellow human beings, and tolerance and respect towards outsiders. The Scouts enable children and youths to discover the world with its beauty and secrets, they learn to respect and care about nature and the environment. The Scouts objective is to support young people in their search for meaning and goals in their own lives.

## BACKGROUND, FIGURES AND FACTS.

The Scout movement was founded in 1907 by Lord and Lady Baden Powell in Great Britain. They wanted to give youths something meaningful to do, and enable them to experience community in a fun way. At present there are 25 million scouts worldwide.

The Swiss Scout movement (PBS) also forms part of this worldwide Scout movement. With 51,200 members it's the largest youth association in Switzerland. Within PBS there are various canton associations, the «Pfadi Kanton Bern» is one of them. It includes various units, which are in charge of the actual Scouts operation. It is the unit that organise the Saturday afternoon activities as well as the camps.

## COSTS.

The costs to join the Scouts are approximately 50 to 100 Francs a year. Additionally there are the costs for special activities (e.g. zoo ticket), for camp contributions and for special equipment (Scout shirts, rucksacks etc.).



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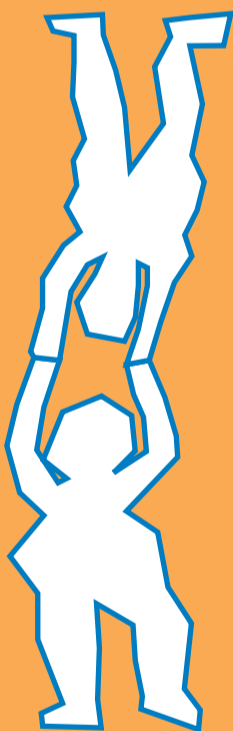


**BIENLI/WÖLFLI.** The first age group is designed for children from 7 to 11 years.

On Saturday afternoons and in camps the children experience their environment in a playful way. During this time they live exciting stories (e.g. Pipi Longstocking, the Jungle Book or Magicians), in which the children can use their imagination to the full. Being together, playing, dancing, romping around, making handicrafts and playing music are all important parts of such a Saturday afternoon.

**PFADI.** The second age group is aimed at children and youths from 11 to 15 years.

The children and youths actively take part in the creation of group activities and experience unique and unforgettable adventures. Within small groups, everyone has the opportunity to take on some responsibility at an early stage. Activities of the «Pfadi» always take place within a framework topic (e.g. Red Indians, pirates or a world trip) and comprise handicraft or drama, scouting techniques and play and sports, as well as planned group experiences and quiet moments.



**PIONIERS.** The third age group is aimed at youths from 15 to 18 years.

In the foreground there is a sense of community, which is developed by the group through activities they select, plan and run. A particular characteristic of this age group is that the leaders no longer determine the programme but merely coordinate it. This includes larger activities, which do not necessarily take place on a Saturday afternoon, for example a hiking week, a camp abroad or a bicycle tour.

**ROVER.** The fourth age group includes young adults of 18 years and above.

This fourth group provides various opportunities to get organised into groups and to realise individual ideas with other young people. Sociability and pleasure are an important factor in this. Special activities can include social involvement or international outreach. Many members of the Rover group also act as leaders for other groups.

