



BALOO THE BUILDER




RATIONALE FOR ADVENTURE

Learning to work with wood to create fun and useful items is a good skill for anyone to have. This adventure will expose the Bear Scout to the safe and proper use of hand tools, how to determine the correct type of wood for a project, and how to construct an item. The adventure also offers a good opportunity to bring parents of the Scouts or other adults with woodworking skills into the den setting, asking them to help with some of the technical aspects.

This adventure can also serve as an introduction to the Boy Scout *Woodworking* merit badge offered.

TAKEAWAYS FOR CUB SCOUTS

- Working with wood to create a project
- Understanding basic tools and tool safety
- Learning some basics about project planning (selecting a project, evaluating what is needed, choosing the proper type of wood, etc.)
- Using math skills while measuring
- Showing creativity and artistic skills with the final project
- A Scout is trustworthy, helpful. 

Bear Handbook, page 120

ADVENTURE REQUIREMENTS

1. Discover which hand tools are the best ones to have in your toolbox. Learn the rules for using these tools safely. Practice with at least four of these tools before beginning a project.
2. Select, plan, and define the materials for the projects you will complete in requirement 3.
3. Assemble your materials, and build one useful project and one fun project using wood.
4. Apply a finish to one of your wood projects.

NOTES TO DEN LEADER

The woodcraft projects in this section are suitable for Cub Scouts and leaders who have had little experience working with wood. Check with your Cubmaster to see if a Family Talent Survey was conducted at the start of the advancement year; some family members in the pack may have woodworking skills and could help your den complete the adventure. Also, you can contact a hardware store, home improvement store, local carpenters, etc., for more tips, tricks, and information regarding wood tools and their uses.

Remember that Cub Scouts are not allowed to use power tools. Refer to the *Guide to Safe Scouting* for safety.

Prior to Meeting 1, if desired, invite a local carpenter, woodworker, etc., to assist with the den meeting.

See the Appendix for optional den meeting activities, including openings, gatherings, and closings.

MEETING 1 PLAN

PREPARATION AND MATERIALS NEEDED

- U.S. and den flags
- Samples of the hand tools referenced in the *Bear Handbook*.
- Scrap pieces of wood for practice in learning about tools and tool safety. Consider recycling centers, home building sites, and wood pallet companies as sources for wood.
- Sample pieces of wood showing the different characteristics of wood types. Pictures can be used if samples cannot be obtained.
- Sample wood project plans for review during the planning process. The local library or the Internet are both good resources for locating project plans.
- Make sure that all Bears have appropriate safety equipment.

GATHERING

Play the game Akela Says, which is similar to Simon Says with “Akela” swapped for “Simon.” Your den chief or a Scout parent may be Akela. Akela will give instructions to the other players, such as “Jump on one foot,” or “Akela says, ‘Touch your knees.’” The instructions should be followed only if they begin with the phrase “Akela says.”

OPENING

- Conduct a flag ceremony of your choosing that includes the Pledge of Allegiance and, as appropriate, the Scout Oath and Scout Law.
- Do a den roll call. Have Bears answer by naming which tool they would be if that were possible.

TALK TIME

- Carry out business items for the den.
- Allow time for sharing among Cub Scouts.
- Demonstrate each of the tools from the *Bear Handbook*, and review the safety notes for each tool. (Requirement 1)
- Review the steps of planning a project and selecting wood. (Requirement 2)

ACTIVITIES

◆ Activity 1: Tool Practice (Requirement 1)

With appropriate adult supervision, have Bears practice using at least four of the tools demonstrated.

CLOSING

Share an Akela’s Minute. Reflect upon the connections to points of the Scout Law, such as trustworthy, helpful, obedient, thrifty, and clean.

AFTER THE MEETING

- Serve refreshments, if desired.
- Record completion of requirements 1 and 2.
- Make certain the area you have worked in is clean and all tools are cleaned and stored properly.
- If a guest has helped with the meeting, have the Scouts sign and present a thank-you note to him or her.

MEETING 2 PLAN

PREPARATION AND MATERIALS NEEDED

- U.S. and den flags
- Two paper plates per Scout and a stapler for the Gathering activity
- As an option, Bears may choose to build one of the projects at home between Meeting 2 and Meeting 3. The final wood finish for at least one project will be done at Meeting 3.
- Decide with the parents if the normal den location is suitable for the building projects. Alternative locations could be a cabinet shop, a trade school that teaches woodworking, a garage, or a home hobby shop.
- It would be helpful if each Scout has an adult partner for a one-to-one ratio. If adults are not available, contact a local Boy Scout troop to request assistance.
- Bear Scouts may want to wear appropriate work clothing instead of their uniforms.
- Make certain there are enough tools on hand and that each boy has the materials to begin his project. It will be up to your den whether each boy brings his own tools and materials or if the den will help with the supplies.
- Make sure that all Bears have appropriate safety equipment.

GATHERING

An activity may not be needed, depending upon the location of the meeting. If a Gathering activity is needed, Scouts can build a “Flying Saucer.”

Materials

- Two paper plates per Scout
- One stapler

Each Scout staples his two paper plates together, top to top. He then throws the “saucer” like a discus. The farthest throw wins. You may try alternative ideas after the first round such as throwing the discus with eyes closed or throwing it while standing on one foot, etc.

OPENING

- Conduct a flag ceremony of your choosing that includes the Pledge of Allegiance and, as appropriate, the Scout Oath and Scout Law.
- Have the den chief (or denner) call roll. Have each member of the den come forward and give him the Cub Scout handshake.

TALK TIME

- Carry out business items for the den.
- Quickly review the tool safety rules. This can be done by simply discussing the information from the previous meeting. In addition, the den chief or a parent may demonstrate the wrong way to use a series of tools, and, with each tool, the Scouts can take turns showing him the correct way.

ACTIVITIES

◆ Activity 1: Building a Project (Requirement 3)

- Build the selected project using the information learned at the previous meeting. Keep an eye out for any change in plan that may become necessary as the projects get underway. If this happens, use the opportunity for a teaching point, referring back to the planning process that was introduced in the previous meeting.

- If Bears complete the first project with enough time remaining to begin the second, help them get started. Projects should be completed at home before Meeting 3, if possible, to allow time for finishing and staining or painting.

CLOSING

- Gather the den in a circle. Have Bears give the Cub Scout salute and repeat the Scout Law.
- Thank all who helped with the projects.



Do-at-Home Project Reminder:

If necessary, Bears should complete the building of their projects for requirement 3 at home. They will bring at least one of the projects to Meeting 3 to apply finish.

AFTER THE MEETING

- Serve refreshments, if desired.
- Record completion of requirement 3.
- Make certain the area you have worked in is clean and all tools are cleaned and stored properly.
- Remind the Scouts that at the next meeting they will be painting or staining their wood projects, so they should be sure to wear older clothes and shoes that can get paint or stain on them. A note to the parents would also be helpful, explaining what the next meeting will consist of.

MEETING 3 PLAN

PREPARATION AND MATERIALS NEEDED

- U.S. and den flags
- Paint (several colors) or stain as desired to finish one or both of the projects. Water-based paints will make cleanup easier. Check with your local home improvement stores for cans of paint that have been returned as mistakes. The cost for those is usually less. Also, you can request small sample cans of paint, which are inexpensive.
- Sealant (this can be from spray cans or brushed on)
- Old rags to apply the paint or stain
- Paint brushes to apply the paint, stain, or sealant
- Disposable breathing masks
- Disposable gloves to keep hands from becoming stained. Note: First, find out if any of the den members have latex allergies; if so, they will need nonlatex gloves.
- A few days beforehand, remind the Scouts to wear old clothes at the meeting because the products they will use can stain and ruin clothing. A reminder to the parents would also be helpful.
- Remember that this activity will require drying time. If Bears choose to finish both projects—only one finish is needed to complete requirement 4—they can move on to the second project while the first is drying. Have some simple games available (e.g., checkers, tic-tac-toe, rope for tying knots) to keep Bears occupied during this time.

SAFETY NOTE: Read all directions for the paint, stain, and sealant to determine proper ventilation for the work area and proper disposal of the brushes or rags. Make sure Scouts wear the breathing masks while they work.

GATHERING

Play Red Light, Green Light. First, select the den chief or a parent as the leader. The Scouts then line up side by side, and when the leader calls “green light,” they move forward as quickly as they can until they hear “red light.” Any boy who continues to move after “red light” is called must return to the starting line and begin again. The first person to reach the leader wins and becomes the new leader. Continue until all the Scouts have arrived and everyone has had a chance to play the game.

OPENING

- Conduct a flag ceremony of your choosing that includes the Pledge of Allegiance and, as appropriate, the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

TALK TIME

- Carry out business items for the den.

ACTIVITIES

◆ Activity 1 (Requirement 4)

- Arrange three types of finish on a table, so each Scout can choose the one he wants to use. Make sure everyone is wearing old clothes, disposable gloves (nonlatex for those with latex allergies), and breathing masks.
- **Natural wood finish:** Wipe down the project with a rag to remove any dirt or sawdust that may be present. Then apply sealant directly to the wood. This will preserve the wood while allowing the characteristics of the wood grain to show through.
- **Painted finish:** The Scout wipes down the project, then applies the paint scheme he wants. After that coat is dry, decide if a second coat is desired. If there are drips or runs, a light sanding may be needed in those areas; then wipe down again and paint once more. When that dries, apply sealant to protect the painted finish.
- **Stained finish:** If a project has a nice wood grain pattern—and paint would only cover up the beauty of the grain—then staining is a good option. The stain may be applied with a rag or a brush. Apply it to small areas, then wipe off with another rag. Continue until the project is finished. If the Scout wants the project to be a darker color, he can apply a second coat of stain, but this isn’t usually necessary. Once the stain has completely dried, apply sealant to protect the finish.

CLOSING

Encourage the Scouts to bring their completed projects to the next pack meeting for display.

AFTER THE MEETING

- Serve refreshments, if desired.
- Record completion of requirement 4.
- Work together to clean up the meeting place.

Upon completion of the Baloo the Builder adventure, your Bears will have earned the adventure loop shown here. Make sure they are recognized for their completion by presenting the adventure loops, to be worn on their belts, as soon as possible according to your pack’s tradition.



NOTES