



# BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

## INTERNATIONAL

## Host an International Scout Meeting Virtually

What if you could attend a meeting or campout with a unit in a different country? You can! But use these tips to make it fun and safe.

### Finding a unit to hold a joint meeting

Maybe you had an opportunity to meet an international Scout Leader at the last World Scout Jamboree, or another international Scouting event. Connecting with them might be a great way to find an introduction to a unit leader in a different country.

If not, use your BSA network to find a connection. Start with your Council's International Representative (go [here](#) to look up your IR's contact information) and ask for an introduction. You can also use some of the well-established international social media groups, such as the [1st Facebook Scout Group](#) or [International BSA](#), to ask for an introduction to a unit leader in your country of choice.

### Plan an interactive meeting

Connect with the adult leader(s) of the other unit and agree on expectations and a basic agenda. Think about ways each unit can learn from each other. Consider having Scouts from each unit:

- Open with saying the Scout Oath and Law in their native language
- Teach or perform a song to each other - something fun and interactive
- Teach a game or skill to each other
- Share camp recipes. Make the dish beforehand and share what it looks like when cooked.

- Do a brief presentation or discussion about what Scouting is like in their unit/country. Each unit could respond to questions on community service, badges, advancement, religious affiliation (or not), where they meet and camp, and their favorite (and least favorite) parts of Scouts.
- Plan some time for unstructured dialogue, but not too much. Often Scouts will be shy about talking, or one person might dominate the conversation.

Each of these activities can be assigned to Scouts to lead, but it helps to have a framework for them to work within.

### Things to consider

**Language** - Will the Scouts and leaders in the other unit speak and understand English? If not, find someone who is capable of translating.

**Time Zone** - Find a time that works well for both units. It may mean an early morning or late evening meeting for some people. Make sure that you are on the same page regarding meeting time - and watch out for daylight savings time differences!

**Technology** - Agree on a tech platform that both groups can use. Many people use Zoom, FaceTime or Microsoft Teams, but in some countries apps like WhatsApp are more common.

### Stay Safe Online

All BSA rules regarding youth protection and digital safety apply for this type of event. Make sure that your plan adheres to the BSA Digital Safety and Online Scouting Activities Guidelines found here (<https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/safety-moments/digital-safety-and-online-scouting-activities/>). Remember:

- All youth protection policies still apply in an online environment.
- Two adults from each unit should be present at all times, monitoring the conversation and chat functions.
- Use business-oriented conference platforms that include safety and privacy features.
- Regularly review and implement the latest security features of your chosen platform.
- Do not record online activities that include youth participants.
- Safeguard personal information. When introducing Scouts, stick with first names and not full names.
- Collecting personal information from youth under 13 is not recommended.

Hosting an International Scout Meeting can be very fun and educational. Maybe this can become an annual tradition for your unit.

Contact your Council International Representative for assistance.