

## **Scout Law & Promise**

Until you have made your Scout Promise, you are not a scout. The Law and Promise are really the ground rules of Scouting – they are the whole basis of Scouting. There are two important features of the Law and Promise. The first is that there is no one to make sure you keep the Promise except yourself. In Scouting we trust YOU to keep it. The second is that the Scout Law is a positive thing. It does not say what not to do; it says clearly what a Scout does and is.

### **The Scout Promise**

Baden-Powell's original Scout Promise:

On my honour I promise that I will do my best –  
To do my duty to God, and the Queen,  
To help other people at all times,  
To obey the Scout Law

By 1966, the New Zealand Promise had changed slightly:

On my honour I promise that I will do my best  
To do my duty to God and to the Queen,  
To help other people  
And to keep the Scout Law

The current Scout Promise is:

On my honour I promise to do my best,  
To do my duty to my God,  
To the Queen and my country,  
To help other people,  
And to live by the Scout Law

## The Scout Law

### Baden-Powell's Original Scout Law

#### 1. A Scout's honour is to be trusted

If a Scout says "On my honour it is so", that means that it *is* so, just as if he had made a most solemn promise. Similarly, if a Scouter says to a Scout, "I trust you on your honour to do this", the Scout is bound to carry out the order to the very best of his ability, and to let nothing interfere with his doing so. Of a Scout were to break his honour by telling a lie, or by not carrying out an order exactly when trusted on his honour to do so, he may be directed to hand over his Scout Badge, and never to wear it again. He may also be directed to cease to be a Scout.

#### 2. A Scout is loyal to the Queen, his country, his Scouters, his parents, his employers and to those under him

He must stick to them through thick and thin against anyone who is their enemy or who even talks badly of them.

#### 3. A Scout's duty is to be useful and to help others

He is to do his duty before anything else, even though he gives up his own pleasure, or comfort, or safety to do it. When in difficulty to know which of two things to do, he must ask himself, "Which is my duty?" that is, "Which is best for other people?" – and do that one. He must *Be Prepared* at any time to save life, or to help injured persons. And he *must try his best to do at least one Good Turn* to somebody every day.

#### 4. 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

Thus if a Scout meets another Scout, even though a stranger to him, he must speak to him, and help him in any way that he can, either to carry out the duty he is then doing, or by giving him food, or, as far as possible, anything that he may be in want of. A Scout must never be a SNOB. A snob is one who looks down upon another because he is poorer, or who is poor and resents another because he is rich. A Scout accepts the other man as he finds him, and makes the best of him. Every Scout should earn for himself the name "Little friend of all the world".

#### 5. A Scout is courteous

That is, he is polite to all – but especially to women and children, and old people and invalids, cripples, etc. And he must not take any reward for being helpful or courteous.

#### 6. A Scout is a friend to animals

He should save them as far as possible from pain, and should not kill any animal unnecessarily, for it is one of God's creatures. Killing an animal for food or an animal which is harmful is allowable.

#### 7. A Scout obeys orders of his parents, Patrol Leader or Scoutmaster without question

Even if he gets an order he does not like he must do as soldiers and sailors do, and as he would do for his captain in a football team, he must carry it out all the same *because it is his duty*; and after he had done it he can come and state any reasons against it; but he must carry out the order at once. That is discipline.

#### 8. A Scout smiles and whistles under all difficulties

When he gets an order he should obey it cheerily and readily, not in a slow, hang-dog sort of way. Scouts never grouse at hardships, nor whine at each other, nor grumble when put out, but go on whistling and smiling. When you just miss a train, or someone treads on your favourite corn – not that a Scout ought to have such things as corns – or under any annoying circumstances, you should force yourself to smile at once, and then whistle a tune, and you will be all right.

#### 9. A Scout is thrifty

That is, he saves every penny he can, and puts it into the bank, so that he may have money to keep himself when out of work, and thus not make himself a burden to others; or that he may have money to give away to others when they need it.

#### 10. A Scout is clean in thought, word, and deed

That is, he looks down upon a silly youth who talks dirt, and he does not let himself give way to temptation either to talk it or to think, or to do anything dirty. A Scout is pure and clean-minded and manly.

By 1966, the New Zealand Scout Law had changed slightly:

1. A Scout is to be trusted
2. A Scout is loyal
3. A Scout is friendly and considerate
4. A Scout is a brother to all Scouts
5. A Scout has courage in all difficulties
6. A Scout makes good use of his time and is careful of possessions and property
7. A Scout has respect for himself and for others

The current Scout Law is:

A Scout is Loyal and Trustworthy

A Scout is Considerate and Tolerant

A Scout is a Friend to All

A Scout Accepts Challenges with Courage

A Scout Uses Resources Wisely

A Scout Respects the Environment

A Scout has Self-Respect and is Sincere

## Promise and Law

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Why do you think Scouts needs a Law and Promise?
2. Why do you think the Promise and Law have been altered as time has gone on?
3. Why do you think the Promise and Law are still relevant to Scouting today, even though they were originally designed for boys many years ago?
4. What part of the Law do you think is the hardest to keep? Why?
5. From the newspapers/magazines, find **three** articles or pictures that show different aspects of the Scout Law, and discuss these with the other members of your group/Scout leader.