

## ***Splash and Go***

### **How to Start a Sea Scout Ship in Two Months**

The following are best practices learned from starting Sea Scout Ships in Boy Scout Councils without existing Sea Scout Ships or volunteers. Many District Executives have little experience with Sea Scouts. This outline is a “how to” checklist for launching a new Sea Scout Ship, including finding a charter partner, recruiting volunteers, and holding an open house.

1. Find a charter partner. One strategy is to perform Google searches in the council service area for yacht clubs, scuba stores, kayak rental business, Power Squadron, or any maritime entity.
2. Contact the prospective charter partner about sponsoring a Sea Scout Ship. Discuss on the phone, web meeting, or do an in person pitch to the group. The [Presentation for Interested Charter Partner](#) can be modified for each prospective sponsor.
3. Set Date for Informational Meeting at the council office or other location for Interested Volunteers with at least one month to promote it in the community if there are no prospective volunteers. If there are already volunteers, proceed to volunteer training and setting a date for an open house.
4. The District Executive and Commissioner should help promote the meeting for Interested Volunteers to their district. This can be by email, council newsletter, or at the monthly district meeting. The District Executive and/or District Commissioner ideally will recruit a volunteer to be the Sea Scout Commissioner
5. Hold volunteer meeting and present modified version of the following to find a Skipper, at least two Mates, and two Committee Members. [Presentation for Interested Volunteers](#) can be modified for the focus of the Ship.
6. Go over required volunteer trainings: Youth Protection, Sea Scout Basic Leader Training, and other online trainings. Provide the Skipper, Mates, and Committee with the [New Ship Starter Kit](#). The District Executive or Commissioner should be present with adult leader applications. The New Ship Mentor should work with the Skipper and Mates to modify the Three-Month Sample Program Outline to fit their new program after the meeting. The volunteer informational meeting should end with a date set one month out for a Sea Scout Open House.
7. Prepare online and print promotional material for Nextdoor, Facebook, and community boards (such as Starbucks). Focus on using one or two large eye catching images that highlights the focus of the new Ship, such as kayaking, scuba, or sailing. Include date, location, time, contact info, and headline promoting the open house.

8. District Executive and Commissioners need to help promote open house to District. Council newsletter should include an announcement on the open house.
9. Hold Open House. Check on options for Sea Scouts from other cities on helping with the open house.
10. Open House should have hands-on activities for the interested youth. Options are unlimited, however, consider easier activities, such as knots, learning to put on life jackets, kayaking, boat rides, throwing heaving lines or ring buoys, making Turk's Heads, Monkey Fist Keychains, and anything that is an activity where youth get on the water. Providing a barbecue lunch is strongly recommended. District Executive or Commissioner ideally will be at the open house with membership forms. Open House should end with the date of the first meeting for the New Ship.
11. New Sea Scouts brainstorm on a Ship name at their first meeting. It is strongly recommended that the name that have an image that would be strong for marketing, such as marine animals, mythology, literature, or famous ships from history. The first and most used uniform of any Sea Scout is their Ship t-shirt. Having a strong logo on the back helps build Ship recognition in the community, esprit de corps between the Scouts, and marketing to other youth in the community.
12. Have fun. Get on the Water for weekly program to the new Sea Scouts.