

## Scout neckerchiefs now approved for wear with non-uniform clothing

Posted on August 21, 2015 by Bryan Wendell in Ask the Expert, International Scouting, Uniforms,



One uniform piece unites Scouts in all 223 countries with a Scouting program.

It's not the button-up uniform shirt. It's not the purple World Crest.

It's the Scout neckerchief.

Look at pretty much any photo of a Scout or Scout leader from another country, and you'll see those rolled-up triangles. They're wearing Scout neckerchiefs even if they aren't in their full, official uniform (what we in the U.S. call the field uniform).

And now, the BSA is joining them. Scout neckerchiefs, long a symbol of the movement globally, are now approved for wear by Boy Scouts of America members whether in or out of uniform.

This line on page 12 of the *Guide to Awards and Insignia*, 2015 edition, confirms the change:

*When engaged in Scouting activities, members may wear the neckerchief with appropriate non-uniform clothing to identify them as Scouts.*

Previously, according to an earlier version of the *Guide*, the Scout neckerchief was "worn only with the official uniform and never with T-shirts or civilian clothing."

### Why the change?

- Removing restrictions for neckerchief wear brings the BSA in line with other members of the World Organization of the Scout Movement.
- The neckerchief, as recommended by Scouting founder Robert Baden-Powell, can be a tool for first aid. It can work as a sling, tourniquet or bandage.
- Scout neckerchiefs identify Scouts as Scouts, even when they aren't in uniform.
- The neckerchief looks cool — just ask Bear Grylls.

## What one Scouter says

Dan Kurtenbach, a Scouter from Virginia, told me by email that he's thrilled with the move.

"The previous policy meant that you would hardly ever see a neckerchief at Scout outdoor activities, because you hardly ever see the official uniform being worn for active outdoor events," he writes. "With this change, it seems that the Scout neckerchief can be used for what it was designed for: practical outdoor gear.

"But more importantly, it finally allows boys engaged in outdoor activities to be recognized as Scouts, not just any old youth group. It allows us to take the uniform with us wherever we go and whatever we are doing."

### Reminder

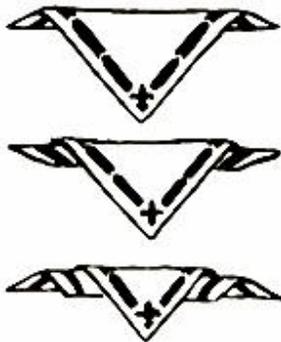
Of course, your regular field uniform and activity uniforms are still an important part of delivering the BSA program.

This option — wearing neckerchiefs with civilian clothes at a Scouting event — merely offers you a nice way to show you're a Scout when out of uniform.

## Does your troop wear Scout neckerchiefs?

Posted on February 3, 2015 by Bryan Wendell in Tuesday Talkbacks, Uniforms

### How to Wear the Neckerchief



a. Fold long edge over several flat folds to about 6 inches from tip of neckerchief. A tight fold prevents gathering around the neck and is more efficient than rolling or twirling.



b. The unit has a choice of wearing the neckerchief over the collar (with the collar tucked in) or under the collar.



c. Draw neckerchief slide over ends and adjust to fit snugly.

Scout neckerchiefs are not required for wear with the Boy Scout uniform.

That said, those triangles of fabric sure can make a sharply dressed troop look even better.

The *Guide to Awards and Insignia* confirms that Boy Scout neckerchiefs are optional, and it dictates that troops (read: the boys, *not* the adults) vote on whether to wear a neckerchief. Majority rules here, and everyone in the troop should abide by the winning decision. Uniforms should be uniform, after all.

The Scouts can decide what color the neckerchief should be and what embroidery and logos it will contain. A number of official BSA licensees, including the BSA's Supply Group, offer custom neckerchiefs for purchase.

## Your Neckerchief: The Oath and Law you wear

A great Scout Leader I knew taught me the importance of the Scout Oath and Law using the Neckerchief. He would hold the open neckerchief in his hands and remind the young scouts of what the last item of clothing they put on when they were getting dressed for the meeting was, his neckerchief. He said that it was no coincidence that the neckerchief had 3 sides, just like the three parts of the Scout Oath. He would run a side through his fingers and say "***On my honor, I'll do my best. To do my duty to God***" The first and longest side is to remind you of our long standing duty to God. This whole side is hidden from view, just as your faith is deep inside you. But without that faith, there is no strength for the rest.

Holding on to the neckerchief by the point he would run the next side through his fingers and say "***To help other people at all times....***" This shorter side is to remind you of your duty to help others. Remember it is some of this duty that shows to others, just like part of this side of your neckerchief shows. So do your duty to others well, so that people might see the good work you do in the name of Scouting.

The last side also shows. He would say "***To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight.***" This last side is your duty to yourself. This shows to others as well. They will know that by seeing your uniform, you are a young man who is physically fit. Has a strong moral foundation and who is not apt to fall into the temptations of drugs and alcohol.

He would then say that this was a means by which we could remember the Scout Oath, every time we got dressed in uniform. He also gave us a means by which to remember the Scout Law.

While wrapping the neckerchief up for wear, he said to wrap it tight in small twists, 12 in fact. And to repeat the 12 points of the Scout Law as you did so. Then as you placed your neckerchief around your neck for wear, the elements of the Scout Oath and Law were with you.

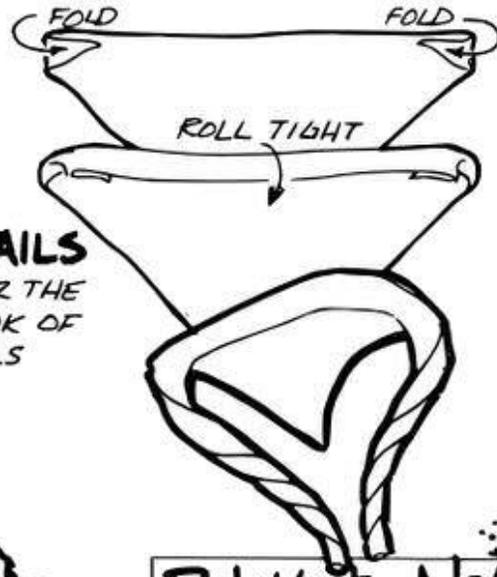
They were in fact part of you.

# NECKERCHIEF KNOTS AND FOLDS



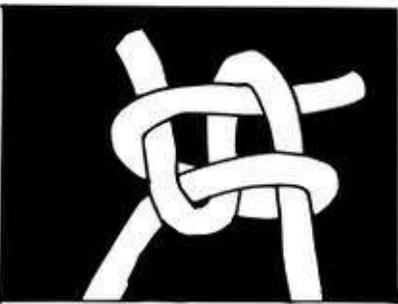
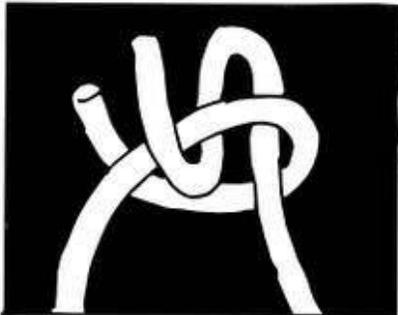
## CATTLE RUSTLER'S KNOT

TAME LOOSE TAILS WITH THIS HANDSOME KNOT.



## TUCKED TAILS

SOME PREFER THE "TAILORED" LOOK OF TUCKED-IN TAILS



## GOODTURN KNOT

A SIMPLE OVERHAND KNOT TIED AROUND ONE TAIL BY THE OTHER AS A REMINDER OF THE SCOUT MOTTO

## Believe it or Not!

ORIGINAL SCOUT NECKERCHIEFS WERE SQUARE!

