

Using Training Aids in the Pack



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If we say that the method we use in the Pack is learning by doing then we imply that it is the Cub Scouts who are doing things, not the Leaders. This means that Packs must have equipment which Cub Scouts can use, and has been designed to help them learn for themselves. The words training aids are used in this factsheet to describe this type of equipment.

How do training aids help Cub Scouts?

They make learning more fun. They allow youngsters to learn at their own pace. They make use of other senses than hearing - touch and sight in particular. Just listening is boring if you are eight years old, it can be just as boring if you are older as we all know.

How do training aids help Leaders?

They enable us to have a greater variety of activities in each meeting thus meeting more of the needs of individual youngsters in the Pack. They prevent boredom and Cub Scouts who are happily involved seldom present discipline problems. They enable us to help more youngsters to achieve more. They make Cub Scouting more interesting and enjoyable for us.

When can training aids be used?

Whilst some training aids are more successful in certain situations, others can be used in a variety of ways. For example:

With the whole Pack

- Film strips, slides or videos with points to look for
- Quizzes or trails where each answer leads on to the next question
- Flip charts
- Flannelboards

- Books and magazines

With a small group

- Board games
- Card games
- Working models - artificial resuscitation aids
- The real thing - not a toy or a scaled down model - such as a compass, woodworking tools, telephone, first aid equipment
- Collections for comparison - types of puppets or maps

With Individuals

- Jigsaws
- Step-by-step instruction charts
- How to tie a knot; or make a cup of tea
- Tape recordings
- Self-training material designed so that the Cub Scout cannot learn wrongly, and can improve knowledge - electric truth board which lights up when the correct answer is selected
- Self-checking aids used by Cub Scouts to check their own knowledge
- Jigsaw in which the key piece only fits if all the others are right; crossword puzzles.

How can training aids be obtained?

Some can be budgeted for. Others can be made, often from junk.

The Scout Information Centre

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Who could make training aids?

Everyone - including you! CSLs, ACSLs and Helpers. The ADC (Cub Scouts) may help with ideas; some parents may really have a flair for this, as well as some youngsters, particularly older ones.

Handy tips

Do

- make them sturdy
- make them colourful
- check the size of any lettering is adequate (about 5 cm high for the most important words)
- use plain lettering not fancy scripts, not all capitals
- give some thought to layout and design before you begin
- make sure that things which are supposed to work, do work.

Don't

- use fussy detail
- use flimsy construction
- use thin, spidery lettering
- leave large areas of blank space on charts
- use charts which are overcrowded with no space or margins
- store them so carefully that they are never used!

How can they be stored?

Obviously a cupboard with plenty of compartments and shelves is most useful but there is rarely adequate storage space in any meeting place. If this really cannot be arranged, then perhaps a box on a trolley can be built and kept in the garage of a nearby house. The Cub Scouts could take it in turns to pull it to the meetings.

Charts can be displayed by pegging them on to a washing line, if wall space is not available. A

folding screen rather like a clothes-horse is another way of providing more corners and a place for charts to be pinned.

A roll of hessian sewn on to a wire coat-hanger can make a handy noticeboard. Large polystyrene tiles are very light to carry and make easily portable noticeboards. They are not very durable but have the advantage of being cheap to replace.

Finally, remember that Cub Scouts do not like having to sit still and be talked at and it can hardly be called fun. So it is worth looking at the various skills, and how you put them across in your Pack. What kinds of training aids do you have or could you make for the individual Cub Scout in your Pack to use to increase knowledge? In what ways could you adapt them so that your Cub Scouts can check their own progress?