Scout Skills
Training Aids

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INFORMATION SHEET

The word 'training' often sounds very formal and conjures up images of courses, flipcharts, people sitting around on chairs, and so on. Of course, this is one form of training, but so is sitting on the floor showing a Scout how to light a fire, or advising the Patrol Leaders' Forum on how they might plan the next month's programme.

When working with, or training, Scouts we are constantly trying to get a message across, be it about how to tie a knot, understand maps or lead an expedition, and just talking about it until you are blue in the face will probably not be very effective!

Visual or practical reinforcement of what we say greatly improves our chances of getting the message over. This is what training aids do; they reinforce what has been said by something visual or tangible and something, which possibly is remembered better than it would be otherwise. Training aids may simply be a book, handout or in some cases, it may be an item related to the talk. For example, if you are instructing Scouts in the parts of a hand axe, there can be no better training aid than the axe itself. This helps put what is being said into context and the Scouts will obviously recognise it, or something similar, again. Just imagine trying to describe the parts of a hand axe by just talking - your 'audience' would not be much the wiser and you would probably find it very hard work!

Training aids may also be videos, slides, tapes, games, jigsaws or, more simply, a concoction of household bits and pieces! (This will be explained in more detail later.)

In fact, just about anything you can think of! However, the best training aids are those which are clear, have impact, are easily remembered but do not distract from what is being said.

How people learn

In order to understand why training aids are useful, it is important to understand the way in which people learn. It is often said that:
'What I hear ... I forget.

What I see... I remember.

What I do... know.'
So, we can see that any visual training aid, that is, something which has been seen by, or shown to the Scouts, will help them remember what was being said. However, we can go one stage further, and anything which people can hold, touch, operate, or do, is the most effective way of people learning.

In other words, our senses are what we gain our experiences from and learn through. For gaining knowledge or factual information, just two senses are usually required:

Sight	75%
Hearing	25%

However, for practical or physical skills, the ratio is very different. It is probably in the region of

Sight	25%
Hearing	10%
Touch and muscular sense	65%

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So you can see again, that 'doing' is much more important. This can be directly related to the way in which we most effectively instruct others. That is:

Explanation	10%
Demonstration	25%
Practice	65%

When do we use training aids?

Just about any occasion or subject that you feel could be reinforced or better remembered by something more than one person speaking, would benefit from using training aids. Therefore, a demonstration, backed up by visual information and then put into practice, has more chance of being remembered than a straight talk.

Types of training aids

Training aids come in different forms and some purely use the sight and/or hearing senses, whilst others allow people to do something. A combination of what you say pictures or diagrams and something they can do, is probably the most effective method of training.

Visual aids

As the name suggests, visual aids support a session or subject, mainly by being seen or looked at. Examples include:

Flip chart - A fixed or free standing board which usually holds Al size paper and can be used for writing or drawing information on. Because of its size, the flipchart can be seen by a large group of people at the same time.

White board - Similar to the above except it does not hold paper and you write directly onto the board using special pens. When finished, the writing can be simply wiped off.

Magnetic board and magnets - Again these are similar to the boards mentioned above except that they are magnetised and will therefore attract magnetic items. This allows paper or card to be fixed with a magnet and placed on the board. The advantage is that they can be moved about with ease.

Overhead projector - This is a device which projects a sheet of transparent film onto a screen or wall. Information or diagrams are written or drawn on this sheet (A4 size) which, when projected, can then be seen by a large audience.

Poster - This is a familiar item, which can be seen in many places. It provides a longer-term visual aid in that it might be left in a strategic place for longer than the others. It can use words, pictures, diagrams, collages or lists, such as forthcoming programmes. There are also training charts available (which specifically detail steps to be taken in gaining a skill), and posters printed by manufacturers or specialists. Posters, however, need to be attractive as they usually 'stand alone' and are not backed up by someone talking at the same time.

Audio-visual aids

This is a group of training aids, which uses both the sight and hearing senses. Examples include:

Data projector Presentations – This is where a presentation is prepared using the PowerPoint programme on the computer and then played through a data projector.

Videotapes - A familiar item used by young and old alike! These can be used in two ways; firstly, to put information across. For example, if the video is of rock climbing - it might show the safety factors, places to climb, techniques and so on. Secondly, it may have been produced by the Scouts or 'participants' and, therefore, they have not only learnt the subject but probably also had great fun while producing it!

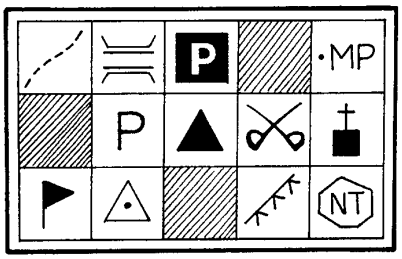
Slides and tape/slide sets - This is showing a series of photographic slides by means of projecting them onto a large screen or wall. Again, this allows everyone present to see it. They can also be accompanied by a cassette tape or similar which has either words and/or music to go with it. Slides are usually used for report backs of camps and expeditions, but they can also be used to show the stages in instructing a skill such as use of the hand-axe, lighting fires, tent pitching and so on.

Board and other games

These are examples of where common, familiar games are amended or altered to include the subject matter that you want. Here are some examples, but many more can be tried and adapted - have a go!

Bingo! - Play the game as you would expect, with the players' cards having a symbol, diagram or writing in the squares and they have to match these with a written description of the symbols which are 'pulled out of the hat' (which, of course, can also be a string bag or wastepaper bin!). The player or team gets a point or prize for getting a row and then a 'full house'. Examples of subjects might include knotting; the names of the knot are called out and the player has to match them with diagrams on the card, Highway Code; where examples of road signs and so on, are used, or astronomy; using constellations.

Instructions: Cut pieces of card about 20cm x 10cm and divide them into squares as shown below. Then draw, or using photocopies from books of your subject, stick a selection of the symbols or diagrams onto the cards in a random order. You will also need some counters of paper cut up into squares to cover the symbols once they have been called out.



Snakes and Ladders - Using the principle of a game of snakes and ladders where players move around the board in the order of the squares (a dice is thrown to determine the number of moves), use your own topic where good or positive points are rewarded by going up a ladder and negative or bad points are acknowledged by going down a snake.

Instructions: Cut out a large piece of card (about 30cm x 30cm or bigger) and divide it into 1 00 squares. At various points write in a correct or incorrect statement about your chosen topic and draw a snake or ladder extending to another square. An example might be tent pitching; -'pitch the tent with the door facing the prevailing wind' (snake), 'tent pegs should be placed into the ground at an angle of 45 degrees' (ladder) and so on. You will also need counters and dice to play the game. Alternatively, you could prepare something similar but on a much larger scale and, if possible, play outdoors. The size of the grid could be about 10 metres square, with one metre squares and posters or sheets of flip chart paper or equivalent, with the statements on. The 'players' then act as the counter as they move around the grid.

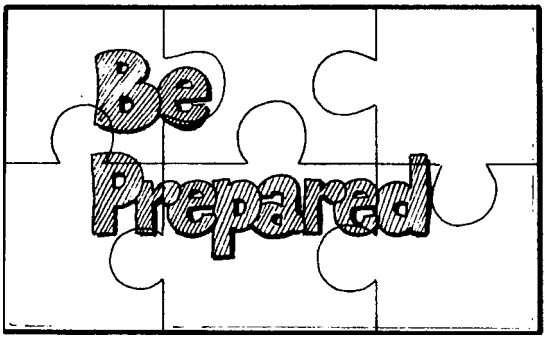
Snap! - Played like a game of snap except instead of having two identical cards, they are in pairs with one card showing a picture or diagram and the second card with the name on. These are then shuffled, dealt to the players and the game played in the usual way with the diagram matching the name card. Alternatively, the cards could just have the diagrams or pictures on, and as they are paired up, the player doing so has to name them. Examples could be map symbols, flags, road

signs, cloud formations, parts of a boat or aircraft and knots to name but a few!

Instructions: Cut up some card into 10cm x 5cm rectangles and draw and write on the details of your chosen topic.

Jigsaws - This provides an opportunity for information to be given in a fun way by getting the Scouts to piece it together to give them the 'message'. There are several methods by which the pieces are given out; they can be given all the pieces at once and then time is spent putting them together; pieces of the jigsaw can be 'won' or 'awarded' after completing another task; they can be hidden or dispersed around an area and have to be found. When completed the jigsaw can provide a clue or instruction for a bigger overall project. It is worth getting someone to try it out before you play it for real, because if it is too complicated it may take longer than you had allowed for, the Scouts may get fed up and lose interest, or it may just be impossible to do!

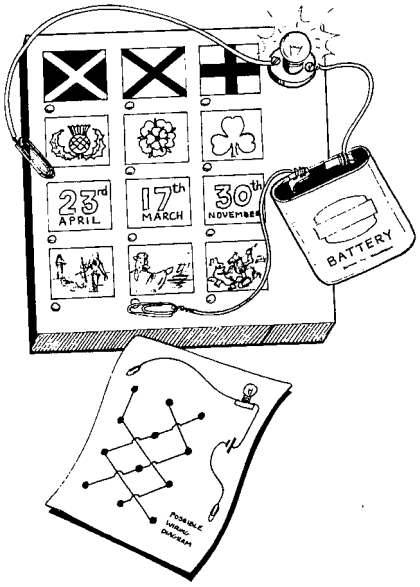
Instructions : Using a piece of card (size can be your choice!) draw or write your message on it and then draw on the lines which are then used for cutting along.



Activity boards

These are boards or devices, which enable people to have a go at something or, by their design, tell them whether they are right or wrong. Examples include:

Lamp Boards - These are boards with various pieces of information on and when correctly matched up, cause a small light bulb to light up! The example used here is national emblems. One row has a picture of national flags, the second national flowers and the third national saints days. More or less rows can be used and a bell can be used in place of the light bulb. You may find it is not hard to delegate the task of making these boards to the Scouts!

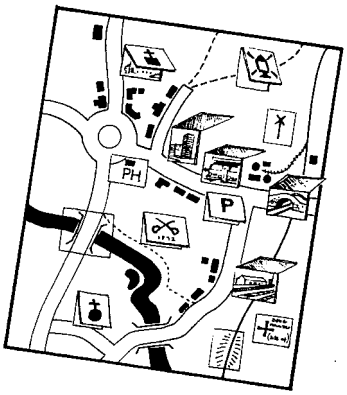


Instructions : Using a piece of hardboard, attach drawings and details of the topic. At the corner of each item, drill a small hole and insert a brass paper fastener opening out its legs at the back to secure it in place. Using thin insulated wire, connect the legs of all fasteners within the same group of related items, but taking care to avoid making contact with any other circuits. Mount a torch bulb or equivalent in a lamp holder and connect one side of the holder to one pole of a low voltage battery. Two other wires are each fitted with a paper clip and their opposite ends connected to a) the battery's remaining terminal and b), the lamp. When any two paper fasteners are touched, if the information is correctly matched, the lamp lights up.

Advent calendar - using the principle of windows or flaps, a scenario is depicted and, by opening a window, allows the Scout to see the answer to a given question or indicated by the outside of the flap. For example, using the Highway Code as a

topic, Scouts are asked to identify different road signs or particular features and they can then check their answers.

Instructions: Place two pieces of A3 paper, or a piece of paper and some hardboard together with paper clips and then draw a map of a fictitious area. At various points, cut out a flap in the top copy of the paper and write on the bottom copy a definition of a road sign. This road sign should then be drawn on the top of the flap. When all the flaps have been done, the two pieces of paper or hardboard can be stuck together and the paper clips removed. Questions can then be posed to the Scout(s) such as 'Where is there a 'No waiting' restriction?' or 'Where does the national speed limit apply?'. By identifying the road sign and then lifting the flap, the Scout can confirm their answer.



Knotting board - This is possibly something that you have seen in various Troop rooms and Scout headquarters. It is basically a board which may display a variety of actual tied knots for identification purposes or more practically, it can show an example of the knot. It can also list the sort of things it is used for and then, more importantly, a piece of rope is attached to the board to enable the user to have a go at tying it.

Instructions:Prepare a piece of wood or soft board about 30cm x 60cm for one knot or 60cm x 120cm for 4 knots. If the details of the knot and its 'example' are removable, it will mean that more knots can be demonstrated.

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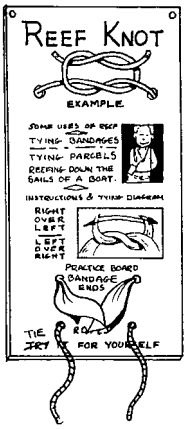


Other Training Aids

'Purpose made' aids (for example, resuscitation dummies) are available for some topics and are usually the best sort of training aid in these circumstances.

Words alone can create a picture. For example, stories told at night in camp.

Music can also be used to create an effect or set a scene.

The important point here is that although specific examples of subjects have been used with different training aids, they are far from exclusive and whilst some are obviously more suited to some subjects, it is possible to adapt and think about alternatives.

Materials that can be used

Materials for making training aids need not be expensive and if you keep a stock available for you or the Scouts to use in the Troop room, it will get used.

Here is a list of the sort of things you might keep:
a variety of colours of paper and card
scrap paper
cotton, needles and pins
rubber bands
canes and wood
plasticine
paper fasteners
pair of compasses
a variety of colours of marker pens, crayons
cardboard
scissors
drawing pins
polystyrene squares
glue
pens and pencils
stapler
special pens for white boards and OHPs
sticky/adhesive tape
'blu-tak'
paper clips
match boxes
string
ruler and eraser
treasury tags

Tricks of the trade

Posters, diagrams, notices and so on, should be bright, not contain a lot of writing, and be legible from a distance.

Size and thickness of lettering and the use of colour on any visual aid should all be tested beforehand in conditions similar to those expected when in use. Practice printing letters, preferably using a lower case style as in motorway signs - research has shown this style to be easier to read.

Colour is important. The normal range of colours is black, blue, red and green. Blue is restful to the eyes. Red is good if you wish to make something stand out but can be difficult to read by those who suffer from colour blindness. Black may be dull and boring but nevertheless is useful as another colour or as a background. You will also need to take into account the colour of paper you are using; green writing on yellow paper will not show up as much as blue on white.

It is useful to keep demonstration equipment especially for that purpose, so that it stays clean, complete and in working order for re-use.

If you can't draw very well, use photocopies of books or articles. They can also be enlarged or reduced to the appropriate size.

Don't let the training or visual aid become all important. It is there to support what you are saying, not to distract or take over.
A visual display well positioned in your Troop room can also help in your day to day running of the Troop. Notices of events, photographs of awards or camps, the progress charts of individuals will all stimulate interest and jog the memory - but remember to update notices and change things occasionally otherwise it will all just become like background wallpaper.

When you have finished with a training aid in a session, remove or cover it up. It will only become a distraction to the rest of your session, or a subsequent session or topic. You may find it beneficial to cover any paper or card training aids that you can use again, with a self adhesive plastic covering. This will make them last a lot longer.

If using sophisticated equipment (for example, videos, overhead projector, slide projector, data projector) always practice using it before the session itself. Don't assume that it will be obvious how to use it.

A training aid should capture your imagination and that of your Scouts. If possible, construct the aid

to last so that you or the Scouts can use it again and make sure it is always available. It makes the time invested in producing it more worthwhile!

Further information and resources

Speak with other Leaders in the Group who have made or used training aids. They may be able to give you some hints and tips on what is available to use, and perhaps put you in touch with someone who is particularly good at this sort of thing.

Contact someone in the District or County who gets involved with formal training (the Local or County Training Managers). Training aids are regularly used on courses. Have a chat sometime to get some more ideas and thoughts on what can be, done. SCOUTING Magazine, especially the sectional supplements, (and not just the Scout one!) often give ideas and examples of things that can be made.
Obtain *Do It Yourself Training Resources* published by Printforce Limited and available from the Scout Information Centre. This gives lots of ideas and instructions on how to make training aids.

TEACH YOURSELF

The key to making and producing training aids is to come up with the idea in the first place! However, having said that, there are really only very few basic ideas - they just need adapting to your particular subject or occasion.

Time

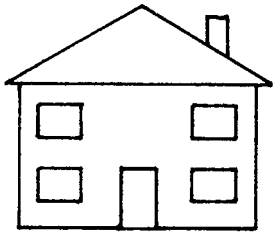
This can vary from five minutes to three hours! However, an hour or so would probably be sufficient to experiment with a few ideas and make some examples of training aids.

Equipment

This will depend on what you choose to actually make. However, have available the basic essential items such as a variety of paper, card, felt tip/marker pens, sticky tape, glue, paper clips, scissors, ruler.

Learning all about it

Before having a go, you will need to read the Information Sheet if you have not already done so.
You might say 'I can't draw or make things' or 'my handwriting is a scrawl'. Don't worry, our minds and imagination are very powerful and can sometimes recognise a great deal from little information. If, for example, you draw the front of a house with simply a roof, chimney, walls, windows and a door, it will be just as recognisable to the Scouts as a photograph. It communicates the message that you want it to which is the important thing.



When making your own aids, ask for help from parents, other Leaders or your Scouts. Your imagination, together with theirs, will produce results.

Selecting the right training aid

Think out beforehand exactly what message you want to get over, about the young people you are training, and the sort of images they are used to, for example, on television, or at school.
(Overhead projectors are often used at school and it won't help your message if you remind them of a teacher in the classroom.)

Before making or preparing a training aid, it may help you to ask yourself these questions:

- What is the best way of supporting what I have to say?
- What will make the message more memorable?

- What prepared training aids are available?
- What basic materials do I have available?
- Will it make the learning more effective?
- Will it distract from what I'm saying?
- Can it be seen by everybody that will be watching and listening?
- Do I have, or know someone with the skills to be able to produce or prepare it?
- How much time is available for either

a) me to be able to prepare or produce it

b) the Scouts to be able to use it?

Refer to the list of training aids in the Information Sheet. Can you add suggestions of your own?

So, once you have decided what the appropriate training aid is, you need to prepare or produce it. Some will be obvious and not require a lot of thought, others will need longer spent on them and more thought given to them.

Here are four examples of subjects and some possibilities of training aids to support these subjects. However, they can be adapted for other subjects so do not see them as just for one thing.

1. **Use of the hand axe**

- *Flip Chart* - Draw a diagram of the axe and put the names to the different parts.
- *An axe* - Display, name the parts, and maybe demonstrate the use of the hand axe.
- *Slides* - If demonstration is not possible for showing how to use the hand axe, it is feasible to show a series of slides showing the correct usage.
- *Magnetic Board* - Using a magnetic board or 'white' board (which is usually magnetised), draw the outline of the axe. Give participants cards with the names of the relevant parts on with small magnets or magnetised strips attached to the back. They then have to place them on the appropriate part of the drawing.

2. **Map symbols**

- *Bingo* - Draw up a number of bingo cards as described in the Information Sheet. Each card should have a variety of different map symbols in the boxes. The descriptions of the symbols (as they appear on the key of the map) are read out randomly. Players then, using counters or squares of paper, cover up a square if the symbol is on their card and the game proceeds in the usual way with points or prizes being given for complete lines or a full card.
- *Lamp board* - Using the 'light a lamp' principle, have one column showing the map symbols and the second, their description. When the correct symbol is linked to the correct description, the lamp lights up.

3. **Knotting**

- *Knotting board* - This provides both the completed example(s) of various knots and a length of rope attached for trying to tie the knots. It may also include details of what the knot is used for and any other useful comments.
- *Snap!* - Divide the 'pack of cards' in half and on one half draw or put a photocopied picture of a knot and or the other half, put the name. The game is then played in the usual way.

4. **Programme planning**

- *Flipchart or overhead projector* - If details of discussions are written on one of these items, everyone can see what has been said and recorded. This helps prompt the memory, and therefore discussion, and it means that everyone is reading the same information.
- *Previous programmes*-Use examples *of* these to prompt the memory and use as a discussion starting point.
- *Books* - Use various books, especially those of the Scout section, to give programme ideas and outline elements of the Training Scheme.

Can I do it?

When you feel confident about training aids, check how you are doing and see which of the following you can tick off:

Can I explain what is the most effective way in which people learn? ☐
Can I explain why training aids are important? ☐

Can I list what sort of things that training aids might be? ☐

Can I give an example of a suitable training aid for the following situations:

- Use of the hand axe ☐
- Learning map symbols ☐
- Practising knotting ☐
- Patrol Leader's Council programme planning ☐
- Taking a specific Troop programme idea or skill, can I plan the session including one or more training aids? ☐

So you want more?

Attend a course about presentations and using visual and other aids. Obtain a certificate of competence for the function of Presenting.

Build up a stock or supply of (well-made and long-lasting!) training aids that can be kept and adapted to different subjects whenever required.

HOW TO TRAIN OTHERS

This section is designed to give you some practical ideas about how you can help other people to have a go at using and making training aids. This might be Leaders or Scouts - either in an informal way on a Troop night or more formally on a skills workshop, training course or something similar.

Objectives
By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

I. State why training aids are important;

II. List examples of training aids;

III. Design and use a training aid for a specific session.

Time
Two to two and a half hours will be required to do the session as outlined.

Equipment
A variety of paper, card, felt tip/marker pens, sticky tape, glue, paper clips, scissors, ruler.
Examples of training aids prepared earlier.
Any items required for specific training aids that are to be made.

Training method
Some explanation will need to be given as to why we use training aids and inclusion of examples of what training aids might be. Once this has been covered, most benefit (as the subject matter itself suggests!) can be derived from letting the participants have a go at making some.

Detailed information for the session can be found in the Information Sheet and Teach Yourself sections.

Here is a suggested outline for a session, but you may wish to amend it for your own purposes and the type of audience:

- Start by explaining that you are about to give two short talks (up to five minutes each), both about the same subject but with a slight difference. The first should be without any training aids just you talking), and the second, with training aids. Then ask participants which talk they found the most effective. (Hopefully, it was the second one!).
  Examples of subjects for these talks might be: identifying map symbols, parts of an axe, tying a knot or tent pitching.
- The session leader should then explain the ways in which people learn. Ask the participants to think of an occasion when they learnt a specific skill, and why they think they remembered it. It was probably because, apart from being fun and enjoyable (which are also very important reasons for why people

learn), they were actually doing something; it was probably practical and 'hands-on'. The points to be covered should therefore include: 'What I hear...' and so on and the proportions in which we use our senses of sight, hearing and touch, in learning.

- Explain that we can also support what we say with a variety of training aids. Ask the participants to brainstorm a list of the sort of things that they consider to be training aids and fill in any 'gaps' or ideas that they may have missed.
- Link these training aids to the two talks that you did at the beginning and the use of the senses previously discussed.
- Show and give examples of specific different training aids that can be used; 'Here's one I made earlier.... .
- Starting with a relatively simple example, give the participants, in small groups, an example of a skill or session that they might need to put across to a Troop or Patrol. Then, having provided the materials, ask them to plan an outline of the session and to make a training aid that will support it. If appropriate, ask them to demonstrate it to the others.
- Participants, as individuals, should then pick a subject or training aid of their own choice that they would like to have a go at. It may also be appropriate for the session leader to ask for specific training aids to be used or made so that a balance of ideas is included in the session.
- It will be valuable for participants to share and exchange ideas as this often sparks off further ideas. This could be done by members of each group demonstrating their ideas to the rest of their group, or if there are not very many people present, everyone else collectively. Alternatively, half of those present could display their work whilst the other half looks at them and then, after a given time, they swap over. For those training aids that do not need any explanation, or are self-explanatory, they can just be left for viewing.
- For Scouts, it might be appropriate to outline the principles of how people learn. However, probably the best method for them to understand about training aids, is to be on the 'receiving end' on several occasions and then be asked to produce a suitable example for either a given subject or one of their choice.

  They should then have the chance to use it.
- Finally, you will need to be sure of what you are doing at each stage, as there is a danger of confusing yourself and the participants about what you are trying to put across. For example, you may end up making a training aid to explain training aids!

Checking their progress

Ask participants if they can answer the following questions:

Can I explain why training aids are important? ☐

Can I list what sort of things that training aids might be? ☐

Taking a specific Troop programme idea or skill, can I plan the session including one or more training aids? ☐