

SCOUTING FOR BOOKS: A HOW-TO GUIDE

How it works: Edina Girl Scouts method has four basic parts, bag distribution, reminder sign installation, bag collection and book drop off.

Bag Distribution - 10/17 – 10/22.

Reminder sign installation - 10/22 – 10/23

Book Bag Collection 10/24 time should be on your bags

Bag drop off 4:00 – 5:30 at the Edina Community Center Door 8

1. Bag Distribution

- a) *For bag distribution*, 2 to 3 Scouts are paired up with an escorting Adult. Troops will be given a map and a set of basic directions. *To help avoid problems, Scouts should be dressed in Uniform.*
- b) Each map will have a number of adjacent streets in one of our assigned areas highlighted.
- c) The Scouts and escort walk up each street in turn, hanging bags with inserted flyers on the doorknobs of each house.
 - The flyers contain detailed information on who we are and what we are asking for; this complements similar information on the bags. There is a section for troops to fill out when exactly they are picking up the bags and sign a little note.
 - For Health and Safety reasons (and also as a simple courtesy to our neighbors who may still be sleeping or relaxing Saturday morning), we do not knock on doors; however, we do stop and explain what we are doing if the residents are outside and available, or see us coming and meet us at their doors.
 - In general, bag distribution - from initial assembly to completion - takes less than 2 hours total.

2. Sign Installation

- a) *Sign installation* can be a vital key to our success. The one-week gap between bag distribution and collection is too long for most folks to remember what we are doing, therefore, it is recommended that we outline our assigned areas with large reminder signs on Thursday afternoon/Saturday morning. This also gives our Scouts with Saturday morning conflicts an opportunity to participate in Scouting for Books.
- b) Signs are to be made by troops. The signs are fairly simple (e.g., "Scout Books/Sat. 9 am" in large block letters on the white backs of large campaign posters), but serve well to jog everyone's memory. They are placed at or near the entrance of each street in such a manner that folks returning home from work Friday night will see them. Past experience has shown that neighborhoods with reminder signs will return at least twice as much Books as those without signs.
- c) All signs are removed during Bag Collection Saturday and (if not ruined) can be saved for the following year. Sign installation takes 30-60 minutes, start to finish.

3. Bag Collection

- a) *For bag collection*, 2 to 3 Scouts are again paired up with an escorting Adult, who either has a vehicle parked close, or use a wagon. Again, to help avoid problems, *Scouts are dressed in Uniform.*
- b) Use the same map as for bag distribution. Each Scout walks up each street in turn and collects *visible bags only*. Again, we do not knock on anyone's door. Reminder signs are also collected and stored. The escorting driver shadows the Scouts to help collect and transport the bags and signs.
- c) For fun - As they come to the vehicle with each bag, they can count the number of books and the number of magazines, and relay those numbers to the driver (who records them "on the fly"). These numbers will not be requested at the collection point, but the troop might find it fun to know how many books they collected as a whole and it is easier to do the counting during the collection versus at the drop-off.
- d) Bag Collection generally takes from 1 to 2 hours, start to finish.

4. Book Drop Off

- a) When the collection is complete the Scouts join the driver for the run to the drop-off center (Edina Community Center from 4:00 – 5:00 PM by the gyms (Door 8). If possible, scouts will assist with transferring items from the vehicle into the community center.
- b) Scouting for Books Coordinator will also be present, to assist and direct as needed, collect the reminder signs and maps.