

KEEPING THE SABBATH WHILE CAMPING

A GUIDE FOR BOY SCOUT LEADERS



ISSUED BY
NATIONAL JEWISH
COMMITTEE ON SCOUTING

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A Word To The Scoutmaster

**Can Scouts observe the Sabbath while camping?
The answer is yes!**

Experience has shown that Jewish youth in Scouting who wish to observe the traditional laws of the Sabbath can do so. At the same time they can participate in their unit's camping program.

The material in this brochure has been prepared for you. It contains not only theory but practical suggestions describing dozens of Scouting activities that are possible on the Jewish Sabbath without cutting wood, building fires, or writing.

If you have any questions about any projects, we suggest you consult your own rabbi who, as spiritual leader of the synagogue, determines the religious policy of the unit.

We are grateful to Rabbi Benjamin Sharfman and to the members of the Queens Jewish Committee on Scouting for demonstrating that it can be done. Yes, it is possible to keep the Sabbath while camping!

LAWS AND REGULATIONS FOR SABBATH OVERNIGHT HIKES

Check with your rabbi regarding any changes or modifications

Prohibitions

1. It is forbidden to travel on the Sabbath, except by foot in certain areas; consequently, Scout troops must arrive at camp before the commencement of the Sabbath.
2. No fires may be lit on the Sabbath, nor extinguished. A fire may be lit before the Sabbath begins, to continue burning thereafter.
3. No cooking is permissible. This applies to both solids and liquids.
4. No holes or excavations may be dug. No loose earth may be utilized.
5. Flowers and leaves may not be picked. This applies even if the vegetation has fallen off by itself.
6. No wood may be chopped or gathered.
7. No Scout knots may be tied or untied.
8. Hunting and fishing are forbidden.
9. Putting up or dismantling a tent is prohibited.
10. Writing of any kind is forbidden.
11. Musical instruments may not be played.
12. The Sabbath laws may be abrogated only in the event of an emergency involving life and death.

Permitted Acts

1. It is permissible to open small cans and all bottles on the Sabbath in order to remove their contents. There is sufficient authority to permit this, particularly in these circumstances of Scouting.
2. Indoor games, such as chess and checkers, are permitted on the Sabbath. Strenuous games, such as those involving a ball, while not strictly forbidden, are nevertheless not within the spirit of the Sabbath rest. However, discretion should be employed in this matter.

BASIC CONCEPTS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PLANNING THE PROGRAM

The Jewish Sabbath starts at sundown on Friday night and ends at sundown on Saturday night. This is based on the Jewish belief that the night precedes the day.

Almost all Scouting activities can be started on the Sabbath and finished on Sunday. The idea here is to stimulate the interesting aspects of a particular activity so that the Scout has the desire to complete the activity at a future time.

Item 10 under "Prohibitions" states that "writing of any kind is forbidden." Many charts, illustrations, diagrams and flash cards can be prepared beforehand. therefore, this program takes a little more preparation. Plan ahead.

During the Sabbath, it is important that some method of communication be set up. If at all possible, see that there is at least one watch patrol and that the patrol leader carries a time schedule. This is necessary because bugle calls are not to be sounded during this period.

**SUGGESTED MENU FOR OBSERVANCE
OF JEWISH DIETARY LAWS
ON WEEKEND OVERNIGHT HIKES**

Friday Evening

Juice (choice of Tomato, grapefruit,
orange, or pineapple)
Soup (chicken noodle or rice)
Gefilte fish
Chicken, roast or broiled
Vegetables (two)
Dessert
Tea and cookies
Challah - Kiddush

Saturday Breakfast

Juice
Cold Cereal
Choice of pickled herring or lox, smoked
carp, matjes.
Milk, challah, and butter

Saturday Lunch

Juice
Salad, choice of salmon, tuna fish, sardines,
tomato herring, or hard-boiled egg.
Lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber, and peppers
Milk and cookies

Saturday Snack

Hard-boiled egg, salmon, tuna fish or cream
cheese and jelly sandwiches
Milk and cookies

Saturday Supper

Juice
Soup
Meat (hamburger, steak or stew)
Vegetables (two)
Dessert
Tea and cake

Sunday Breakfast

Juice
Cereal (cold or hot)
Choice of French toast, wheat cakes,
eggs (boiled, fried, or scrambled)
Milk, coffee, or cocoa.

Sunday Lunch

Juice
Sandwiches or frankfurters and beans
Dessert
Tea for meat
Milk or cream for dairy

Utensils

Scout - (mess kit and utility kit)
Troop - two mess kits, one for dairy and one for meat. Two sets of cooking and serving
knives, spoons, and forks.
Brillo and two cakes of kosher soap
Three cold cups
Three hot cups
Plastic spoon and fork
Four plates (8-inch, flat)
Two plates (5 or 6" deep)

All menus and brands of food to be approved by rabbi of sponsoring institution.

No white bread to be used.

PROGRAM A

Friday	4:00 p.m.	Registration Transportation arranged by each unit; set up camp, make fires; all work done before sundown.
	6:30 p.m.	Supper under unit leadership
	7:30 p.m.	Assemble for Sabbath service; coordinate watches
	7:45 p.m.	Sabbath service
	9:00 p.m.	Oneg Shabbat
	10:15 p.m.	Taps (not sounded)
Saturday	7:00 a.m.	Reveille
	8:00 a.m.	Services
	9:45 a.m.	Breakfast - unit site
	11:00 a.m.	Scouting activities
		a. Compass facing
		b. Games
		c. First aid discussion
	d. Map reading	
	1:00 p.m.	Luncheon
	2:00 p.m.	Siesta in own quarters
	2:30 p.m.	Nature hike
	3:15 p.m.	Discussion groups - Ner Tamid
	4:00 p.m.	Unit refreshments
	4:15 p.m.	Scouting activities and Games
	7:00 p.m.	Afternoon service
	7:30 p.m.	Inspirational hour
8:15 p.m.	Evening services	
8:30 p.m.	Prepare and eat supper in unit site	
9:30 p.m.	Campfire by units	
10:30 p.m.	Taps	
Sunday	7:00 a.m.	Reveille
	7:45 a.m.	Morning service
	8:30 a.m.	Breakfast - cleanup
	9:45 a.m.	Scouting activities such as trailing, fire building, cooking, etc.
	12:00 Noon	Lunch
	1:30 p.m.	Assembly - closing ceremonies

PROGRAM B

Friday	Before sundown set up camp and finish supper Sundown - Sabbath services Oneg Shabbat Star hike Taps (not sounded)
Saturday	Reveille Sabbath services - (before services Scouts may have some fruit juice) Breakfast Game --- Compass change 20 minutes Scoutcraft - Map-reading 20 minutes Games --- Do this-do that 20 minutes played twice Scoutcraft - first aid 40 minutes Lunch Siesta Nature hike 1 hour Ner Tamid discussion 30 minutes Game --- The laughing handkerchief 20 minutes Scoutcraft - Morse code 30 minutes Game --- Signal do this-do that 20 minutes Scoutcraft - Woodlore 30 minutes Game --- Sleeping Indian 20 minutes Free time Evening service (end of Sabbath) Prepare for supper Campfire Taps
Sunday	Regular Scout activities

The time schedule was purposely left out to adjust to the varying time of sundown throughout the year. For official Sabbath starting time, check with your rabbi.

PROGRAM C

Friday	Before sundown set up camp and finish supper Sundown - Sabbath services Oneg Shabbat Patrol business meeting Taps (not sounded) Patrol leaders' council
Saturday	Reveille Sabbath services (before services Scouts may have some fruit juice) Breakfast Game -- object hunt 20 minutes played twice Scoutcraft - first aid 30 minutes Tracking - use of flash cards 20 minutes Game -- oratory 20 minutes Scoutcraft - compass games 1 and 2 Lunch Siesta Visit to spot of natural beauty or historical interest 2 hours Ner Tamid discussion Scoutcraft - edible wild plants and woodlore 45 minutes Game -- signal do this-do that 30 minutes Free time Evening service (end of Sabbath) Prepare for supper Game -- "Steal the white flag" Patrol campfires (if there is time) Taps
Sunday	Regular Scout Program

The time schedule was purposely left out to adjust to the varying time of sundown through the year. For official Sabbath starting time, check with your rabbi.

PROGRAM D

Friday	Before sundown set up camp and finish supper	
	Sundown - Sabbath services	
	Oneg Shabbat	
	Round robin discussion groups	
	a. How to care for feet while hiking	
	b. How to dress for hikes in different weather	
	c. The importance of patrol meetings and what should happen	
	d. Safety in camp	
	Taps (Not sounded)	
	Saturday	Reveille
Sabbath services (Before services Scouts may have some fruit juice)		
Breakfast		
Scoutcraft - Nature hikes		
including edible wild plants and woodlore		1 1/4 hours
Game -- Grandmother's footsteps		20 minutes
Sleeping Indian		20 minutes
Lunch		
Siesta		
Scoutcraft - First aid round robin discussion group		
(each group 15 minutes - total time 1 hour)		
a. Bleeding and pressure points		
b. Sunstroke and heat exhaustion		
c. Frostbite and shock		
d. Breaks, sprains, and blisters		
Games - patrol cheers		
- each patrol is given 5 minutes to compose new cheer		20 minutes
Signal touch - by patrols		20 minutes
Scoutcraft - map-reading		20 minutes
Compass and compass games		30 minutes
Ner Tamid discussion		40 minutes
Games -- do this-do that		30 minutes played twice
Scoutcraft - woodsman's walk around camp		
Look at the various trees and decide which ones should be thinned out and why. Then choose ten trees and see which patrol has learned the most		30 minutes
Free time		
Evening Service (end of Sabbath)		
Prepare for supper		
Campfire with patrol skits using either the Bible or the Talmud as the source of them.		
Taps		
Sunday	Regular Scout program	

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SCOUT ADVANCEMENT ACTIVITIES

Tenderfoot

Most of the Tenderfoot requirements can be met on the Sabbath, with the following exceptions:

1. The Flag. - The American flag cannot be raised, lowered, or folded. You can explain how to raise and lower the flag, and with the use of prepared charts, you can illustrate the folding procedure. The Scouts can demonstrate this on Sunday. (See page 15.)
2. Knots. - You cannot tie ropes or bandages, but you can explain the use of both.

Second Class Requirements

1. Scout Hiking. - Better done on a day hike (non-Sabbath) than on a camping trip.
2. First Aid. - None of the demonstrations may be done, but the theory can be explained and discussed.
3. Compass. - This can be done and practiced by the use of flash cards prepared beforehand, illustrated on page 16. Each of the "cards" has the compass points on one side (N., NE., E., etc.) and the degree readings on the other (0, 45, 90, etc.). Various games can be played with them.

Game 1

The instructor (patrol leader) puts one of the cards down on the ground and then asks each Scout in his patrol to place his card in the right position in a circle.

Game 2

The instructor holds up one side of the card, such as "NE". and the first Scout must give the correct degree reading such as 45. The procedure can then be reversed by holding up the side that gives the degree readings. The Scout may practice with a compass as long as he does not write.

4. Map Reading - Easily accomplished on the Sabbath.

5. Cook a Hike Meal. - Practically speaking, most of these requirements are impossible for the Orthodox or Conservative Jew on the Sabbath. However, here are some thoughts on cooking in general. The Biblical Jews, as well as the American Indians and pioneers, often used a covered pit fire (food set in coals and covered with a layer of earth). This can be set up on Friday before the Sabbath starts and be ready for lunch on Saturday. For details, consult any good book on camping, as well as our own Scouting literature. In addition, we know that a good bed of coals can remain hot for over 24 hours, but be sure to protect against a fire hazard. Food cannot be cooked but can be reheated by placing in a container that is placed in a pot of water in the bed of coals. This requires real camping skill and should be tried.
6. Wildlife. - Fine activity for the Sabbath but there are some limitations. Many animals, such as snakes, salamanders, snails, etc., live under old logs or stones. These logs may not be picked up or rolled away. The leader should explain the life that might be found there in a way that will stimulate the interest of the Scout so that he will want to return the following day to investigate.

First Class Requirements

1. Equipment for Scout Camping. - This can be done while preparing to leave Friday afternoon and health protection can be done while setting up camp Friday before sundown.
2. First Aid. - No bandages may be tied or dressings applied, but all theories may be discussed, the circulatory system, pressure points, shock and sunstroke, heat exhaustion, frostbite, internal poisoning, etc.
3. Mapping. - With the use of prepared charts such as those on page 18, you can teach them the symbols. However, most of this requirement is best done at another time.
4. Trees and Shrubs. - This is a good activity, but you must remember not to pick up wood specimens or leaves and not to snap twigs.
5. Cooking. - See Second Class requirement for cooking.
6. Edible Wild Plants. - Good activity for the Sabbath, but the Scouts may only observe and identify and not collect.
7. Swimming. - The Scouts may tell what precautions must be taken for a safe swim. As for actual swimming, we quote in part from Rule 2, under "Permitted Acts" on page 2:

"Strenuous games, such as those involving a ball, while not strictly forbidden, are nevertheless not within the spirit of the Sabbath rest."

We suggest that you check with your own rabbi on this point.

8. Signaling. - The use of flags, buzzer, or other signaling devices is not permitted, nor is the writing of messages. The Morse Code can be taught, however, by use of flash cards, as illustrated on page 16. The cards have to be prepared in advance, of course.

9. First Class Camps. - All these requirements can be met on a camping trip by the use of careful planning and good camp techniques. When the Scout sets up his tent on Friday afternoon, he must be sure it is pitched correctly, because if the tent should fall down, it may not be "fixed" on the Sabbath. The weekend camping trip should leave early enough on Friday so that the Scouts can set up camp and have supper before sundown. If the Scouts have to leave school a little early, arrange to have the rabbi send a note to school explaining that this is due to religious observance.

Onward to Eagle and Merit Badge Programs

The same method of careful planning and observance of the rules will enable the Scouts to pass parts of the requirements of many of the outdoor merit badges.

GAMES, STUNTS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

We all know that if a Scout is to enjoy any activity, he should have fun. Purely Scouting activities should and can be fun as well as educational. However, let us not overlook the fun games that have relatively little instructional value. Before we leave the field of education, let us not forget the religious program, which in this case is the Ner Tamid. The Sabbath is one of the best opportunities and certainly the best atmosphere to teach the requirements for the Ner Tamid emblem.

The following games and stunts have been taken from the Patrol Leader's Handbook:

Compass Change

The Laughing Handkerchief

Sleeping Indian - This has to be modified by having the "Indian" either close his eyes or by preparing the knotted blindfold before sundown on Friday.

Hot or Cold

Do This-Do That

Ringleader

Guess What

Songs, cheers, and skits. - By all means. In fact, to continue the feeling of the Sabbath, some of the skits might be taken directly from the Talmud or even some of the stories related to the religious holidays.

Board of Review. - If the troop has enough adults on its camping trip a Saturday afternoon board of review may be scheduled. The writing of the records will have to be postponed until after sundown.

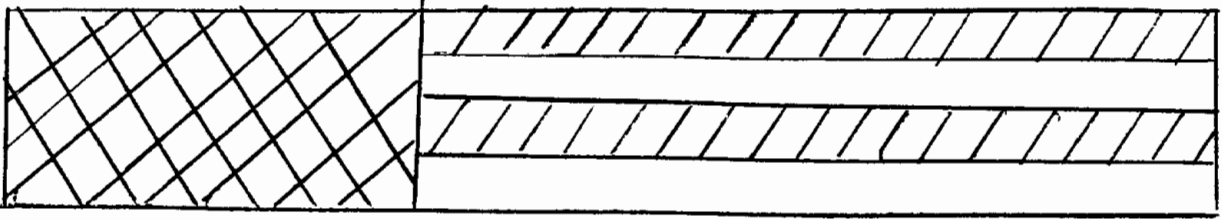
Visits. - If there is a place of historical interest or natural beauty close by, you may hike your troop there and make an afternoon of it. If the historical spot is one that requires an entrance fee, you will have to find some other place, since the Scout cannot handle money. If the place has free admission, but sells souvenirs, remind the Scouts beforehand that they cannot handle money.

Councils and Planning. - Saturday afternoon is also a good time for a patrol leader's council or a patrol planning session. Once again, we caution you about not writing.

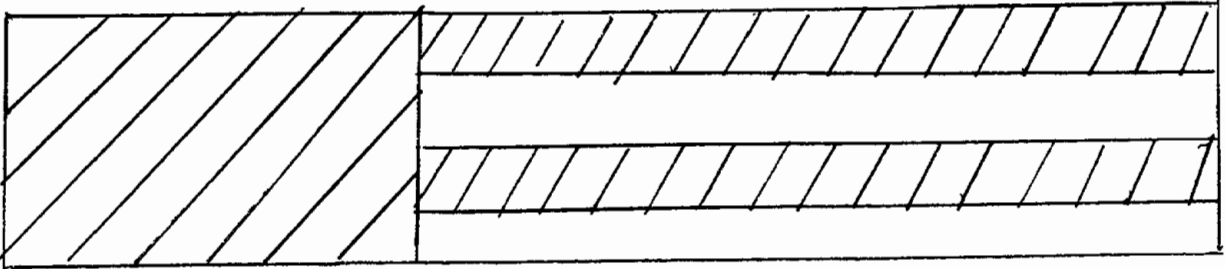
Discussions. - All kinds of discussion groups are in order; care of the feet while hiking, the behavior of Scouts in public conveyances, summer camp plans, etc. In fact, you might set up a round robin, with three or four discussion leaders and have the patrols rotate leaders and subjects.

Star Hikes. - On Friday night a star hike would be a good activity. Be sure to point out the North Star and its significance in direction finding.

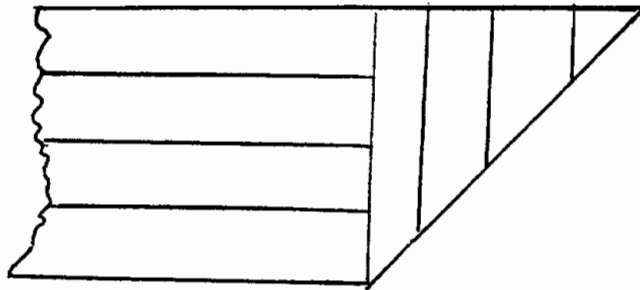
Folding The American Flag



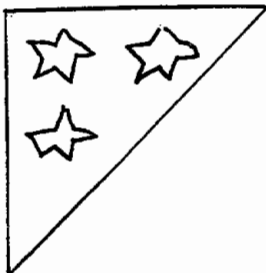
Step 1. Fold in quarters



Step 2. Fold into a "cocked hat"



Step 3. Looks like this

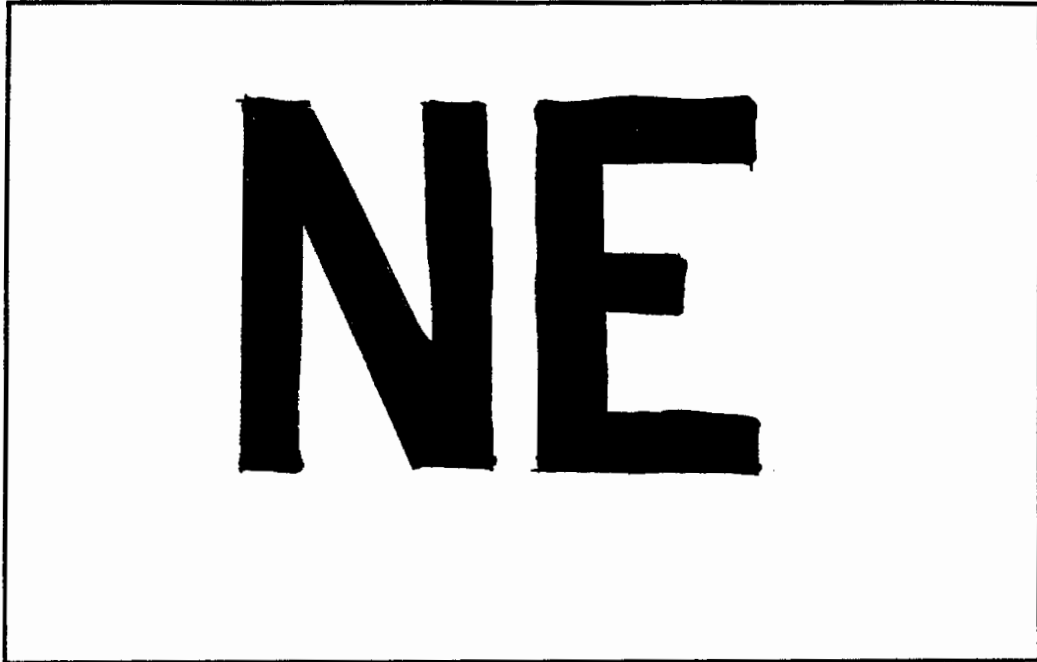


This should be a 12" x 18" chart.

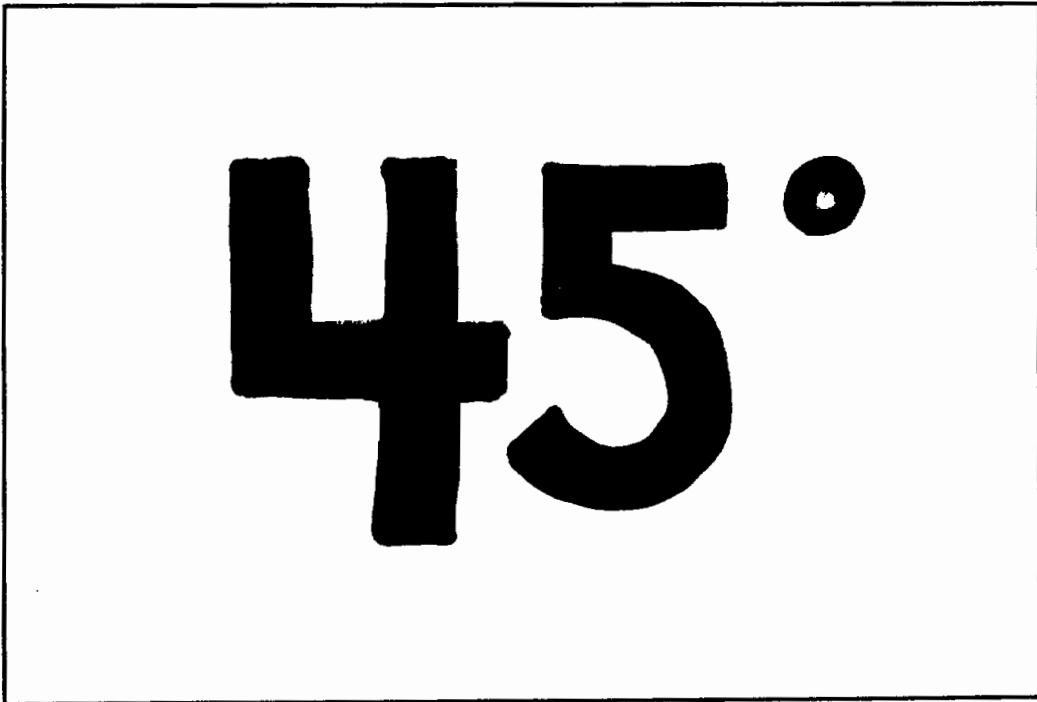
COMPASS FLASH CARDS

One of a set of eight

Front



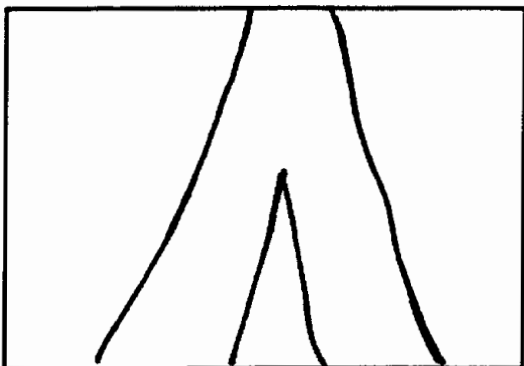
Back



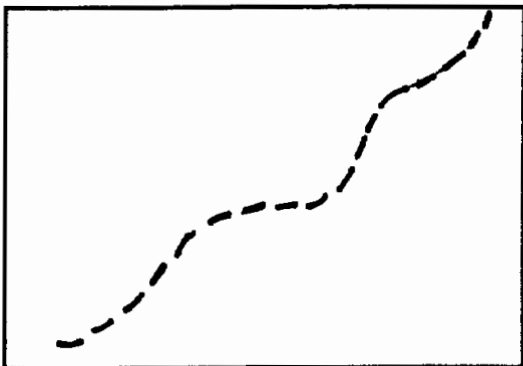
Cards should be 8" x 10"

MAP READING

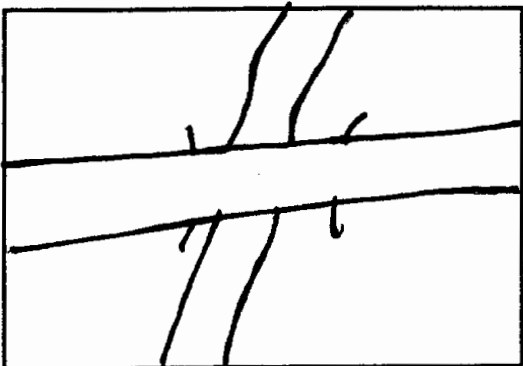
Conventional Signs



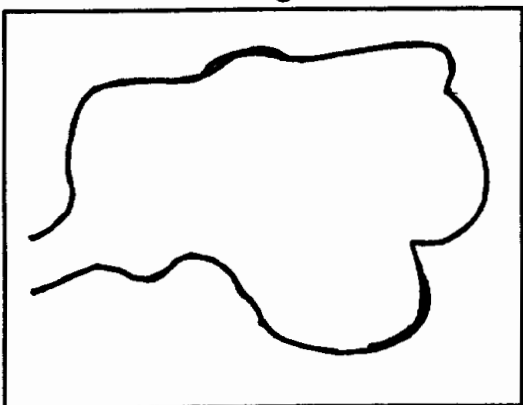
Good Motor Road



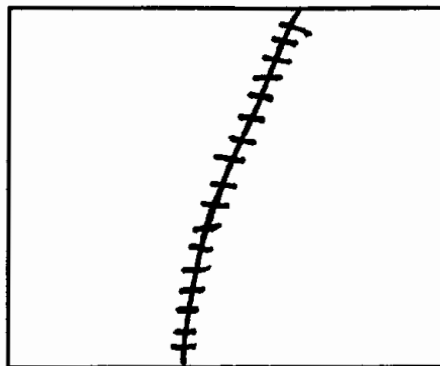
Pack Trail



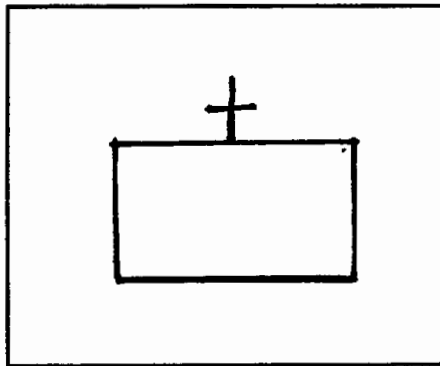
Bridge



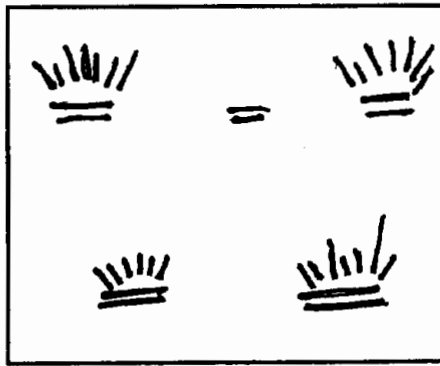
Lake



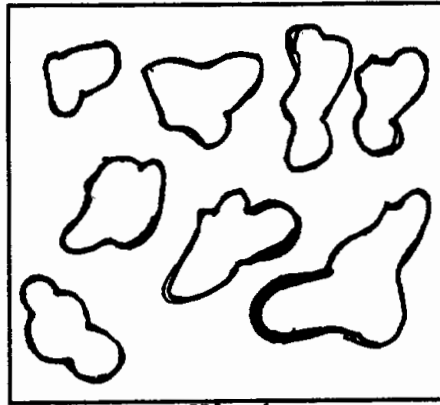
Railroad



Church



Marsh

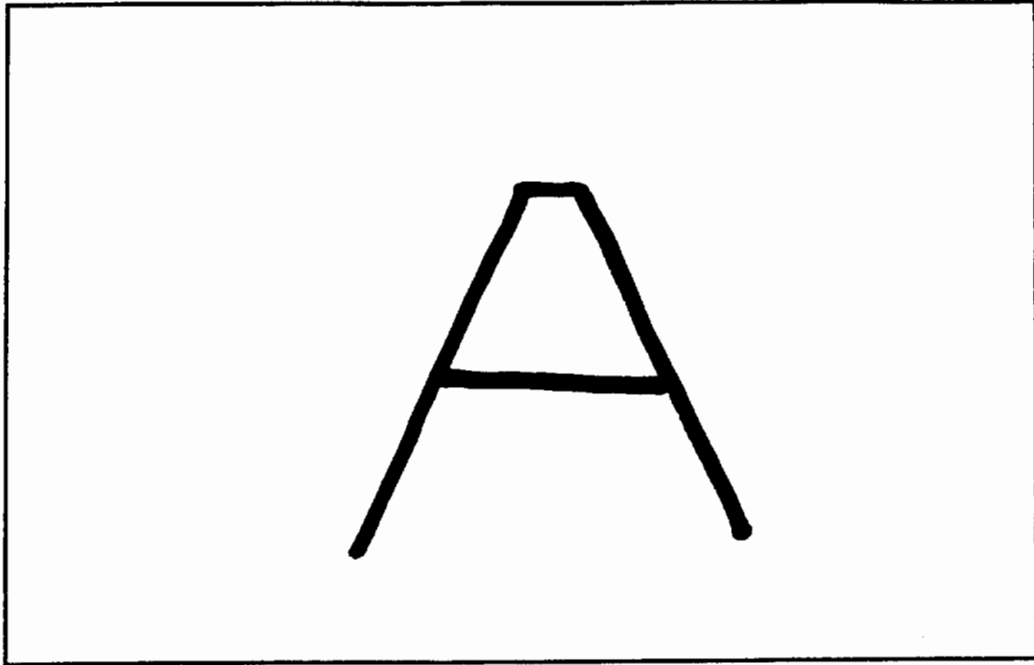


Woods

Several charts needed
At least 12" x 18"

MORSE CODE

Front



Back



Flash Cards

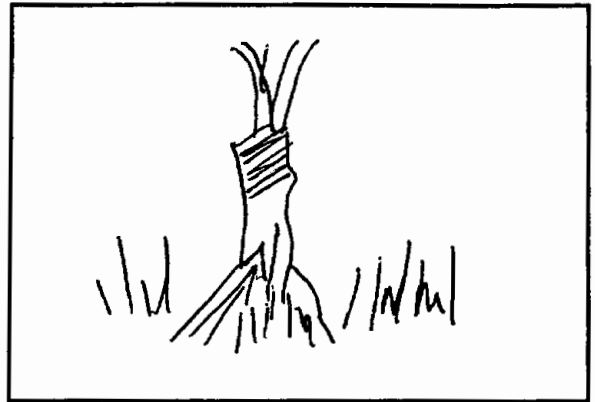
36 Needed

Cards should be 8" x 10"

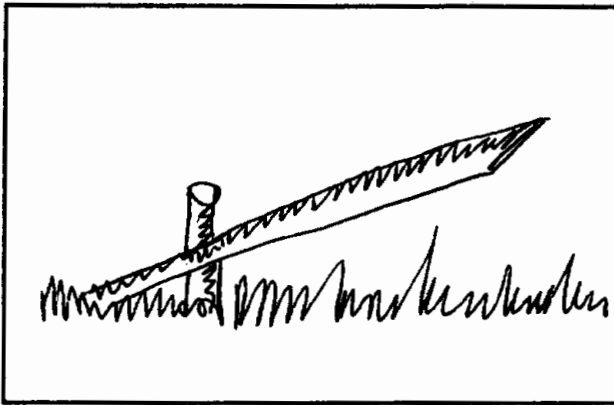
TRACKING SIGNS



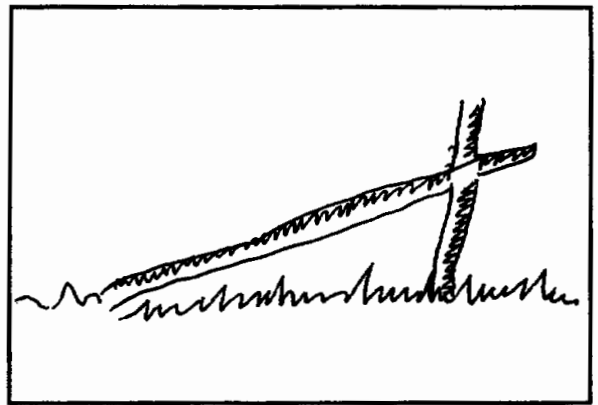
This is the Road



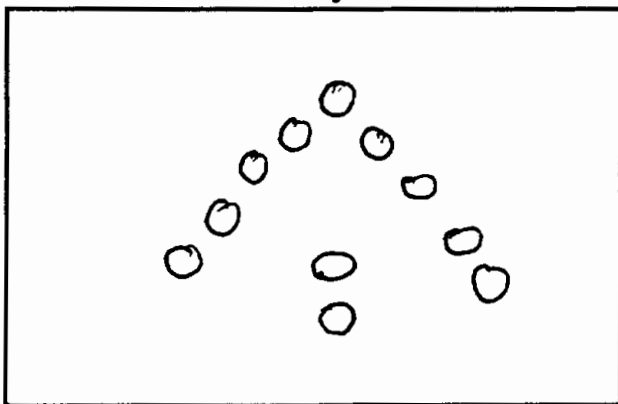
This is the Road



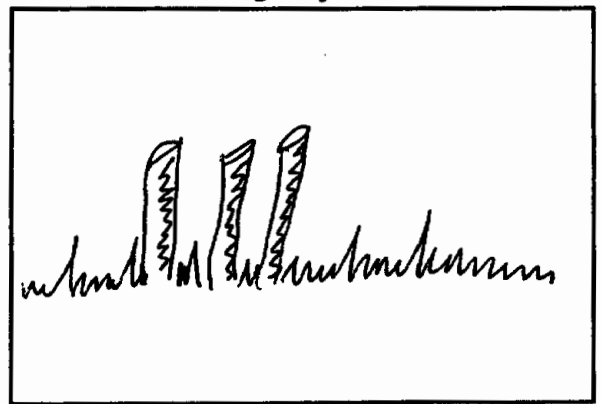
Short way to -



Long way to -



This way



Danger

Flash Cards

8" x 10"

REFERENCES

1. Boy Scout Handbook
2. Scout Fieldbook
3. Patrol Leader's Handbook
4. Scoutmaster's Handbook
5. Ner Tamid Record Book
6. Ner Tamid Guide for Boy Scouts and Explorers
7. Prayer Book for Summer Camps - Prayer Book Press
8. Jewish Religious Service for Boy Scouts and Explorers