

## Singing

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### Introduction

Singing is fun. Singing is a basic, flexible tool if used by sensitive, imaginative Leaders. Most Keas and Cubs will take to singing quite readily as long as they are not singled out to sing a solo.

Scouts and Venturers can be more of a challenge and leaders may need a reason such as a campfire, to get them involved.

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### Singing is important

We don't really sing enough and where youth members seem to dislike singing, it is often due to the attitude and approach of the adult leaders. There is quite a bit of singing in the National Programmes. Please try the songs. In fact use singsongs regularly but don't have a campfire - leave that for a special occasion such as a camp.

- Many of the songs are well known songs but make a practice of learning one or two new ones.
  - *Singsongs are important activities whilst on an expedition. Introduce singing while sitting around the cooking fire after dishes are done, while waiting for transport or just finishing off a very pleasant and quiet evening.*
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### Developing singing

Leadership is necessary. The leader should be alert to provide the right opportunity by making a direct suggestion - "Let's have a singsong" or pass out song sheets and let the youth members choose the songs.

Play recordings of the songs so that they can pick up the tunes. Sing along with the recording - this is the answer for the Leaders who can't keep a tune in their heads.

Identify youth members who can sing or play a musical instrument and see if they can give a lead.

*If you have limited music ability, obtain community support to develop singing. There are bound to be parents available to help teaching new songs. You usually just have to ask.*

Encourage Sixers and Patrol Leaders to teach and lead their team members in a song. Of course the right climate has to be established because a boy or girl who is singled out to sing could be embarrassed.

*Use a search engine on the internet and look for "SCOUT SONGS". Many have sound tracks you can listen to and learn from.*

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### Types of songs

The following types of songs are all popular.

- Songs with a chorus.
  - Simple rounds;
  - Scout Campfire songs;
  - Repetitive songs;
  - Action songs;
  - Quiet songs.
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## Singing, Continued

### International Songs

Music from other lands gives fresh emphasis to the fact that SCOUTS is international. These songs can be linked with customs, food, dances, or in a theme activity. Modern music is a very important part of our time - use it to advantage. A Leader does not have to be a singer or a musician. Involve parents with these skills.

### How to teach songs

Sing a song through so that the youth members get the spirit of it. Teach one line at a time, join two lines together, finally the whole verse.

Rhythm instruments add a new dimension to singing. A handcraft session for Keas and Cubs could be put to good purpose by making a range of percussion instruments.

Encourage ingenuity on the part of Cubs. Make sure that the instruments are readily accessible when a request for a singsong comes up. Cubs who can play a recorder should be encouraged to learn the tunes of Cub songs.

Use local resource people; record the tune on a cassette, put the words on a chart and you are in business. Remember, the Right Royal Rovers in Auckland have a Scout Songs CD for sale that is ideal for teaching campfire songs.



### Camp fires

It is better to have the campfire outside and keep it small. A bonfire is not a campfire as it's too hot and can become hard to control. Aim to have the fire reduced to just a few embers that can be put out with a bucket of water at the end of 30 or 40 minutes. See the section on Ceremonies in the Initial Training workbook.

#### Size of a campfire

About 80cm x 80cm and 60 cm high at the most for about 30 people. Make it smaller if there are less people.

#### Putting out the campfire

Some traditions say someone must always sit by the fire until it dies out. That's OK if you don't have water to put out the last of the embers, but being practical about it, you have youth members to get to bed and don't have time to sit up until midnight watching to make sure the embers don't flare up and start a grass or bushfire.

If you do have to work indoors, an artificial fire or a few candles create a satisfactory atmosphere. Here are some suggestions.

- Take precautions against the fire spreading.
- Tell the youth members what camp fires are all about, that they are places where people gather together to entertain and sing. Fun and friendship is what campfires are about.
- A camp fire should not be all songs. Have some games, stunts and always a yarn.
- A musical instrument is a help.
- Always work towards a quiet ending and finish with a prayer.
- Thirty minutes is usually sufficient and certainly no longer than forty-five minutes.



Attend a Campfire Leaders Course to learn more about organising and leading campfires.

