



VENTURING · BSA

# Venturing Uniforming Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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Because of the flexibility of Venturing uniforms over those for Cub/Boy/Varsity Scouts, the issue of what is/is not 'proper' Venturing uniforms comes up too frequently on-line. This FAQ file tries to answer those questions. I've tried to make it clear in this file as to when I am stating written BSA policy and when I am stating my opinion. Do not confuse the two.

**Throughout this document, Official BSA policy is shown in this format.**

The 'Official' word on Venturing uniforms comes from the *Venturing Reference Guide*, included with the *Venturer/Ranger Handbook* (#33494B, 2005 Printing) on pages 78-95 (Venturer half) and *Venturing Leader Manual* (#34655D, 2003 printing) on pages 328-336. The current version from the *Venturer Handbook* (pg 93-94) and *Venturing Leader Manual* (pg 335) says:

**Uniforms and Insignia (BSA). The BSA green Venturing shirt is available for wear by Venturers and adult leaders. The green Venturing short-sleeve shirt with green shoulder loops will be worn with charcoal gray shorts or long pants as the recommended field uniform for Venturers. *Male and female Venturers should not wear the BSA tan shirt with green shoulder loops.* Existing insignia placement policies related to BSA uniforms shall apply to the green Venturing shirt. Crews choosing to wear a patch related to their specialty may do so on the right shoulder sleeve. District, division, council, and national adult leaders related to Venturing may wear the green, silver, or gold shoulder loops with the green Venturing shirt. Sea Scouts may choose to wear nautical-style uniforms using Sea Scouting insignia available from the BSA Supply Division. For further information on BSA uniforms and insignia, contact your BSA local council or refer to the *Venturer Handbook*. A uniform, if any, is the choice of the crew.**

This information is ALSO reiterated, slightly differently, on page 6 of the *Venturer Handbook* and page 9 of the *Venturing Leader Manual*.

Information on proper insignia placement may be found in the current *Insignia Guide* (#33066, 2006 revision). This version finally adds several items missing from previous versions, but still leaves out several new items.

Please note that Sea Scout uniforms are a bit more complex than those of Venturers. For information on those uniforms, please see the current *Sea Scout Manual* (#33239C, 2002 printing). The *Insignia Guide* should not be consulted for this information.

**1. Can Crews choose their own uniform?**

Yes. If Crews do not want the recommended uniform (see below), they can come up with their own, such as t-shirts or polo shirts with a Crew design on it (YES, they can use the Venturing logo). National also makes Venturing t-shirts and a polo shirt. Or they can choose no uniform. Be aware that the BSA tan shirt is not to be used by Venturers.

**2. Can Crews choose not to have a uniform?**

Yes. However, they should consider some means of identifying themselves as a group. This can be as simple as wearing the Venturing pin or Venturing t-shirts. National makes Venturing t-shirts and a polo shirt. These are all options.

**3. What is the Official BSA Uniform for Venturers?**

The 'recommended' BSA uniform is the forest green Venturing shirt (with green, silver or gold shoulder loops as appropriate) with charcoal gray shorts or pants. As it's recommended, Crews do not have to choose this as their uniform, but if you are at an event where BSA uniforms are expected (i.e. OA events, council or national events like Jamborees, etc.), you should have and wear it. However, you must follow proper insignia placement with this shirt, including wearing the green loops (or silver or gold loops if that's appropriate for you). Insignia placement is pretty much universal, regardless of the program, youth/adult, or level of scouting.

I recommend that if Crews choose not to use the green shirt as their official crew uniform, that they allow those crew members (youth and adults) who are involved with other scouting activities (OA, council events, national events) to wear it. Wearing the green/gray Venturing uniform at such events is a great way of keeping Venturing 'alive' for others in scouting, and has a greater impact than wearing crew t-shirts/polo shirts.

**4. Can I (or our Crew) choose not wear the green loops on the green shirt?**

No. It specifically states that green loops will be worn with the green shirt. You can't leave them off. Despite the policy of the 'crew chooses their uniform', you must still follow BSA insignia rules with official BSA uniforms, including the green shirt.

Some seem to think wearing green loops is silly on a green shirt, but they forget that there are 3 different loops that can be worn on the shirt: green (for those involved in a crew),

silver (for those working in district/council positions), or gold (for those working in area/regional/national positions). The green shirt indicates you are involved with the Venturing PROGRAM. The loops indicate the level (crew, district/council, or area/regional/national) where you are involved.

**5. Can I (or our Crew) choose to wear other color pants with the green shirt?**

No. It specifically states that charcoal gray shorts or pants are to be worn. These do NOT need to be the ones made by National Supply. There are many sources for charcoal gray shorts/pants, many better than the ones supplied by National. Both Cabela's and Bass Pro Shop have several styles of shorts, pants, and zipoffs in charcoal gray at reasonable prices.

That said, I doubt that most will get upset if your crew chooses a different color. As some Venturers (and leaders) are Boy Scouts or former Boy Scouts, they probably have the BSA khaki pants and want to keep wearing them. Not proper, but so what? I would not recommend going out and purchasing new BSA khaki pants to wear, however.

**6. Can Venturers choose to wear the tan shirt with green loops?**

No. The literature clearly states that Venturers (i.e. the youth) cannot wear the tan BSA uniform. This is stated both in the Venturing Reference Guide (see above for the quote) AND the *Insignia Guide*.

Again, I understand that if you have Venturers who are former Boy Scouts that they would want to reuse their tan uniforms with the green loops. But National does not want that. In fact, this policy was actually started under Explorers back in 1995 when they brought back the green shirt for the second time. That said, I don't get too upset about it, as I understand the economic reasons to reuse the shirts, but would NOT recommend crews or Venturers purchasing new tan shirts to wear.

**7. Can adults choose to wear the tan shirt with green loops?**

No.

In previous versions of this FAQ, I gave the answer of 'yes'. Why? Well, at first it was not clear that adults couldn't wear the tan shirt with green loops. The official statement in the Venturing Reference Guide was adamant that youth could not wear tan shirts, but didn't include adults. At the time, the *Insignia Guide* was silent on the matter. However, in current versions of the *Insignia Guide*, it states that the green Venturing loops are not to be worn on tan shirts. So this would indicate that this option is no longer valid.

I have found that most adults involved with Venturing wear the green shirt (and those in Sea Scouts wear the appropriate Sea Scout uniform) rather than the tan. Again, as with Venturers, I understand that some adults now involved in Venturing were involved in other areas of scouting and may want to reuse their tan uniforms. That is fine, but I would

recommend adults in Venturing purchase new shirts to get the green ones. And no one should feel they are obligated to get tan for any reason! The green shirt is an official BSA uniform. You may wear it at Wood Badge and Jamborees. Don't let anyone tell you that you have to wear a tan BSA uniform. Also, adults (and Venturers) wearing the appropriate Venturing/Sea Scout uniforms is a great way to promote the program!

**8. Can I wear the Eagle Badge (or other Boy Scout Rank patches) on my green shirt?**

Yes. The *Venturer Handbook* states that the Eagle Badge (the patch) may be worn on the green shirt by Venturers until they are 21. See pg 64. Both the *Venturer Handbook* and the *Insignia Guide* state that Boy Scout Rank patches may be worn on the green shirt, as well as the Arrow of Light patch.

Personally, I recommend that Venturers should wear the Eagle and AOL (Arrow of Light) knots instead of the patches, regardless of their age. These can be found with the forest green background from other sources. Some youth do this, btw. But I leave it up to each Venturer to make their own choice in this matter. Information on the National Venturing Cabinet site also recommends wearing the knot, for those Venturers over 18.

**9. Can a Venturer wear the Silver Award Knot?**

Yes. As there is no 'informal' way to indicate they have earned the award (i.e. there is no Silver Award patch), they can wear the knot.

Remember, knots are not only for adults.

**10. Can the Bronze Awards or the Gold Award ribbon be worn after turning 21?**

No. Like other youth awards, they should be removed after turning 21. If earned, the Silver Award knot is worn.

**11. Can the Ranger Award bar be worn after turning 21?**

Yes. This is a permanent award, much like the knots.

**12. Can a female Venturer wear the Religious Award knot? Even if it's for an award earned as a Girl Scout?**

Yes. Remember that the BSA does NOT administer the Religious Awards program. It administered by the churches and setup such that any youth, regardless of youth organization, can earn them. The knot just indicates the youth has earned an award. Even if it was earned as a Girl Scout (or Camp Fire Girl, or as a member of their church's youth group) that should not matter. However, the miniature pins worn on the knot are only appropriate for those who have earned the award as a Cub Scout, Webelos Scout, or Boy Scout.

**13. Can our female Venturers who have earned the Girl Scout Silver and Gold Awards wear them on their Venturing green shirt?**

This is kind of a gray area. The Girl Scout Silver and Gold Awards would fall under the heading of 'awards from other scout associations'. There is no proper placement for them per say, as the *Insignia Guide* deals more with knots or knot-like awards from other associations. Most likely the best place to wear them would be the left pocket flap (same as the Ranger bar) or left pocket itself. Have your Crew decide what will be the standard for them. One person has created a knot for the GS Gold Award, and someone has claimed that BSA National has 'approved' this knot (no idea who/what group at National did so). That is another alternative.

**14. Can I wear my OA flap on my Venturing uniform (i.e. green shirt)? My crew wants to say I can't, since our female Venturers can't join the OA.**

Regardless of the fact that Venturers cannot be elected into the OA as Venturers (they can be elected in as Boy Scouts or Varsity Scouts, or as adult leaders of Boy Scout Troops or Varsity Scout Teams if they meet the requirements for YOUTH membership), the OA flap may be worn on the green Venturing shirt. This is stated in the FAQ list at the National OA website. Personally, I feel that it is inappropriate for a crew to decide not to allow members to wear the flap. BSA Uniforming policies allow it, and that's that. Should a Venturer or Venturing adult choose not to wear the flap, that is their choice. But no one should be barred from wearing it.

**15. What is this 'crew designed patch' that they wear on the right sleeve that is 'related to their specialty'?**

This is what the Venturing Reference Guide says:

**Emblems: Venturing Crews are encouraged to design their own identifying emblems. A Crew emblem is not limited in size, but if worn on the sleeve of an official BSA uniform shirt or jacket, it may not be more than 3 inches in diameter and worn 2 inches below the shoulder seam on the right sleeve. Crew emblem designs should be approved by the BSA local council before they are ordered.**

This is something that Venturing continued from Exploring, and which Exploring picked up from Sea Scouts. The idea is to have a design showing their specialty and Crew number. It could include their sponsor name/logo if the sponsor allows, and the council approves it. So you could have a youth ministries crew have a specialty patch with their church's logo and crew number. Or a Native American culture crew with a native dancer or craft item plus crew number. Approval is needed so you don't create some design that may be inappropriate. You are wearing this on a BSA uniform, remember. Size limitations only apply if you want to wear in on your green shirts.

Please understand that the purpose of this patch is to symbolize your crew, NOT to advertise for your sponsor/chartering organization.

This crew-designed patch replaces the generic Venturing patch on the right sleeve.

**16. Can youth on camp staff, district or council committees wear silver loops?**

Venturers and Venturing adults who work on the district, council and national levels should wear the appropriate green, silver or gold shoulder loops with the green Venturing shirt that corresponds to the office insignia on their sleeve (e.g., crew president, district committee, council committee, etc.) Loops matching the insignia are important for a complete uniform.

**17. Can our Venture Patrol wear the green shirt? The green loops?**

No. Members of Venture Patrols are Boy Scouts, and as such wear the tan Boy Scout uniform with the red loops. The only thing they wear to indicate membership in the Venture Patrol is the 'Venture' shirt strip. This is clearly shown in the current *Boy Scout Handbook* and *Insignia Guide*, and has been the policy since the Venture program was created back in 1989. . They also cannot wear the green loops with the tan shirt.

**18. Can any Boy Scout or Boy Scout leader wear the green shirt with red loops?**

No. The green shirt is only for Venturing. Boy Scouts and anyone involved in other programs may not wear it. The days when Boy Scouts could wear the green shirt are long over.

**19. I have boys in my troop who are dual registered as Venturers. What can they wear on their Boy Scout uniform to indicate they are Venturers? Can they use the 'Venture' strip for this? The green loops on their Boy Scout uniform?**

Sorry, but there is nothing that a Boy Scout can wear on their Boy Scout uniform to indicate they are also Venturers. The 'Venture' strip is for use by members of Venture Patrols, not Venturers. (see question #17). Use of the green loops by Boy Scouts on the tan uniform is also incorrect. (again, see question #17) Should a boy earn the Venturing Silver Award, they can wear the knot on their Boy Scout uniform (uncertain about the Bronze/Gold ribbons or the Ranger Bar, but I wouldn't care if a boy did wear them), but that's it in terms of items that can transfer over.

**20. Where do I wear the Powder Horn award? Can I wear it wherever I want? I was told there is no set location for it.**

Per both the *Insignia Guide* (see the latest edition) and the PH Staff Guide, it's worn on the left pocket, hanging from the button. Some female Scouters are uncomfortable wearing it there, and so will hang it from other locations on their uniform or instead wear the small PH pin. If you have a non-BSA uniform (t-shirt, polo shirt), wear the small

Powder Horn pin wherever you want.

**21. Can adults wear the Kodiak medal? The VLSC patch?**

Not really. The Kodiak medal is considered a youth award, and should not be worn by adults. Those adults who have either gone thru a Kodiak Course Director Conference or completed all the commissions in a Kodiak course, have earned the award (and should be presented with the items), but should not wear it. An exception is made for those adults who have earned it and are promoting an upcoming Kodiak course they will be directing or staffing.

The VLSC patch again is a youth award. Adults really shouldn't wear it. Hopefully, they have completed basic training and should be wearing the Trained strip instead.

**22. Where do I wear the Kodiak medal? Kodiak patch?**

Like the Powder Horn medal, the Kodiak medal is worn on the left pocket, hanging from the button. As youth can not receive the PH medal, and as (for the most part) adults do not wear the Kodiak medal, there is no conflict.

As to the Kodiak patch (including the staff patch). The right pocket would be an appropriate location. I feel that wearing it on the left pocket, as an alternate to wearing the medal is also ok (if you wear the patch there, don't wear the medal). Others disagree. Wearing it on the left sleeve in place of an office patch is inappropriate. It's not an office patch. Wearing it above the right pocket is also inappropriate. That area is reserved for Jamboree patches, and this is not a Jamboree patch. The right sleeve would also be inappropriate.

**23. As Crews can determine their own uniform, can my crew decide what is worn where on the green Venturing uniform? Can we create our own unique shoulder loops?**

No. While crews can determine their own uniform, and if they decide on using non-BSA clothing as their uniform, they can put insignia wherever they want (most seem to follow insignia placement). However, when it comes to the green Venturing shirt, the policy is clear: 'Existing insignia placement policies related to BSA uniforms shall apply to the green Venturing shirt.' This means that you will wear the insignia in its proper place, including wearing the appropriate shoulder loops (green, silver, or gold). Thus creating your own unique crew shoulder loops is incorrect. Putting insignia in other places on the uniform is incorrect. If your crew does not know where things are worn, they should check the literature (both the *Venturer Handbook* and *Venturing Leader Guide* have basic insignia placement information), or get a copy of the *Insignia Guide*.