

Choice 3: The Obligations of an Eagle Scout

Becoming an Eagle Scout is a great accomplishment; being an Eagle Scout is a great responsibility. The Scout Oath and Scout Law take on new meaning; the motto and slogan take on new urgency.

The Eagle's first obligation is to live with honor. He is a marked man, a leader; for good or ill, people will follow the example he sets. He would sooner give up anything than his reputation and good name. As Shakespeare said, "Mine honour is my life; both grow in one. Take honour from me, and my life is done." The white of the Eagle badge represents honor.

The second obligation of an Eagle Scout is to be loyal. As a follower, he promised to be loyal to those above him. Now, as a leader, he must also be loyal to those below him, treating them as he would want to be treated. And he must also be loyal to his ideals, not letting others sway him from his course. The blue of the Eagle badge represents loyalty.

The Eagle Scout's third obligation is to be courageous. Stepping into his new role as a leader, he will face many challenges and obstacles. A ship in the harbor is safe, but that's not what ships are for. The Eagle must have the courage to do what is right, no matter what other people do or say. The red of the Eagle badge represents courage.

The fourth obligation of an Eagle Scout is to serve others, for a leader is above all a servant. The practice of the daily good turn leads the Eagle to a lifetime of service. He knows that only in giving of himself does he give anything of value. Just as it always has, the scroll on his badge represents service.

The final obligation of an Eagle Scout is to have vision. As a leader, he must now blaze his own trail. Just as a bald eagle soaring high above the ground can look far into the distance, so too the Eagle Scout must look far into the future. Many people will follow him; only with vision will he lead them in the right direction. The silver eagle hanging from his badge reminds the Eagle Scout of vision.

These then are the obligations of the Eagle Scout: honor, loyalty, courage, service, and vision. With these qualities, he can lead his troop, his community, his nation toward a better tomorrow.