



Pinewood Derby

Hosting Your 2021 Race

Start Your Engines. The Race is On!

The pinewood derby is often the highlight event of the year for the Cubs in your pack. As with most things, we know that your pack's program plans have probably changed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but given a little planning and creativity, the event your Cubs look forward to all year can still happen.

There are a couple of ways to make this favorite Cub Scout event happen, each with their advantages and disadvantages depending on the comfort level and necessary precautions to hold the event. To decide which is best for your unit, first and foremost, be sure to follow the guidelines set out by your local county and the state. You can find a link to these guidelines on our [Covid-19 Scouting Impact and News](#) page on our council website. Understanding what is necessary for in person meetings is important before making the decision to host an in-person event.

Unit Restart Checklist

1. Make A Unit Plan
2. Communicate With Your Unit
3. Have Fun and Safe Meetings
4. Review and Adjust

Download a copy of the Unit Restart Guidebook [here](#).

General Pinewood Derby Tips

- **Recruit a team to plan the event.** This team will handle the list of to-dos and make sure that everything gets done on time. Depending on the size of your event, this can be anywhere from two to six people. If you can, grab a mix of veteran Derby-goers and newbies so that you can keep things fresh with new ideas and pull in best practices from past Pinewood Derbies. Also, it never hurts to name your team and assign a hashtag to them for social media sharing purposes.
- **Make a list of essential to-do's that cover the event from start to finish.** This is crucial to making this whole shindig run smoothly. Get the ideas out of your head and onto paper so that it is easy to see what needs to get done and where there may be gaps in planning. It also makes it easy to spread the workload evenly across your task force team.
- **Assign specific tasks to your team members.** After you have created your list of essentials, re-review everything and put names and deadlines next to each line item. Again, this makes it easy to check in with everyone. Be sure to share the essentials list with your Cubmaster as well, so they can add if need-be and to keep them in the know (if they are not at your planning party).
- **Make a day of schedule with stage notes of who is doing what to make the event run smoothly.**
- **Download a pinewood derby checklist [here](#).**

A Virtual Derby

1. **Choose a virtual platform.** With Zoom, you can host free meetings for up to 40 minutes, but chances are, someone in your pack or den has a paid account that can host if you need longer.
2. **Pick the race location with care.** Be sure to have a set-up that is brightly lit and where the camera has a great view of the racetrack. You'll need a big space. If possible, try to find an outdoor space, like a church parking lot, to make it safer for the hosts.
3. **Use good AV equipment.** A computer with a newer camera can provide better sound quality; use headphones with a built-in speaker so the host can move around and emcee it up from all areas of the track. To up the quality of experience even more for your Scouts, use multiple cameras – one on the finish line and one taking in the entire track.
4. **Set up strong logistics.**
 - Set a specific drop-off date for car impound with specific times for each family to drop off.
 - Create a space for cars to be dropped off with no contact – use a drop box or tray for families to put their cars in and use gloves or sanitize cards for all car handling.
5. **Plan an engaging, fun virtual program**
 - Virtual programs need lots of Cub engagement, so race countdowns, Zoom polls and quizzes mid race, cheers, songs, and skits help keep them engaged between races and during set-up.
 - Schedule the races so that families know when they are racing and when to tune in.
 - Spreadsheet brackets or other score keeping software are available through various websites. You can stream on a second computer and spotlight as needed the scoreboard to breakup the action.
 - Using spotlight is a great way to highlight the track, the emcee, or the scoreboard and make the show feel like a real race on tv by providing multiple camera angles. You can use multiple camera, phones, ipads or laptops logged in to the meeting to create the views you are looking for
 - Be sure your show team practices in advance to make sure everything works and sounds okay.
6. **Keep safety in mind!** Be sure to have a moderator for your zoom event and only share the race login info with those who need to know. Do not post zoom credentials publicly and use a meeting password! For more details on digital safety, visit the [Digital Safety](#) page.

A Social Distanced Derby

1. **Review the in-person meeting requirements for your county and state.** Before hosting your event, its important to know the requirements for all youth activities in your county and for the state. You can find a link to these guidelines on our [Covid-19 Scouting Impact and News](#) page on our council website. Before resuming in person meetings, it is important to develop a plan to conduct safer meetings.
2. **Select your location carefully.** Perhaps your local park has an area large enough to accommodate a race with lots of space to socially distance or a local church parking lot.
3. **Use cones, markers or sidewalk chalk** to set up family pods that are 6 feet apart – this will allow for stress-free watching. We also highly recommend families bringing camp chairs to help everyone stay in their watch pods. It is important to note that during Tier 1 (Purple) or some individual counties may have a requirement for no parent participation. For those counties, we recommend sticking to a virtual race or a drop off event for each den.
4. **Schedule race times by small groups or dens.** In-person activities are allowed with cohorts of 16 or less scouts and leaders, so scheduling a set time for each den is important. Den cohorts should never be within 25 feet of each other.
5. **Just like with all Pinewood Derby races, logistics are important.** Decide ahead of time on how you are managing the drop-off of cars. You can address this like the virtual event and have a drop-off point for cars ahead if time, and then one person can handle the cars while wearing gloves. The race operations team should be in charge of racing the cars from start to finish.
6. **Include a virtual option.** All families may not be comfortable with an in-person race, so having a way families can participate virtually is important. See the virtual derby for more tips.
7. **Plan an engaging, fun program.** Socially distance programs need lots of Cub engagement, so race antics, skits or other games are important. Keep cheers, shouting and singing to a minimum as it may be discouraged by your county or state guidelines.