

Pinewood Derby Tips

- Advertise to your Pack early (even if you don't yet have a specific date picked).
- Hand out the car kits early enough to give the scouts time to build their car. (Remind them often as the race date gets closer, so the project doesn't end up on the back burner too long.)
- Handout the rules for your Derby when you hand out the car kits. (Best to use a copy of the District/Council rules as a base.) It isn't a good idea to make up rules at the Derby.
- Some Packs offer a car-building workshop where kids and dads with less tools or skills can get help.
- Reserve a track if your Pack doesn't have one.

At the Derby:

- Have a **Tune up Table**. There are always last minute repairs that need to be made. Have a hot glue gun setup and maybe a cordless drill for quick repairs, adding weight, etc.
- Have a **Check in Table** to weigh the cars and make sure they are legal based on your rules.
- Have a **Staging Table** to store the cars after they have been checked in.
- Start with a **flag ceremony**. (Use the same meeting format as you normal Pack meetings.)
- Involve the other kids in the races...
 - Have the scouts carry their own car to the track at the start of their race, then have them pick it up from the finish line and return it to the staging table after the race.
 - Have all the scouts yell; On your mark, get set, GO! to start each race.
 - Have "On deck" chairs setup near the front of the track. Have the announcer call the names for the next race while the current race is getting ready.
 - Other suggestions?:
- Everyone races Everyone (by Den). (For two-lane tracks.) Even the slowest cars get to race a lot.
 - Avoid single or double elimination brackets. (Slow cars race once or twice and are done.)
 - Unless you have a huge number of scouts, it is best to let every car race against every car.
 - Everyone against everyone charts are easy to setup on the fly. (See sample charts)
 - If a scout comes late, simply add another line to the chart and include him in the races.
- Volunteers:
 - **Announcer** (Preferably with a microphone).
 - **Finish Line Judges**. Even if you use an electronic finish line, you will need at least one judge to call out the winner to the person that is recording the results on the chart. Have two judges if you don't have an electronic finish line.
 - The **Start Gate Operator** makes sure the cars are placed correctly and starts the race when the judges are ready. (Have the scouts yell out, On your mark, get set, GO! to start each race.)
 - The **Chart Recorder** tells the announcer which scouts are racing and who is on deck, in addition to recording the winners of each race. The chart recorder can also run the check in table before the races, or you can have a separate **volunteer for the check in table**.
- Provide awards for 1st 2nd and 3rd place (by age group). Tiger Cubs, Wolf, Bear, Webelos I, Webelos II
- Optional, (if you have time) you may want to have an overall race off between the first and second place winners of each Den for a Pack champion. (A nice award would be appropriate.)
- Most Packs like to have novelty awards in addition to the fastest cars. (Best Paint, Most Unusual,...)
- Serve refreshments after the awards ceremony.

Note: Make sure to let the winners and alternates from each Den (age group) know they can go to the District races. Even the scouts that don't win like to go to the District races to cheer for their Pack. If you can, have a handout at your derby with the date and location (and rules) of the District races.