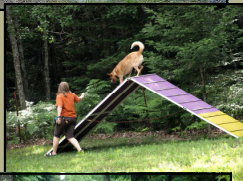




# Dog Scout Camp

*A fun learning adventure for you and your dog!*



## About Dog Scout Camp

Dog Scouts of America holds week-long summer camps for you and your dog. People and dogs learn new things, participate in fun activities, and spend quality time with their dogs and with other dog lovers. The wonderful and talented staff members teach everything from manners to agility to boating to... well, you might not believe how many cool things there are to try.

Each day at camp is loaded with activities, and you can choose to participate in a few or as many activities as you like (all included in the basic camp fee). Campers also enjoy just hanging out spending time with their dogs and fellow campers, in a "summer camp" type setting complete with campfires and s'mores. If you're a "dog person," we think it's just about the best vacation you could ever take...

You'll find out lots more about what Dog Scout Camp is like on the following pages.

Proceeds from Dog Scout Camp support DSA's educational and charitable endeavors. DSA also has Spring, Fall, and Winter 3-day "Outings," and DSA troops also hold 3-day "Mini-Camps" in other parts of the country.



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## Dog Scouts? What's That?

Dog Scouts of America is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting responsible dog ownership, positive training methods, and the importance of the human/canine bond. DSA has multiple national educational programs, plus supports local Dog Scout Troops across the country. Local troops get together to learn new

things, promote responsible dog ownership in their communities, and use their dogs' skills in community service projects.

And *oh yes*, there are merit badges. It's true! There is a badge for just about every activity you can think of, and many people and their dogs enjoy working toward earning the badges by learning new

things with positive training. The badges provide a great "to-do" list of things to try, with training instructions and goals.





## What do you do at Dog Scout Camp?

Wow. There are opportunities to do all kinds of activities with your dog – you get to choose what kinds of things to do, and how busy you want to be. Each day has a full schedule of activities, with

There are also opportunities to make crafts while your dog takes a break, and each evening usually brings folks to the campfire to tell stories, laugh, and enjoy each other’s company.



plenty of support and individual attention from instructors.

Winter Outings can include skijoring, dog sledding, and other snow activities. As the week’s end nears, laying in a hammock by the lake taking a nap together becomes more and more popular as well...

Learn how to improve your communication with your dog. Opportunities to learn about canine behavior and training are plentiful.



## K9 Sports and Activities

You name it—there’s a Dog Scout merit badge for it. Whether or not you choose to pursue earning merit badges, each camp offers a multitude of activities selected from that loooong list of badges.

There are organized games and contests for you and your dog, a talent show, and a costume contest. Each year, there are also a few unique additional activities offered like Lure Coursing, Flyball, Search and Rescue, Weight Pull, Terrier Steeplechase (which is “all-breed” steeplechase at camp), Carting, Sign Language, Frisbee, etc.



A sampling of activities offered at most camps: Agility, Swimming, Boating, Dock Diving, Hiking, Backpacking, Rally-Obedience, Clicker Training, Geocaching, Letterboxing, Freestyle, Basic obedience training, etc. You can even teach your dog to paint!

Each camp offers the “Core Four” activities: Agility, Obedience, Water, and Trails activities.



## Sharing Time With Your Special Dog and Other Dog Lovers

While camp is action-packed if you’d like it that way, there is always time to share a special moment, relax together, and have a great time with other campers.

Find a hammock or explore the trails. Let our creative crafts leaders help you create a lasting keepsake, or an awesome toy for your dog. Share some great campfire stories.



## Where is Dog Scout Camp?

Dog Scout Camp is located in Michigan’s beautiful North Woods in St. Helen, Michigan, 48656. Michigan’s North Woods are a vacation destination for all kinds of outdoors enthusiasts, and provide a beautiful setting for camp.



## What is the camp facility like?

Camp is rustic – a lot more like a Boy or Girl Scout camping experience than Club Med, except that if you “don’t do camping” you can stay at the local motel. There are several options for lodging on site, depending on your preferences and your dog’s. You can bring your own RV, rent one of the campers on site, stay in the “lodge” in either a private room or one shared with other campers, or you can tent camp. One end of the lodge building has all of the showers, bathrooms, sinks, etc. for everyone staying on site to use, set up something like you might see in a small gym or pool locker room. The lodge also has the kitchen and dining area, which doubles as the main meeting area.



Main meeting area inside the lodge.

If camp lodging sounds like it’s not on par with a 5-star All-Inclusive Resort – if you’re a dog lover, the activities sure are! Most campers and dogs think it’s pretty close to heaven. There are hiking trails, a small pond for boating and swimming and dock diving, agility fields, large fenced play areas, and all the equipment and instruction you’ll need to learn tons of new things. Check out the “Photo Tour” of camp on the DSA website to get a good idea of what camp is like.



Meals are served buffet-style (photo of “chow line” at right), and are no-frills camp-style meals. Most campers think the food is great, but it does help if you’re not expecting celebrity chefs...



Campfire baked potatoes!

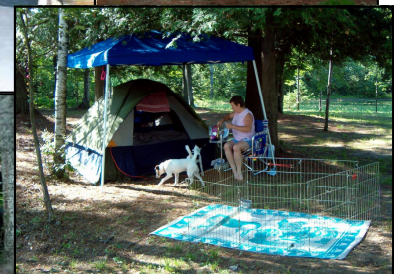
## Camp Lodging Options

For those who are “less outdoorsy” there is a local motel minutes away. But for the full camp experience, you can stay in dorm-style lodge rooms, private lodge rooms, Rent one of our RVs, bring your own RV, or tent camp.

It depends on you and your dog, and a little research of the options beforehand will go a long

way to making sure your camp experience is most enjoyable for you both.

You’ll hear the word “rustic” a lot when people describe camp... the RVs were donated used and we’d rather use funds to improve activities and keep the cost of camp low than have turndown service. If that sounds smart to you, you’re our kind of people!





## Who Attends Dog Scout Camp?

Camp is for people who enjoy spending time with their dogs, and spending time with other people who love their dogs too. Campers are usually pretty diverse – all ages, different backgrounds, from all over the country, from first-time dog owners to advanced trainers, easygoing dabblers to serious competitors, responsible breeders and rescuers and shelter staff, etc. We share a love of dogs, and that usually

makes fast friends. Admittedly, a large percentage of our campers are women, but every camp always has a great bunch of guys too, and camp also offers traditional “male bonding” activities like camping out, building bonfires, grilling, sharing harrowing and heroic stories involving wildlife encounters (har har), and being so useful around camp like guys always are. Camp is not “for kids” specifically, but children

often attend camp with their families – kids should be willing to follow all the camp rules, and their guardians should be willing to help make sure that happens. You will be asked to refrain from using harsh punishments or physical force on your dog while at camp, and to be open to learning about and using more positive training methods – allow us to convince you!

## What if my dog isn’t “perfect” - can we still come?

Well, our dogs aren’t “perfect” either! Certainly, some dogs are so fearful and/or aggressive that camp is not a healthy place for them, and they wouldn’t be able to relax all week. You should put some thought into whether your dog will be able to enjoy being around other people and dogs, because we don’t want anyone (dog or person) attending to be overly stressed out and unable to have a good time.

Camp is not for dogs who would hate camp... other than that though, as long as you are willing and able to keep your dog safely under control,

and willing to follow the camp rules, you and your dog are more than welcome!

Camp is full of great learning opportunities for every dog and handler – from beginners to advanced trainers. The staff and other campers understand that dogs (and people) are flawed creatures – dogs who attend do not have to “love all other dogs” or “love all people” in order to come, as long as you are willing to be responsible for your dog’s safety and well-being, as well as your dog’s impact on others. There is always help available from staff and fellow campers if you’re having

trouble with a particular training or behavior issue. People are often surprised at how well their “shy” or “reactive” dog does in an environment where other people and dogs are understanding and respectful of their space. Many campers with “shy” or “reactive” dogs treasure coming to this special place where they and their dog can feel understood, safe, and truly welcome.

If you have any questions about whether camp is appropriate for your dog, read all the camp materials to get a good idea of what camp is like, and ask us any questions you might have.



## Are dogs off-leash at Dog Scout Camp?

Yes and no. There are lots of opportunities for your dog to be off-leash, but the ability for your dog to be reliable off-leash is not required. We want all dogs and people to be able to enjoy camp, and our leash “rules” support that goal. Campers are expected to exercise good judgment on when and where their dog should be off-leash, making sure doing so doesn’t negatively impact

others. Dogs with good social skills and a lightning-quick recall can spend a great deal of time off leash, but generally most campers find it practical to have their dogs on leash most of the time, “un-leashing” for specific training or play sessions. A general rule of thumb is that handlers of off-leash dogs are expected to have enough control over their dog to ensure their dog does

not rush up to another dog, person, or wildlife (!) uninvited.

There is also plenty of opportunity for dogs of all skills to be off leash - the agility field is fenced, and there is a large fenced area just for off-leash play complete with woods and sand dunes!



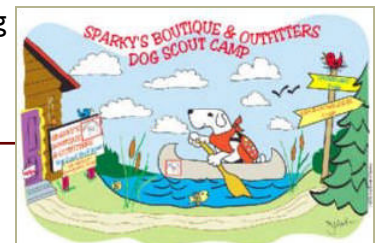
Photos of the large fenced play area.

## But my dog is [too big, too small, not the “right” breed...]

What!?! We think all dogs should be able to have a good time trying everything. When a 130-pound “All-American” dog wants to try Terrier Steeplechase, we go ahead and figure out how to make that happen.

Chihuahuas Backpacking. Bulldogs Lure Coursing. Hounds Dog Sledding. Herding dogs Dock Diving. Beagles Weight Pulling. Shelties Carting. And lots and lots of “Heinz 57’s” doing everything under the sun. All

that matters is that you and your dog are having fun. By the way, we feel the same way about people, and we do our best to help every person participate in anything they’d like to try.



## How much does camp cost?

That depends, but a first-year camper bringing one dog would pay \$650 for camp, which includes six days packed with activities, and all meals (three meals plus one snack each day.) Lodging fees start at \$15 per night in a lodge group room (“rustic” has its merits!) An additional family member coming along would pay just \$300 for their activities and meals.

We’ve found that the cost of at-

tending Dog Scout camp is generally much less than other dog-related camps, and certainly less than if you paid for similar instruction and equipment rental for these activities on your own (if you could find it). You can also feel good about helping people and dogs by supporting DSA’s nonprofit mission.

Repeat campers get discounts – a camper would pay only \$550 the

second year for activities and meals.

Now don’t get us wrong, there are plenty of other opportunities to throw a little cash DSA’s way since this is a big fundraiser for the organization’s projects, and plenty of pretty irresistible Dog Scouts gear in the camp store, but the basic camp fee and lodging are all you really need to have a great time without being “left out” of anything.

## Dog Scouts of America Summer Camp

**Do you enjoy spending time with your dog and other dog-lovers?  
Do you wish you could take your dog on vacation with you?  
Would you like to try cool activities with your dog like agility, kayaking, or teaching your dog to paint? Then Dog Scout Camp might just be the best way to spend your next vacation...**



[www.dogscouts.org](http://www.dogscouts.org)

### Signing Up For Camp

There are two or three summer Dog Scout Camps in Michigan each year, during June and July. You can find exact dates on the DSA website, as well as dates for Mini-Camps and Outings.

Go to:

[www.dogscouts.org](http://www.dogscouts.org),  
and click on Camp Info in the top menu.

This page has all the info you'll need to prepare for camp and have the best time possible! This is also where you register and pay for camp.

*Your dog will thank you!*

### *Why should I NOT come to camp?*

Most campers have a fabulous time, and many come back year after year, but every once in a while there is someone who finds that camp is NOT for them. Because we try to be very up front about what you can expect from camp, this is pretty rare.

FYI—Camp has Big Mosquitoes and Sand Everyplace and Other People And Dogs Who Have Their Own Opinions About Things.

Before coming, you should read the "Top 10 Reasons NOT to Come to Camp" on the DSA website. Camp isn't for everyone, and not everyone would enjoy spending their vacation with a bunch of other dogs and people in the middle of Michigan's North Woods. When everyone comes with accurate expectations of camp, camp is a much happier place for everyone. If you read the Top Ten Reasons, have a good chuckle, and still want to come to camp, we're SURE you'll have the best vacation ever.