

Letterboxing 101

for Scout Leaders



LETTERBOXING IS...

1. A letterbox is a HIDDEN container somewhere in a public place. It is often in a scenic area or a place with historical significance. It's good way to see new places and even make new friends. It is also cheap entertainment!
2. A letterbox contains a [usually hand-carved] RUBBER STAMP and a LOGBOOK.
3. Letterboxers use a TRAILNAME.
4. CLUES are found at www.AtlasQuest.com (AQ) or www.letterboxing.org (LBNA).

FINDING LETTERBOXES

5. Choose a letterbox to hunt for. Check attributes (icons) for trail length, etc. and check whether it has been FOUND recently. On AQ - click "Show Finds". On LBNA - log in and click green flag.
6. READ the clues all the way through first, just in case there is something else you need.
7. When you go hunt for a letterbox, you need to bring your:
 - a) printed clues
 - b) signature stamp
(for the group OR each scout)
 - c) ink pad or markers
(Crayola markers work fine)
 - d) personal logbook (4x6 blank index cards from WM or OfficeMax, a cheap photo album from Walmart)
 - e) pen to write in logbook
 - f) hiking gear: water bottle, bug spray, snack, cell phone, first aid kit, etc.
 - g) compass
 - h) paper towel (for cleaning stamp; no baby wipes!)
8. A "pace" equals TWO STEPS.

RULES ("Code of Conduct")

SAFETY – poison ivy, snakes, spiders, using sticks, partner, cell phone
STEALTH – move away, pretend to take a photo, tie your shoe, have a snack, use phone
RESPECT – for nature: leave the area better than you found it: DONT disturb nature by: littering, leaving a trail to the box, breaking the sod, removing native vegetation, disturbing natural rock formations, taking apart rock walls or interfering with animals or their habitats.
for people: reseal and rehide well, replacing it exactly as you found it, report your find.

9. Only one person from your group should LEAVE THE TRAIL.
10. Don't let any MUGGLES see you! (This is a term from the Harry Potter series meaning those who don't know about the secret magical world.)
11. When you find the letterbox, you stamp:
 - a) YOUR stamp in the BOX's logbook, with your trailname, the date & where you're from.
Please do not let scouts take up an entire page per person!!
 - b) the LETTERBOX stamp in YOUR logbook, with the date found and the planter's trailname.
12. You might find a HITCHHIKER! (Don't take it unless you know what it is and can move it on.)
13. Check for bonus clues in THE BACK OF THE BOOK. Most boxes don't have them but some do.
14. Make sure to REHIDE it very well, just like you found it. Rocks may be holding it in place, etc.
** Have the person who actually removed the box be the one to put it back.
15. *Please* LOG your find online; this helps planter know it's OK and future finders to know it's still there! Scout leaders can simply log finds for the entire troop as one trailname such as "Troop 3400".