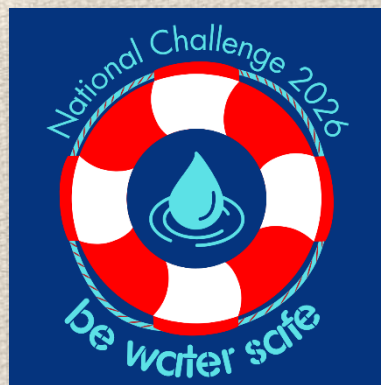


be water safe

national challenge 2026

scouts

 quiz



*"Most drownings are preventable.
Learning basic water safety and rescue skills saves lives."*

— Surf Lifesaving South Africa (SLSA) —



be prepared

be water safe quiz – how to set up and play

purpose

The **Be Water Safe Quiz** helps Scouts test their knowledge and awareness of water safety through a fun, interactive Troop or Patrol activity.

It reinforces the key themes of the **National Challenge 2026 – Be Water Safe: Awareness, Preparedness, Service, and Responsibility**.

This quiz encourages Scouts to Be Prepared and act responsibly near water. It teaches them to stay safe, and help others around rivers, dams, pools, and the sea.

how to set up

You can run the quiz in one of two ways —

1. **As a Patrol Activity:** Each Patrol completes a printed copy of the quiz together or Scouts do so individually.
2. **As a Troop Quiz:** A Quiz Master reads the questions aloud, and Patrols / Scouts record their answers on an answer sheet.

Choose whichever format above, or adapt to your own chosen format, that works best for your Troop.

equipment needed

- Printed copies of the **Be Water Safe Quiz** (one per Patrol or Scout, depending on format)
- **Answer sheets** and pens/pencils
- **Clipboard or firm surface** for writing (if outdoors)
- **Timer or stopwatch** (to keep rounds short and lively)
- **Score sheet** for the Quiz Master or Scouter
- **Optional:** Whistle or bell to signal the end of each round
- **Optional:** Small prizes or Patrol points for top performers

suggested setup

1. **Group Scouts by Patrols.** Each Patrol sits together and appoints a *Patrol Scribe* to record answers.
2. **Appoint a Quiz Master.** This could be a Troop Scouter, Assistant Troop Scouter, or Senior Patrol Leader.
3. **Explain the Rules:**
 - Patrols discuss answers together before writing them down.
 - No phones or online searches allowed.
 - Each correct answer scores one point.
 - Bonus points may be awarded for quick thinking or teamwork.
4. **Decide the format:**
 - **Written format:** Distribute printed question sheets and allow 20–25 minutes for completion.
 - **Quiz Master format:** Read out each question and its four multiple-choice options. Allow 20–30 seconds per question.

playing the quiz

- 💧 Divide the quiz into **four rounds**:
 1. **Awareness (8 questions)** – Safe behaviour and identifying hazards.
 2. **Preparedness (6 questions)** – Training, swimming skills, and rescue readiness.
 3. **Service & Responsibility (5 questions)** – Sharing knowledge and community action.
 4. **Scenario Challenge (6 questions)** – Real-life decision-making near water.
- 💧 Encourage discussion and teamwork within Patrols.
- 💧 Keep the pace lively and energetic — this is about fun *and* learning.

scoring

- 💧 1 point per correct answer.
- 💧 Bonus 2 points per Patrol if all members participate actively.
- 💧 In case of a tie: run a *bonus question* (choose one from the scenario section).

recognition

- 💧 The Patrol or Scout with the highest score can receive **Patrol Points**.
- 💧 You may also recognise Patrols or Scouts who show exceptional teamwork, leadership, or sportsmanship during the quiz.

tips for scouters

- 💧 Play as part of a Troop night meeting, **National Challenge 2026 – Be Water Safe**, Programme-On-A-Plate
- 💧 Use quiz answers for reflection or discussion and to spark conversations about real-life experiences around water — e.g. “What would you do differently?”

for the quiz master

After each round, review the answers with the Patrols, providing the correct responses and brief explanations where needed. Encourage discussion, ask Scouts to explain their thinking, and highlight key water safety points. Use the answers and explanations to reinforce learning, clarify misconceptions, and make the quiz both educational and fun. Remember to keep the pace lively and acknowledge teamwork and participation as much as correct answers.

round 1 : awareness – questions 1–8

Scouts learn to identify safe and unsafe water areas, understand the buddy system, recognise safety signs, and recall rescue principles like Reach, Throw, Row, Go.

round 2 : preparedness – questions 9–14

Covers readiness and water survival skills. Scouts demonstrate their understanding of training options (e.g., Lifesaving SA, Swimming badges), use of PFDs, and risk awareness.

round 3 : service & responsibility – questions 15–19

Highlights how Scouts can share their knowledge — from teaching Meerkats and Cubs, to leading safety campaigns and supporting local water initiatives.

round 4 – scenario challenge – questions 20–25

Real-life situations requiring quick, safe decision-making. Scouts apply their judgment to emergencies, risk awareness, and responsible leadership.

questions

There are two sets of question/answer materials for the **Be Water Safe Quiz**. The Quiz Master / Adult Leader questions include the correct answer for each question along with a brief explanation, enabling the Quiz Master to provide immediate feedback and reinforce learning as the quiz is conducted.

The Scout question sheets are simplified, with space for Patrols or individual Scouts to fill in their answers easily, allowing them to focus on discussion, teamwork, and learning without seeing the answers in advance.

round 1 – awareness (1–8)

Focus: **Safe behaviour, hazards, safety rules, and basic water knowledge.**

1. What does the “buddy system” mean?

- ☐ A) Always swim alone
- ☐ B) **Pair up and watch out for each other near water** 
- ☐ C) Have a friend take your swimming test
- ☐ D) Compete to swim faster than your buddy

Explanation: **Swimming with a buddy keeps both Scouts safe. The buddy system ensures someone is always watching out for you, reducing the risk of drowning or accidents.**

2. Which of the following is a safe place to swim?

-  A) Any river or dam
-  B) **Areas designated for swimming with lifeguards or safety signs** 
-  C) Under waterfalls
-  D) Near rocks or fast currents

Explanation: **Only swim in approved areas. Swimming in designated areas with supervision and safety signs reduces the risk of injury or drowning.**

3. Who should always supervise Scouts during water activities?

-  A) Older Scouts only
-  B) **Responsible adults (Adult Leaders or trained supervisors)** 
-  C) No one; Scouts can supervise themselves
-  D) Friends in the Patrol

Explanation: **Adult supervision - adults who are equipped or know what to do in an emergency - ensures activities are safe and emergency procedures can be followed.**

4. What is a personal flotation device (PFD) used for?

-  A) To decorate your swimsuit
-  B) **To help keep you afloat in water** 
-  C) To swim faster
-  D) To signal your friends

Explanation: A Personal flotation device is designed to keep you afloat if you get tired or fall in unexpectedly, helping to prevent drowning.

5. True or False: You should always wear a properly fitted PFD when on a boat or near deep water.

💧 **True** 💧

Explanation: Proper PFD use is essential for water safety. PFDs keep you afloat and reduce the risk of drowning in deep water.

6. What should you always do before going near a river, dam, or lake?

- 💧 A) **Check for hazards, depth, and currents** 💧
- 💧 B) Run as fast as you can
- 💧 C) Dive in immediately
- 💧 D) Go alone

Explanation: Always assess water safety before entering. Understanding water conditions helps prevent accidents and ensures safe planning.

7. Which action helps prevent drowning in pools or open water?

- 💧 A) **Swimming with a buddy** 💧
- 💧 B) Ignoring warning signs
- 💧 C) Jumping from unknown heights
- 💧 D) Swimming when tired or alone

Explanation: The buddy system is a key preventative measure. Swimming with a buddy ensures someone can call for help or assist in an emergency.

8. Which is the correct order for a rescue without entering the water?

- 💧 A) Throw, Reach, Row, Go
- 💧 B) Go, Row, Throw, Reach
- 💧 C) **Reach, Throw, Row, Go** 💧
- 💧 D) Row, Go, Throw, Reach

Explanation: The correct sequence prioritises safety: REACH with an object, THROW a flotation aid, ROW if possible, and GO into the water as a last resort.

round 2 – preparedness (9–14)

Focus: **Training, practical swimming skills, and readiness.**

9. What is the first thing you should do if someone is struggling in the water?

- 💧 A) Jump in immediately to rescue them
- 💧 B) **Call for help and use the Reach, Throw, Row, Go method** 💧
- 💧 C) Shout at them to swim to shore
- 💧 D) Take a photo to show later

Explanation: **Reach, Throw, Row, Go is the safest rescue method to help without putting yourself at unnecessary risk. Never jump into unsafe water!**

10. If a Patrol is planning a water activity, what should they do first?

- 💧 A) Jump straight in and have fun
- 💧 B) **Do a risk assessment and get Adult Leader/parent approval** 💧
- 💧 C) Ask only one Scout for permission
- 💧 D) Ask the buddy system to take care of safety

Explanation: **A risk assessment ensures hazards are identified and safety measures are in place. Planning and approval are mandatory for safe activities.**

11. True or False: Running on a wet pool deck is safe as long as you are careful.

- 💧 **False** 💧

Explanation: **Running on wet surfaces increases the risk of slipping and injury.**

12. Which of these items can be used to safely assist someone in the water without entering it?

- 💧 A) **Rope or stick** 💧
- 💧 B) Shoes
- 💧 C) Backpack
- 💧 D) Blanket

Explanation: **Using long objects like a rope or stick allows you to 'reach or throw' and help without entering the water, keeping both rescuer and victim safe.**

13. What is the main reason Scouts should practice water safety drills?

- 💧 A) To win competitions
- 💧 B) **To be prepared in case of an emergency** 💧
- 💧 C) To impress friends
- 💧 D) To get a badge only

Explanation: **Drills develop preparedness and confidence, teach practical skills and prepare Scouts to respond safely in emergencies.**

14. True or False: It's safe to swim in a dam or river after heavy rain without checking conditions.

- 💧 **False** 💧

Explanation: **Floods and strong currents increase the risk of drowning.**

round 3 – service & responsibility

Focus: **Teaching, leading awareness, and helping the community.**

15. True or False: Teaching younger Scouts or community members about water safety is part of being responsible.

☐ **True** 

Explanation: **Sharing knowledge helps others stay safe and encourages responsible behaviour. Educating others is part of Scout service and responsibility. But, before a Scout can teach others, they need to know the correct way themselves first.**

16. While teaching Cubs about water safety, one child asks if it's okay to swim after heavy rain. What's the correct answer?

-  A) Yes, if you are careful
-  B) **No, rivers and dams may be dangerous due to strong currents and debris** 
-  C) Only swim in the middle of the river
-  D) Only if an adult is watching from a distance

Explanation: **Avoid entering any water after heavy rain as the water conditions may change without warning.**

17. Your Patrol wants to organise a water safety awareness campaign at a local school. Which is the safest way to approach this?

-  A) Invite the school and do a demonstration without planning
-  B) **Prepare an age-appropriate presentation, use safe props, and have adult supervision** 
-  C) Hand out safety posters without instructions
-  D) Let the children lead the session unsupervised

Explanation: **Planning, supervision, and age-appropriate content are key.**

18. You are constructing a flotation device during your Patrol activity. What is the most important thing to remember? It must -

-  A) Look cool
-  B) Safely support the weight of a small object
-  C) **Safely support the weight of a small object and float as fast as possible** 
-  D) Made entirely of wood

Explanation: **Safety and functionality are most important.**

19. You are supervising a water activity with younger Scouts. One Scout is wearing a PFD that is too loose. What should you do?

-  A) Let them continue; it's close enough
-  B) **Adjust the PFD so it fits properly before starting** 
-  C) Take it off and let them swim anyway
-  D) Ask another Scout to check later

Explanation: **Correct fit of a PFD is essential for safety.**

round 4 – scenario-based (20–25)

Focus: **Applying knowledge to real-life water safety situations.**

20. A Patrol member falls into a pool while playing near the edge. What's the first thing the rest of the Patrol should do?

- 💧 A) Jump in immediately
- 💧 B) **Shout for the Patrol Leader or Adult Leader and use the buddy system** 💧
- 💧 C) Take a video to show parents later
- 💧 D) Ignore them because they know how to swim

Explanation: **Always alert adults and use safe rescue methods. Alerting an adult and following the buddy system ensures quick assistance and safety.**

21. You are at a local dam with your Patrol. One Scout spots someone struggling in the water near a rocky area. What is the safest first action?

- 💧 A) Jump in to save them immediately
- 💧 B) **Shout instructions from the shore and throw a rope or flotation device** 💧
- 💧 C) Call friends to help without thinking of safety
- 💧 D) Ignore it

Explanation: **Always attempt to rescue safely without entering the water unless trained. Safety first – use tools and call for help.**

22. During a rainy day, your Patrol plans to swim in a river. What should you do?

- 💧 A) Go ahead; you're confident swimmers
- 💧 B) **Avoid swimming because currents will be stronger** 💧
- 💧 C) Only swim near the middle
- 💧 D) Swim quickly to finish before it rains more

Explanation: **Heavy rain can make rivers dangerous; it is safer to avoid swimming.**

23. Your Patrol is near a river when you see sudden flooding from heavy rain upstream. What should your Patrol do first?

- 💧 A) Swim to the middle of the river
- 💧 B) **Move immediately to higher ground** 💧
- 💧 C) Try to rescue floating debris
- 💧 D) Wait and observe

Explanation: **Evacuate to safety immediately.**

24. During a Patrol "wet drill" at a pool, you notice someone struggling with a flotation device. What is the safest action?

- 💧 A) Enter the water immediately
- 💧 B) **Use a reach or throw method and call for adult help** 💧
- 💧 C) Pull them in by yourself
- 💧 D) Wait for someone else to act

Explanation: **Always use safe rescue methods and alert supervisors.**

25. You find a small child alone at a riverbank. What is your first priority?

- 💧 A) Leave them; it's not your responsibility
- 💧 B) **Ensure the child is safe from water hazards and contact an adult immediately** 💧
- 💧 C) Tell them to swim across to you
- 💧 D) Play with them first

Explanation: **Child safety is the top priority; notify adults immediately.**

💧 **bonus questions** – in the event of a tie-breaker

Bonus Question 1 – Awareness:

A Scout sees a warning sign at a dam that says “No Swimming – Strong Currents.” What should they do?

- 💧 A) Swim quickly before anyone notices
- 💧 B) Ignore the sign if friends are swimming
- 💧 C) **Stay out of the water and follow safety instructions** 💧
- 💧 D) Test the current carefully with one foot

Explanation: **Always follow posted safety signs; they are there to prevent accidents and drowning.**

Bonus Question 2 – Preparedness:

Which of the following is the safest way to check if a river is safe to swim in?

- 💧 A) Jump in immediately and see how it feels
- 💧 B) **Check water depth, current, and hazards, and ask an adult** 💧
- 💧 C) Only swim where friends are already swimming
- 💧 D) Throw a small object and swim after it

Explanation: **Safety checks and adult supervision help prevent accidents and ensure the water is safe.**

Bonus Question 3 – Service & Responsibility:

Your Patrol wants to teach younger Scouts about water safety. Which approach is best?

- 💧 A) Give a short talk and let them try unsafe activities
- 💧 B) **Use age-appropriate demonstrations, supervise closely, and explain safety rules** 💧
- 💧 C) Hand out safety leaflets without explanation
- 💧 D) Let them learn by watching older Scouts swim

Explanation: **Teaching safety in an age-appropriate manner reinforces knowledge and models responsible behaviour.**

national challenge 2026

be water safe quiz

scout's name: _____

patrol name: _____

Test your Patrol's knowledge of water safety! Work together to choose the best answers for each question. Discuss your choices before writing them down – teamwork and understanding are what count most. Stay alert, think safely, and have fun learning how to **Be Water Safe!** 🌊

1. What does the "buddy system" mean?

- ☐ A) Always swim alone
- ☐ B) Pair up and watch out for each other near water
- ☐ C) Have a friend take your swimming test
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- ☐ C) To swim faster
- ☐ D) To signal your friends

5. True or False: You should always wear a properly fitted PFD when on a boat or near deep water.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

6. What should you always do before going near a river, dam, or lake?

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- ☐ D) Play with them first



Be Water Safe Quiz Score 



Award **1 point for each correct answer.**

If the Patrol is playing together, record one set of answers and total their score at the end. If Scouts are playing individually, add all individual scores to get the Patrol’s total score.

The Patrol with the highest total wins! In the event of a tie, the Quiz Master may ask a bonus question or award extra points for teamwork and enthusiasm.



By participating in the Be Water Safe Quiz you’ve learned how to stay safe in, on, and around water — and how to help others do the same!

