

Duke of Edinburgh Award – FAQ's

1. **What age do I have to be to register for the Award?** You have to be at least 13 years and 9 months old to register for the Award (and no older than 24 years and 6 months). Plus parental consent is required if you are under 18 years old.
2. **How is Skill defined?** The Skills section involves the development of a new skill or improvement of an old skill which takes mental rather than physical effort. Skills include such activities as painting, music, public speaking, gliding, collections, sewing, home accounting & finance, computers and many more topics. If a collection or model building is selected it is expected that the participant will do far more than merely gather, or build, a number of times.
3. **Is sailing a Skill or Physical Recreation section activity?** Sailing qualifies as Physical Recreation.
4. **Can I switch Skills?** The Award prefers that each participant choose one skill to work on, though it is permissible to switch skills but only once per Award level.
5. **Is being a Cadet a Skill?** No “Cadetting” is not a Skill in and of itself; a skill needs to be more specific, e.g. marksmanship; or flying; or playing trumpet; and Cadets need to work on their Skill regularly.
6. **How is Physical Recreation defined?** The Physical Recreation section requires that participants take part in physical recreation. Physical recreation includes any activities in which the participant is active. Examples of physical recreation include aerobics, dancing, skiing, basketball, street hockey, Ultimate Frisbee, yoga, martial arts, weight lifting, horseback riding, and swimming.
7. **How is Service defined?** The Service section can include activities such as selling poppies, assisting the elderly, helping at the local library, volunteer work for non-profit organizations, painting faces as a community event and much more. Service cannot include activities for which payment is given, nor can it include activities which one should be expected to do, such as baby-sitting siblings!
8. **Do FTX (Field Training Exercise) weekends count as AJ's (Adventurous Journeys)?** Yes but only at the Bronze level.
9. **Do I have to write an AJ report?** Yes you do –it should state the AJ's purpose and read like daily diary entries that tell the story of your adventure (ideally include photos if you can). Also include hours per day, distances travelled and a map with route on a 'route card' (ask your award leader to provide). Finish off with personal and group equipment lists, a copy of the menu and a concluding statement e.g., what you liked, what you would do differently, how the AJ helped you develop...
10. **What is the difference between an Expedition and an Exploration?** Expeditions include traveling by foot, canoe, horse, bicycle, snowshoes as well as other options. Participants may also choose to

participate in an Exploration instead of an expedition, Explorations have a base camp and the participant undertakes an activity that is historical or environmental in nature, such as studying the local flora or fauna, caving, etc. Please note that all explorations must receive prior approval by the Award Divisional Director.

11. **Do I have to camp as part of an Adventurous Journey (either Exploration or Expedition)?** Yes, Cadets should camp and they should also prepare their own meals over a campfire or camp stove (restaurant meals won't count!).
12. **How long must the Gold level Residential Project be?** A Residential Project must last 5 days and 4 nights. Examples include; summer CSTC courses, deployments in Naval or Coast Guard ships, International Exchanges, National Regatta, and National Air Rifle Championship.
13. **Do Cadet camps (e.g. Base Borden) qualify as the Residential Project?** Yes, provided the participant is at least 16 years of age.
14. **What Cadet activities qualify for the Award?** Any volunteer activity a Cadet does can qualify, as can any physical activity.
15. **Do I have to complete all sections at one level before progressing on to the next level?** Yes you do.
16. **Can my Assessor be a relative (e.g., parent or guardian)?** No, an assessor needs to be an independent and impartial adult as well as knowledgeable and experienced in the activity being evaluated. They must be prepared to work with you throughout the activity and be able to note challenge and improvements!
17. **Can I use the same Assessor for each section of the Award?** A concerted effort should be made by participants to have different assessors for each of the four sections (five for Gold).
18. **Who is an Instructor?** An Instructor is a responsible adult who has considerable knowledge of the activity chosen, and who teaches, aids, guides and instructs the participant(s) over the time period stipulated in the Record Book. He or she may also act as an Assessor in some circumstances.
19. **Who is a Group Leader?** A Group Leader is a responsible adult who co-ordinates, monitors and advises a group of participants. This individual may also act as an Assessor and/or an Instructor.
20. **Can I continue with the Award if I leave Cadets or I age out of Cadets?** Yes, membership is fully portable and you have until your 25th birthday to complete an Award, provided you satisfy the minimum time requirement for each Award level, and can do so through any sponsor group or as an independent participant here in Canada or in any of the more than one hundred other countries who host the Award. If you stay in the local area, the Award Office will maintain contact with you as an independent or will assist in arranging to continue your participation through membership in another group. If you move to another Divisional area in Canada, the Award Office will forward your information and records to that area's Award Office which will again either handle you as an Independent or group member.