

# 2015 Scout Popcorn Sales FAQ

*"Nuggets from the Kernel"*

## Introduction

---

### What is this all about?

"Popcorn" is an annual fundraising event for our pack and also for the local Boy Scouts of America (BSA) council, that we are a member of, as well as for BSA national. The scouts sell various popcorn products, all manufactured by a company called Trail's End (in partnership with the BSA), through three sales channels:

#### Show & Sell

We set up stalls at popular locations around town over a number of weekends and scouts man shifts on these stalls to sell popcorn to passersby.

#### Take Orders

Scouts take orders from family friends, neighbors and sometimes also parents' work colleagues for popcorn product for later delivery.

#### Online Orders

Scouts can sell to far-flung friends and family through the Trail's End website. See details below. Note that this is typically not a big channel for our sales. The cost of the product is often higher than it is locally (due to various reasons) and also shipping charges will apply. If Grandma in California absolutely has to support her grandson then this could be a good option, but to be honest it'd probably be better for her, and for us, if she were to just make a straight-up donation to the pack.

This is the primary annual fund raising activity for the pack and provides the majority of the money to pay for the pack's year and to subsidize trips and activities. Yes, we charge dues but that alone does not provide all the money that we need. Popcorn revenue pays for our annual Blue and Gold party and also allows us to offer subsidies to the cost of many of our big trips (e.g. The Intrepid, Night at the Museum, etc.).

Of the retail price of the product more than 73% goes to fund scouting activities at the pack, council and national level. Our pack typically earns about 39% of the retail price.

The popcorn sales campaign is a big blitz that happens at the start of each new school year. It's intense but short lived.

### Are all pack families expected to participate in the campaign?

There is no requirement for pack families to participate in this campaign but we hope that everyone will, and we encourage you to do so. Because new families (especially new Tigers) are just getting up to speed with the pack, and with scouting in general, we don't expect them to participate in the "Show and Sell" part of the campaign, where we man stalls around town to sell popcorn to passers-by. New scouts can join in of course but we don't expect it. We do encourage all existing scouts to man at least one shift though. It's a great experience for them and they get credit for prizes for doing it!

Everyone is encouraged to participate in the “Take Order” part of the campaign though. This is where your son takes orders from your family, friends and neighbors, as well as the parents’ workplace, for later delivery. This latter opportunity is often the richest vein to mine; it’s amazing what a kid in uniform can get out of people when he walks door to door around an office! Or the parents can just take the form in to work and get some orders that way.

We hope that all scouts will sell something and suggest that you aim for at least \$150 in take order sales. That isn’t much product at all at the end of the day.

## Did someone mention prizes?!?

Yes. Scouts earn credits towards prizes (see the prize select sheet on our [website](#)) by selling popcorn. Each scout earns a fixed share of our overall Show & Sell sales for each shift that they work, and each scout earns full credit for the value of their Take Order and Online sales.

When a scout submits their Take Order form at the end of the campaign, their Show & Sell and Online sales credits will be added to their Take Order sales to calculate a total prize sales amount. On the form you should then indicate which prize (or prizes) they want.

## Who’s in charge of all this?

That would be Kernel Popcorn, one of the members of Pack 22’s committee. The Kernel is a real trooper who works hard to make all of this come to fruition. If you see him, tell him he’s doing an awesome job.

## Show & Sell

---

### When and where does this part of the campaign happen?

This is the first phase of the campaign and will play out over a couple of weekends of the new school year. The schedule and location information can be found [here](#).

### How do I sign-up my son to work a shift?

Look at the online [schedule](#), see what shifts are available, decide what shift you want your son to work, and then email the Kernel ([popcorn@wiltonpack22.com](mailto:popcorn@wiltonpack22.com)) to let him know. He will then confirm back to you and add you to the schedule.

### Do parents need to man the stall with their son(s)?

When you sign your son(s) up for a Show & Sell slot the expectation is that at least one parent will be staying for the shift as well. There are no other adult volunteers who will be there other than parents of the boys working that shift. It's essential that at least one adult is present all the time in order to ensure that money is taken and each sale is recorded correctly.

### How does a Show & Sell stall work?

For each day during our Show & Sell campaign there will be a designated volunteer sales manager. The sales manager will setup each location at the start of the day and provide the first shift workers with:

- A table with a banner or other signage that will indicate who we are and what we are doing

- A laminated sheet showing the popcorn products and their retail price
- Sufficient popcorn stock to cover that shift
- A cash box containing a \$100 float from which you can give change for popcorn purchases
- A tally sheet on which you will be expected to track each box/bag of popcorn that you sell
- An envelope marked with your shift location and time
- Contact information for that day's sales manager and the Kernel. Reach out to the sales manager first if you need anything and then the Kernel if you can't contact the sales manager.
- A pop-up tent roof if the location is not undercover (e.g. Orem's Diner) to shield you from the sun and potentially rain

Scouts should be dressed in their full Class A uniform. They should be the ones primarily doing the selling but you can (and should) help and encourage them. This is a great opportunity for them to learn how to be confident, talk to people and sell. They should look people in the eye and ask them if they'd like to support the cub scouts. Once they bring customers back to the table they can transact the sale but you should ensure that money (or a check) is taken, popcorn is handed over and the sale is logged on the tally sheet.

At the end of the shift:

- Put \$100 (in small bills) back in the cash box for the next shift
- Check that your takings match the total of product sales on your tally sheet
- Put your completed tally sheet and your takings in your envelope and leave it in the cash box
- Stick around until the next shift workers arrive and ensure that they are all set to start before you leave

If you find yourself running low on stock at any time then call the sales manager. They will then deliver more stock to you.

You might also want to bring a folding chair or two to sit on. Standing can be tough for us old people.

## What advice do you have for our scout sales people?

Here's some basic advice:

- Be out there in front of the table and engaged with passersby
- When someone comes by, be confident, look at them and say in a clear voice "Would you like to buy some popcorn to support the cub scouts?"
- If they say no then to say "Ok, thank you" anyway
- If they say yes then call them over to the table, describe what we have to offer and how it works. Then if they want to buy something the adult usually oversees that to take money and track things correctly.

It's often noted by potential customers that our popcorn is very expensive, and it is. If they want the best deal on popcorn then they should just buy it at the grocery store. We're not just selling popcorn though, we are selling cub scouts. The point is that we are asking people to support scouting. They are buying something that includes an implicit donation ... as well as being really, really good popcorn. It's like when WNYC asks you for a donation but they offer you a tote bag in return.

## Can we take credit card payments?

Technically we could – there are services (e.g. Square, PayPal) that facilitate credit card transactions via a small card reader connected to a smartphone or tablet – but we have not done this in the past and are not doing it this year. The haircut that we would take (and it would come out of the pack's share of the retail price as opposed to that we have to give on to the local council and BSA national) is not insignificant and we (the pack

committee) have felt that we are not losing a significant volume of sales because we don't take credit cards. In future we may think otherwise though.

If someone says that they don't have cash then you can politely point them to a local ATM but don't be too pushy.

## Take Orders

---

### When and where does this part of the campaign happen?

This is the second phase of the campaign but can proceed in parallel with the Show & Sell phase. This is where your son takes orders from family and friends. You can also take the order form in to your workplace and hit up your colleagues for orders too. It works really well if you son can come to the office with you one day. People love a young man in uniform.

### What if we have "misplaced" our Take Order form?

You can get another copy from: <http://www.wiltonpack22.com/news/2015popcorncampaigndetails>. You don't need to use the original form, a copy is just as good.

### When do we collect payment for the orders that our scout takes?

Payment is due in full when you turn in your scout's take order form by Sunday October 25<sup>th</sup> as we have to pay for all popcorn when we place our final order.

**A suggestion from the Kernel:** I collect payment up front from as many patrons as I can. However, there are always family members who don't live nearby or a neighbor or co-worker who can't write a check when you are taking their order. I write one big check (to "Wilton Pack 22") for any of my son's orders that have not been paid when we turn in his form and then we collect from those folks when we deliver the popcorn. Obviously, if a customer is paying on delivery and after we have turned in the payments, then they repay me in cash or write me a personal check since I previously paid Pack 22 for their popcorn order.

### When will the popcorn orders be delivered?

We pick up the popcorn for the Take Order sales in mid-November. Once Kernel Popcorn can sort and distribute the popcorn to the respective dens, you will be able to pick up your scout's popcorn orders for distribution from the den leader or your den's popcorn designee (parents this is a good opportunity to take one responsibility off your den leader's plate). Expect popcorn will be available for pick up on the weekend on November 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> and definitely in time to distribute prior to Thanksgiving.

### What is the deadline for turning in all Scout Take Order forms, prize request and payments?

All forms and payments are due to be turned in to your Den Leaders by **Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup>**. That is Kernel Popcorn's deadline for receiving the forms however your own den leader may ask for the forms sooner based on your den leader's schedule. There is a Pack meeting on Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup> and I think a few dens have den meetings over the 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> weekend and your den leader may want them turned in at the den meeting. If you have questions about your particular den's "Take Order" deadline, ask your den leader.

# Online Sales

---

## How do we register to make online sales?

If you created an account for your scout to sell via the Trail's End website in a previous year then you can reuse it. To create a new account:

- Go to <http://sell.trails-end.com>. Note that this is **sell**.trails-end.com and not www.trails-end.com.
- In the upper right corner, click on "Create an Account" (and select Scout from drop down menu).
- Enter your son's birthdate to verify his age and click "Continue".
- Fill in your son's first name and last initial (for security reasons they only identify the scout this way), enter your contact details (email for you and your scout – can be the same) and choose a username/password. Select our council, district and unit as below and then click "Sign Up".
  - Council: Connecticut Yankee
  - District: Powahay
  - Unit: Pack 22 – Hope Evangelical Free Church
- You will receive an activation email (to the parent email account) entitled "Activate Your Child's Trail's End Scout Account". Click on the large red "Activate Account" image in the email to activate it.
- You will then be taken to a form where you must specify answers to security questions and grant consent for the account to be created. Fill in the information and then click "Approve".
- Then, finally, you will be able to login to the site (<http://sell.trails-end.com/login>) with the username and password that you specified before.
- All Pack 22 scouts have been entered according to their names on the Pack Roster.

## How do people buy popcorn online from my son?

- First you must create an account at <http://sell.trails-end.com/>. See the previous FAQ entry.
- Direct the person who wants to make a purchase to <http://www.trails-end.com>. Note that this is **www**.trails-end.com and not sell.trails-end.com.
- If the person has an Amazon account then they can use it to login here. Have them click on the "Sign in" link in the upper right and then click on the "Use my Amazon account" button. If they do not have an Amazon account then they will need to create a Trail's End account. Have them click on the "New Customer?" link in the upper right and then fill in and submit the form.
- Once they are logged in (either via their Amazon or new Trail's End account) then they can browse the popcorn product. They should immediately be prompted to specify the name of the scout that they want to support. Have them enter the Wilton zip code (06897) and then have them select your son's name from the drop down list. Note that the boys' names are shown as: "<first\_name> <last\_initial> - <parent\_first\_name> - <pack\_number\_name>", so remember how you entered your son's name (e.g. Teddy vs Edward, Sam vs Samuel, etc.). Once they've selected your son's name, have them click on the button to support him (as opposed to just support the Connecticut Yankee council).
- Now they should be able to shop and purchase.
- Note that not all the same products are available for purchase online as we sell locally. Also note that the price of the same product online may be higher than it is for local sale. They also charge, not insignificant, shipping fees. This is just the way that Trail's End does it. Online sales are typically only used for distant family and friends who can't buy product from you locally.

## How do I check the status of my son's online sales?

- Go to <http://sell.trails-end.com> and login with your son's account. Note that this is **sell**.trails-end.com and not www.trails-end.com.
- You should see the status of your online orders in the My Orders report at <http://sell.trails-end.com/scout/orders>.

## Miscellaneous

---

### Who should checks be made payable to?

All checks should be payable to "Wilton Pack 22".

### How do I know what my son earned in Show & Sell credits?

Show & Sell credits (our store sales over those few weekends in September/October) will be posted on the Pack website by Kernel Popcorn. Every boy that works a shift will earn Show & Sell credits. Every boy earns the same amount for every shift worked. We take our total sales from the Show & Sell weekends and divide the sales by the number of shifts worked to determine the per shift credit. You do not get sales credit for the actual shift totals when your scout worked. If we did that, the boys would all fight over the best time slots (VM 3-5) and no one would volunteer to work the less desirable (CT Coffee 8-10) shifts. Remember, first and foremost, this is a scout fundraiser to benefit the Pack and the CT Council and we want the boys to learn good salesmanship skills and work together as a Pack.

### How do I include my son's Show & Sell credits for prize selection?

At the bottom of the Take Order form, you may write down your son's "Show & Sell" credits and add them to his other sales (online if any and the Take Order form total) to determine his "Prize Rewards Total". You should select his prize(s) based on his total of all sales combined. For instance, Jimmy earns \$200 in Show & Sell credits from the store sales, his grandmother buys \$50 in popcorn through his online sales and he turns in \$300 in personal sales from his "Take Order" form. Jimmy has a rewards total of \$550 (\$200 + \$50 + \$300) and he is allowed to select prizes according to the rules outlined below.

### How do we select prizes?

In previous years you were limited to selecting just one prize from the level that you hit with your rewards total. The rules have changed this year though and now you can select either a single prize from your highest prize level or multiple prizes from lower levels that total your rewards total or less. So if Jimmy's rewards total was \$800 then he could choose one prize from the \$750 prize level; or one prize from the \$500 level and one from the \$250 level; or three prizes from the \$250 level.

If you do not select a prize on your order form, Kernel Popcorn will elect a Gift Card as the default.

### Do we need to do anything to receive the "other" prizes mentioned at the Pack Meeting?

No, your Take Order form is for the Trail's End prizes offered only. There are additional prizes from the CT Council and Pack 22 that will be awarded to all scouts that hit certain sales levels:

- Additional gift cards for the top sellers in each Den/Pack
- Two free tickets to a Harlem Globetrotters game for sales of \$750 or above
- Participation in the Trail's End Scholarship Program (funds for college) for sales of \$2,500 or above

The Kernel will track the additional prizes/tickets due and distribute them at a later Pack meeting.