

The Official Sea Scout Uniform: Alternative Sources



The Official Sea Scout Uniform (formerly called New Century Universal Uniform) was designed around garments available from Dickies. These were chosen because of universal availability in men and women's sizes, and affordability. However, you may wish to base your uniform on alternative garments, because of fit, material, or comfort. This document will offer suggestions as to acceptable alternatives.

The [Official Sea Scout Uniform fact sheet](#) says that you should use "Dark Navy Blue shirt; similar to Dickies Nos.1574DN (male) and FS574DN (female), color DN, dark navy" and "Dark Navy Blue trousers; similar to Dickies Nos. 874DN (male) and 774DN (female), color DN, dark navy" as the garments. The key here is "similar to" which allows us some latitude in the actual garments used - this makes it possible to choose alternatives to Dickies if you wish. "Similar to" means that most people wouldn't notice the difference without close inspection - please don't choose something that really doesn't look similar. Whatever you choose needs to be the same dark navy color, and to have a generally similar appearance including the shape of the shirt pocket flaps.

The first source to consider is [SG Trading Post](#). They are an official BSA vendor who can sell you a uniform based on Dickies which already has "SEA SCOUTS BSA", a world crest and a flag patch - that makes getting your uniform together a lot easier. More importantly, SG Trading Post also sells a moisture-wicking uniform shirt which breathes better than the standard Dickies and which may suit your needs.

There are several sources for 'tactical' garments which make for very professional looking Sea Scout uniforms - they are designed for outdoor activity, have superior hot weather comfort, and fit well within the "similar to" standard so as to represent a compliant version of The Official Sea Scout Uniform. Two sources are described here; there are many vendors of tactical gear with similar offerings that are acceptable - be sure to choose the 'dark navy' or 'lapd navy' color.

One very practical alternative can be had from LA Police Gear. The [LA Police Gear Tactical shirt](#) is made of poly cotton ripstop, with a vented back (which makes it significantly cooler in hot weather) and sleeve pockets. It works well in both hot and cold weather and comes out of the dryer looking sharp. [LA Police Gear Operator Tactical Pants](#) (or shorts) are also made of poly cotton ripstop with a good selection of cargo pockets. The pants (but not the shirt) are teflon coated - the teflon coating means that water falls off and they dry nearly instantly. The pants also come in a [women's version](#). You might also want to consider their [Atlas pants](#) - they are a bit more expensive but are slightly elastic for better freedom of movement. For all of these, order the "navy" color - it is nearly identical to the Dickies dark navy color. These are also available from Amazon and some other retailers but they are usually slightly cheaper if ordered

directly from LAPG. LAPG frequently offers one-day sales with 10% off entire orders - if you aren't in a hurry, join their mailing list and wait for a sale. Even without a sale, the cost is similar to Dickies. Please note that LAPG changes their product lineup frequently - if these models are no longer available, search the website for equivalents.

You may also want to consider 5.11 Tactical's [TacLite Pro pants](#) and [shirt](#). The TacLite Pro line is made of a poly-cotton ripstop, and the shirt has a vented back and sleeve pockets (very similar to the LAPG shirt). A unique feature is a hidden cargo pocket behind the main pocket on each side of the shirt that is big enough to carry an 8" tablet, a small notebook, or just some 8.5x11 paper folded in half. The pants are made of the same fabric - both shirt and pants are teflon coated. They have a good selection of cargo pockets, including a small one that makes a fantastic place to carry reading glasses. Order the "Dark Navy" color. There are [women's versions](#) of these too. 5.11 garments are carried by Amazon, Academy, Cabelas and a variety of other retailers, and 5.11 now has retail stores in several cities. They tend to be more expensive than LAPG but do offer some nice features and are much more widely available in stores.

No matter which shirt you choose, consider getting "SEA SCOUTS BSA" embroidered directly on the shirt with white thread. Doing this looks much better and is usually cheaper than the pocket strips - and most recent sewing machines have the ability to embroider block letters. Be sure to have your embroidery person follow the instructions in the Sea Scout manual for size and placement of the letters¹. Note that the hidden pocket behind the shirt pockets on 5.11 shirts and some LAPG shirts makes it difficult to embroider "SEA SCOUTS BSA" on the shirt without sewing that pocket closed - not every embroidery machine has a long enough reach to make that possible, so you may want to discuss with your embroidery person first if you plan to use that pocket.

On both the LAPG and 5.11 shirts, if you are careful, you can preserve the function of the sleeve pockets when sewing on patches - there's just room above them for most council strips, and you can sew unit numerals and position patches over the sleeve pockets without closing them if you are careful. It may help to insert a popsicle stick or something similar to each of the pockets while sewing to avoid inadvertent closure. These pockets can be quite useful to carry a pen and perhaps a small flashlight when wearing a life jacket which covers your shirt pockets, so you'll want to preserve them if you can.

Thanks for your commitment to Sea Scouts and for wearing The Official Sea Scout Uniform. Uniforms are often a matter of strong personal preference - for those of you who have said that they like the uniform but not the Dickies, these alternatives meet both the letter and the spirit intended for The Official Sea Scout Uniform.

¹ Embroidery instructions: As an alternative to the Sea Scouts BSA strip, adult or youth uniforms may have the letters SEA SCOUTS BSA embroidered or sewn in contrasting white thread, $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch above the right pocket measured to the bottom of the letters from the top of the pocket seam. The letters must be in block-style letters $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch in height.