



A total solar eclipse is a rare event. A total solar eclipse whose path crosses right over the heart of the United States? Even rarer.

On Aug. 21, 2017, the solar system serves up a special treat. Aug. 21 is a Monday, but those Scouts and Venturers who are still on summer break should plan a big celebration. Like all the best celebrations, this one comes with its own patch.

There won't be another total solar eclipse over the United States until 2024. After that, you must wait until 2045. In other words, when Aug. 21 arrives, make sure you're ready.

How to earn the BSA 2017 Solar Eclipse patch

1. **Locate a site suitable for viewing the eclipse.** Search Google for "eclipse viewing" and the name of your city or town to find events near you.
 - See the exact path and precise timings [at this NASA site](#).
2. **Describe how to safely view the eclipse.**
 - Never look directly at the sun. Instead, look directly at [these tips from NASA](#) on how to view the eclipse safely.
3. **Discuss with your group** what you saw and felt during the eclipse.
 - Post your comments and eclipse photos on social media using the hashtag #BSAEclipse2017.
4. **Do the following:**
 - **Cub Scouts:** Discuss what a solar eclipse is with your leaders.
 - **Boy Scouts and Varsity Scouts:** Draw a diagram of the positions of the moon, earth, and sun to show how the solar eclipse occurs.
 - **Venturers:** Research Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington's 1919 experiment and discuss how it confirmed Einstein's theory of general relativity.
5. Ask your unit leader to **buy the 2017 Solar Eclipse patch.**
 - You'll find it at your local council service center.