

EARNING A MERIT BADGE

You can learn about sports, crafts, science, trades, business, and future careers as you earn these merit badges. There are more than 100 merit badges. A complete list of all merit badges can be found in the Boy Scout Requirements book, BSA publication # 33218. Any Boy Scout can earn any merit badge at any time. You don't need to have had a rank advancement to be eligible.

PICK A SUBJECT. Talk to your Scoutmaster about your interests. Read the requirements of the merit badges you think might interest you. Pick one to earn. Your Scoutmaster or Unit Advancement Chairperson will give you a name from a list of certified counselors. These counselors have special knowledge in their merit badge subjects and are interested in helping you. Merit badge counselors have been certified by the District Advancement Committee prior to being eligible to counsel you.

SCOUT BUDDY SYSTEM. *You must have another person with you at each meeting with the merit badge counselor.* This person can be another Scout, your parents or guardian, a brother or sister, a relative or a friend.

CALL THE COUNSELOR. GET A SIGNED MERIT BADGE APPLICATION FROM YOUR SCOUTMASTER. Get in touch with the merit badge counselor and tell him or her that you want to earn the merit badge. They may ask you to come and see them so they can tell you what they expect and start helping you to meet the requirements.

When you know what is expected, start to learn and do the things required. Ask your counselor to help you learn the thing you need to know or do. You should read the merit badge pamphlet on the subject. Many troops and school or public libraries have them.

SHOW YOUR STUFF. When you are ready, call the counselor again to make an appointment to meet the requirements. When you go take along the things you have made to meet the requirements. If they are too big to move, take pictures or have an adult tell in writing what you have done. The counselor will ask you to do each requirement to make sure that you know your stuff and have done or can do the things required.

GET THE BADGE. When the counselor is satisfied that you have met each requirement, he or she will sign your application. Give the signed application to your Scoutmaster or Advancement Chairperson so that your merit badge emblem can be secured for you.

REQUIREMENTS. You are expected to meet the requirements as they are stated---**NO MORE AND NO LESS.** You are expected to do exactly what is stated in the requirements. If it says "show or demonstrate that is what you must do. Just telling about it isn't enough. The same thing holds true for such words as "make," "list," "in the field," and "collect," "identify," and label."

The requirements in the merit badge requirements booklet may not match word for word those in the merit badge pamphlets. Where they are different, use the requirements in the book or pamphlet with the latest printing date.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT AND COUNSELOR

1. Only duly certified merit badge counselors may approve merit badge applications. Certification is provided by the District Advancement Committee.
2. MERIT BADGE APPLICATIONS MUST BE SIGNED IN ADVANCE BY THE APPLICANT'S SCOUTMASTER OR ADVISOR.
3. The purpose of merit badge counseling is to find out what has been learned and accomplished. Ability to do things is more valuable than just memorizing information.
4. The counselor may not change requirements in any way but may share personal knowledge or experience that will make the counseling more interesting and valuable.
5. A partial completion on a merit badge must be completed before the Scout's eighteenth birthday.

UNIT LEADER INFORMATION

1. Contact your District Advancement Chairperson if a merit badge that a Scout wants to pursue does not have a certified and registered merit badge counselor listed for that badge on your District Counselor List.
2. Unit leaders should assist Scouts in selecting merit badges from the District Counselor list, dated within the last twelve months, that are not close friends with the Scout so the Scout can experience meeting with different adults.
3. All errors on the merit badge counselor's list should be made known to the District Advancement Chairperson.