

10 Step Method for Earning a Merit Badge

You have been in the Troop a few months now, you have your Scout and Tenderfoot rank taken care of, summer is coming, and now you are thinking about Merit Badges. We encourage every Scout to explore the list of various merit badges. Find ones that interest you and explore things you have not done before. You will work on Merit badges at Summer Camp, during the winter months, and at Merit Badge Challenge, but our Troop encourages every scout to pursue merit badges on their own.

Below are some step-by-step instructions on how you may go about earning a merit badge.

**Earning merit badges should be Scout initiated,
Scout researched, and Scout learned.**

Step 1: Picking a Merit Badge

Pick a merit badge that you are interested in. This could be an Eagle-Required merit badge or one that covers a subject you are really interested in learning more about. Plan to spend time at home, time with your parents, time with other scouts in the Troop, and time with the Merit Badge Counselor who will guide your progress while earning the merit badge.

Step 2: Talk to a Scoutmaster

Talk to the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster and discuss the merit badges that have your interest. He/she will help you acquire a Merit Badge Application (known as a "Blue Card") that will be used to track your progress. Fill out (or Print) the Blue Card and present it to be signed by the Scoutmaster. This will authorize you to contact a Merit Badge Counselor ("MBC"). The Scoutmaster may also give you a contact info for a MBC. It is important that you always keep close track of your Blue Cards.

Step 3: Contact the Merit Badge Counselor

Contact the Merit Badge Counselor for the merit badge you are working on. A list can be found on the Troop or the Dan Beard website (<https://danbeard.org/find-a-merit-badge-counselor/>). We have qualified adults in the Troop that cover many of the merit badges, but sometimes you need to find someone outside the troop. All Merit Badge Counselors are required to be qualified and registered with the council and have Youth Protection Training (YUT).

The Scout should contact the counselor and let them know they plan to start working on the merit badge. The Merit Badge Counselor should then outline their expectations and the Scout should set up some kind of schedule for themselves and the counselor. "Two-deep Leadership" with the Counselor, or the "Buddy System" amongst scouts, must be agreed upon before any meeting with a Counselor.

(If you are planning to earn a Merit Badge at Summer Camp or Merit Badge Challenge, you will not yet need to contact a Counselor. The Troop's Advancement Coordinator will advise you of how you will register and receive Merit Badge Applications in advance of those events.)

Step 4: Gather your Merit Badge materials

Consider creating a folder that you can use to keep a record of your merit badge worksheets, and materials, your rank and achievement progress, and other important information for this badge. This will be a good way to keep the materials organized.

Step 5: Use Merit Badge Pamphlets, Workbooks, and Worksheets

Most Merit Badge Counselors often request you use the Worksheets found at [Merit Badge Worksheets \(usscouts.org\)](http://usscouts.org). Merit Badge Worksheets are convenient to show your knowledge of the merit badge lessons you'll be learning. These worksheets can be downloaded from the Merit Badge Worksheet page on this site, printed and placed in your folder. You might want to refer to the official merit badge book – these list the requirements and are a useful reference. We have a library in the troop; the Troop Librarian looks after the collection of merit badge books and Scouts should check with the librarian for a merit badge book that they can borrow. Official merit badge books may also be purchased at the Scout Shop.

Step 6: Get to work!

Successful completion of your merit badge begins with good planning. It also includes having fun and enjoying the experience of learning a new skill.

Step 7: Have fun!

Please remember that the goal of the Merit Badge Counselor is to help you answer questions and to provide you with a road map for success. It is your responsibility to do the work. Not only will you learn more you will also have a better learning experience from start to finish.

Step 8: Earning the Badge

Once you have completed all learning requirements, you'll need to meet with your Merit Badge Counselor to demonstrate what you've learned. When you meet and satisfy all of the requirements set by the Boy Scouts of America you'll earn that merit badge. Your Counsellor will detach and keep the Counselor's Record portion of the blue card, sign the other two portions of your Merit Badge card "Complete", and return those to you.

Step 9: Submitting your completed card

Now that you've completed your merit badge requirements you can submit you're the Blue Card to the Troop's Advancement Coordinator. Our Troop keeps permanent records of Merit Badges, but you are responsible for having your own independent documentation of your achievements. The Advancement Coordinator will record your merit badge in the troop's database, sign the Applicants Record portion of the Blue Card as "recorded" and return that portion of the Card to you at a Court of Honor. This is your "receipt" and is your evidence for your work and your own record that you have earned the merit badge. Put the card you receive in a safe place for your scouting records.

Step 10: Receive your Merit Badge

You will be eligible to receive your merit badge at the next Troop Court of Honor. At the Court of Honor you will receive your badge and a pocket certificate. Sew the badge on your sash to show off your achievements!

As always ... if there are questions ask a Scoutmaster.

For adults who want to become a MBC:

Follow this link:

http://www.danbeard.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Merit_Badge_Counselor_Registration_Process.pdf

Refer to the Guide to Advancement for further guidance: <https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/33088.pdf>