

## **TROOP 43: The Merit Badge Process**

The requirements for each merit badge appear in the current BSA merit badge pamphlet for that award and in the current edition of the Boy Scout Requirements book, available at Scout shops and Council service centers. Merit Badge worksheets can be found at [www.meritbadge.org](http://www.meritbadge.org)

When a Scout has decided on a merit badge he would like to earn, he obtains from his Scoutmaster the name and phone number of the district/council-approved merit badge counselor. At this time, the Scoutmaster will issue the Scout a signed Application for Merit Badge (blue card).

The Scout telephones the Merit Badge Counselor (MBC) to make an appointment and together they schedule a date and time for the Scout and his Adult to meet. The Scout must never meet a MBC alone; another Adult must be present. The MBC suggests that the Scout bring the Merit Badge Pamphlet, the Application for Merit Badge (blue card), and any work that he has started or accomplished (worksheet), and that he prepare by reading over the requirements.

At their 1<sup>st</sup> meeting, the MBC and the Scout decide upon a tentative schedule for completing the requirements. They should keep the Scout's other obligations (Scouting, school, worship, etc.) in mind, and set dates, times, and locations for future meetings. The MBC will explain the requirements for the badge and help the Scout plan ways to fulfill these requirements so that he can get the most out of the experience.

MBCs help Scouts meet the requirements for the merit badge. They may expand on the information in the merit badge pamphlet based on their knowledge, experience, and expertise in the subject. They are encouraged to tell about their own experiences that positively reinforce the subject matter, but new requirements or additional work may not be added. The Scout is expected to meet the requirements for the merit badge as stated – no more and no less.

The number of counseling sessions depends on the difficulty of the merit badge requirements and the Scout's preparation and ability. The Scout and MBC are expected to meet as many times as necessary for the Scout to complete the requirements for the merit badge. The advancement program allows the Scout to move ahead in his own way and at his own pace. Rather than competing against others, he challenges himself to go as far as his ambition will carry him. The rate of advancement depends upon his interest, effort, and ability.

As the Scout completes each requirement, he is always tested (but with an Adult present), and as each requirement is completed, the MBC mark it on the application. When all the requirements for the merit badge are fulfilled, the MBC certifies that the Scout has completed the requirements. The Scout then returns his completed Application for Merit Badge (all 3 parts of the blue card) to the Scoutmaster or Advancement Chair.

## **Steps Required of the Scout:**

1. Scout makes decision to earn a merit badge (MB).
2. Scout contacts his Scoutmaster and requests to work the MB. The Scoutmaster provides the Scout with the name of a Merit Badge Counselor (MBC). The Scoutmaster may also defer to the Advancement Chair.
3. The Scoutmaster provides the Scout with a Blue Card. The Scout fills in his legal name (*not a nickname or middle name*), address and the complete name of the merit badge.\* The Scoutmaster then signs the Blue Card and hands it back to the Scout.
4. The Application for Merit Badge (blue card) has 3 parts which MUST be kept intact:

Section #1 for the Scout/Applicant, Section #2 for the MBC, Section #3 for the Scoutmaster

5. Scout becomes familiar with the requirements of the MB by discussion with the MBC and/or by reference to the Boy Scouts Requirement Handbook (a brief description of the rank advancements and the merit badges) and/or the respective merit badge pamphlet. The Scout should print out a copy of the MB Worksheet from [www.meritbadge.org](http://www.meritbadge.org)
6. The Scout keeps all 3 parts of the blue card until he has completed all requirements of the MB. After attending BSA camp, any incomplete blue cards (partials) are handed in to the Advancement Chair for Troop Records until the Scout wants to work on the MB again.
7. Scout works on and completes the MB requirements.
8. As steps are completed, the MBC initials the blue card, noting the steps as completed.
9. When all requirements are completed, the MBC signs the blue card, noting that all requirements are complete, and returns the blue card to the Scout. The MBC will keep a portion of the blue card for his or her own records. The Scout then hands in all two parts of the blue card to the Scoutmaster. Do not separate sections of the blue card.
10. The Scout has completed and earned the merit badge, but has not yet been formally recognized for the achievement. Recognition occurs at the semi-annual Court of Honor. At this time the Scout will receive the merit badge patch and formal BSA merit badge card. The merit badge cards should be kept in a safe place and the merit badge should be sewn onto a merit badge sash, as soon as possible. There will be a fee for lost merit badges if they need to be replaced.
11. The Advancement Chair submits the blue card to Council where it is signed/stamped/registered in the Council database. Council keeps one portion of the blue card and the applicant portion is kept by the Advancement Chair in Troop Records. The MB is also entered into the Troop 43 Advancement database. The Advancement Chair purchases the merit badge and merit badge card which will be presented to the Scout at the Court of Honor.

*\*The name on the Blue Card MUST match the name that was filled out by the Scout's Adult on his Application to the Troop. (Example: Joseph, not Joey; only full names as it must match the name in Council's database in order to get credit for the merit badge.)*

## HOW TO EARN A MERIT BADGE:

1. Pick a Merit Badge: [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org) [www.meritbadge.org](http://www.meritbadge.org)

Or buy *The Merit Badge Requirements Book* from the Scout Shop.



2. Read the requirements of the badge.

3. Ask Mr. Parker if you can work on the Merit Badge.

Mr. Parker will give you a **BLUE CARD**.

Fill in your: FULL NAME, your address, Troop 43, T. Roosevelt Council, and the name of the Merit Badge.

Return the card to Mr. Parker. Mr. Parker will then sign it and you must hold onto it until your Merit Badge is completed.

Information for Applicant		Information for Counselor	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A merit badge application can be approved only by a registered merit badge counselor.</li><li>You must have a buddy with you (Scout buddy system) at each meeting with the merit badge counselor.</li><li>Turn in your approved application to your unit leader. You will be awarded the merit badge emblem and certificate at a suitable occasion.</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Merit badge applications must be signed in advance by the applicant's unit leader.</li><li>The Scout must have his buddy (Scout buddy system) in attendance at all instructional sessions.</li><li>You may not change any requirement, but you may share your knowledge or experience that will make the counseling more interesting and valuable.</li></ul>	
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APPLICATION FOR MERIT BADGE	
Name _____	
Address _____	
City _____	
Is a registered _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Boy Scout	<input type="checkbox"/> Varsity Scout <input type="checkbox"/> Explorer
of _____ Troop, team, post, ship No. _____	
District _____	
Council _____	
and is qualified to begin working for merit badge noted on the reverse side.	
Date _____	Signature of unit leader _____
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA	
No. 34124	1995 Printing

4. Mr. Parker will give you the name + phone number of a Merit Badge Counselor to call. **Write it down.**

5. Call the Merit Badge Counselor: Be Polite and Speak Clearly.

Arrange WHEN and WHERE to meet your Merit Badge Counselor.

**Write it down.**

The Counselor may ask to meet with you before you start working on your badge to explain what is expected. Or the Counselor may want to meet you after you've started some of the requirements. Ask him what you should do first.

6. Use the Buddy System: You must have an Adult with you whenever you meet with your Merit Badge Counselor. |

7. Work on Your Badge: Buy and read the Merit Badge Booklet. Print out a Merit Badge Worksheet to help you keep track of your work ([www.meritbadge.org](http://www.meritbadge.org)). Take as much time as you need.

8. Show Your Stuff: Call the Counselor again to make another appointment. The Counselor will ask you questions and test what you've learned. You are expected to meet the requirements - no more and no less. You must do exactly what is stated in the requirements... such as "...show, demonstrate, make, list, collect or identify."

9. Done? When the Merit Badge Counselor is satisfied that you have met all of the badge requirements he will sign your Blue Card.

10. Return the completed Blue Card to Mr. Parker or the Troop Advancement Chairs, Mrs. Ponzo or Mrs. Ditrano.

When do I get my Merit Badge?

At the next Court of Honor.

# Calendar of New Merit Badges

(from blog: [ByranOnScouting](#) – not our Troop’s Bryan Thompson!)

**Last update: May 19, 2014**

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## Newest Merit Badges — Coming Soon

*(Next to be released listed first)*



**Animation**

*Estimated release: 2014*

Requirements: TBD

Description: Computer or traditional animation tasks that will test a Scout’s creativity, artistic skills, and storytelling abilities.



**Signs, Signals, and Codes**

*Estimated release: 2014*

Requirements: TBD

Description: American Sign Language (ASL) is the third most used language in the United States. The Signs, Signals, and Codes merit badge will cover Morse code, ASL, Braille, signaling, trail markings, and other nonverbal communications. Did you know that some of these have even saved people’s lives?



## Computer-Aided Design

*Estimated release: 2015*

Requirements: TBD

Description: Teaching boys to use computer systems to assist in the creation, modification, analysis, or optimization of a design.



## Advanced Computing

*Estimated release: 2015*

Requirements: TBD

Description: The next generation of computing.

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# Major Updates

*(Most-recent update listed first)*



## Swimming

*Update released May 2014*

Note: This merit badge will become Eagle-required on Jan. 1, 2014

New requirements and blog post: [Click here](#).



## **Cooking**

*Update released December 2013*

Note: This merit badge became Eagle-required on Jan. 1, 2014.

New requirements: [Click here](#).

Related blog post: [More details on the soon-to-be Eagle-required Cooking merit badge](#)

## **Moviemaking (was Cinematography)**



*Update released October 2013*

Note: This merit badge received a name change and a few requirements tweaks. The merit badge formerly called Cinematography is now Moviemaking, which better reflects the requirements.

New requirements and blog post: [Click here](#).



## **Cycling**

*Update released at 2013 Jamboree.*

New requirements: [Click here](#).

Related blog post: [The trail to Cycling merit badge just got a bit rougher](#)

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# Newest Merit Badges — Available Now

*(Newest listed first)*



## **Digital Technology**

*Released: April 16, 2014*

Requirements: [Click here.](#)

Note: This merit badge will replace Computers merit badge, but Scouts may earn and wear both merit badges. More details about the phase-out of Computers MB [here](#).

Description: Technology has come a long way since Computers merit badge was first introduced in 1967. This badge will teach Scouts about technology in the digital age.



## **Mining in Society**

*Released: Monday, Feb. 24, 2014*

Requirements: [Click here](#)

Description: Mining has been an important part of the United States since the 19th century. Today, the U.S. mining industry employs 3 million people, directly and indirectly, and is a major contributor to the global mining landscape. I expect this merit badge will cover the history of mining, explore the status of mining in the 21st century, and introduce Scouts to modern mining careers.

Related blog posts:

[Here's the Mining in Society MB patch and first two requirements](#)  
[Scouts preview Mining in Society at 2013 jamboree](#)

## **Sustainability**





*Released: July 15, 2013*

Note: This merit badge will be Eagle-required. Scouts must earn either this or Environmental Science.

Requirements: [Click here.](#)

Description: A badge to teach Scouts about climate change, species extinction, resource extraction, green chemistry, recycling, and zero-waste manufacturing.

Related Post: [Cooking, Sustainability merit badges to become Eagle-required](#)

## Programming



*Released: July 15, 2013*

Requirements: [Click here.](#)

Description: A tech-focused merit badge for the 21st Century.

## Game Design



*Released on March 6, 2013*

Requirements: [Click here.](#)

Description: Slated to include both traditional games and video games, this sure-to-be-popular merit badge will test Scouts' creativity, problem-solving skills, and planning abilities.

Related Post: [First look at Game Design merit badge](#), including details on how to help launch the badge at the 2013 jamboree

## Search and Rescue



*Released on Aug. 20, 2012*

Requirements: [Click here](#).

Description: Scouts won't fly helicopters, but they'll get practice in finding and rescuing people in case a real emergency ever happens.

More information: In the [BSA's press release](#)



## Kayaking

*Released on June 13, 2012*

Pamphlet cover image: [here](#)

Requirements: [Click here](#).

Description: A basic-level merit badge for flat-water kayaking — whitewater kayaking will still fall under [Whitewater merit badge](#).



## Welding

*Released on Feb. 24, 2012*

[Requirements](#)

[Bryan on Scouting post](#): "Requirements, launch info, video"



## **Robotics**

*Released on April 11, 2011*

### [Requirements](#)

[Bryan on Scouting post](#): “Robotics merit badge launch includes all-new interactive resource center”



## **Chess**

*Released in September 2011*

### [Requirements](#)

[Bryan on Scouting post](#): “Human chess match will celebrate the new Chess merit badge”



## **Geocaching**

*Released in December 2010*

### [Requirements](#)

[Bryan on Scouting post](#): “Smartphones: The modern-day camper’s Swiss Army knife?”

[Scouting magazine story](#): “The Real Game Boys”



## **Inventing**

*Released in June 2010*

[Requirements](#)

[Bryan on Scouting post](#): “Boy Scouts and Lemelson-MIT Program introduce Inventing merit badge”



**Scouting Heritage**

*Released in May 2010*

[Requirements](#)

[Bryan on Scouting post](#): “Boy Scouts of America releases Scouting Heritage merit badge”



**Scuba Diving**

*Released on Dec. 1, 2009*

[Requirements](#)

[Bryan on Scouting post](#): “Scuba diving merit badge released”

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