

rcscouts.org
(Rainbow Council)

Merit Badge Counselor Instructors Guide

**Merit Badge Program Quiz

uscscouts.org

Earning merit badges allows Scouts to:

- Explore many fields
- Helps them round out their skills
- Introduces them to subjects that may become
 - Lifelong interest
 - Rewarding careers
- Gain self-confidence from overcoming obstacles to achieve a goal

There are 125 different merit badges at this time.

Subject matters range from vocational and career introduction to personal development, hobbies, sports, high adventure, citizenship, and life-skills development.

There are 12 Eagle required merit badges, but a Scout is free to pursue any merit badge he wishes if he can find a merit badge counselor.

Every merit badge is designed to:

- Teach the Scout new skills
- Provide an opportunity for personal growth
- Encourage him to challenge himself
- Have fun in the process

Merit badge counselors provide an excellent means for a Scout to grow through his exposure to outstanding adults who serve as examples and mentors to them. This is the Scout's opportunity to deal with business leaders, trained specialists, and experienced hobbyists. A merit badge counselor may counsel his own son if he or she meets the requirements.

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Merit Badge Counselor Requirements and Registration

- Register with BSA
- Be 18 years old or older
- Be of good character
- Be proficient in the merit badge subject by:
 - Vocation
 - Avocation
 - Special training
- Be able to work with Scout-age youth
- Be approved by the district/council advancement committee

Merit Badge Counselor Must Complete

1. BSA Adult Application form (code 42)
2. BSA Merit Badge Counselor Information form
 - a. No limit on number of merit badges
 - b. Must be approved for each one
 - c. Renew registration annually
3. BSA Youth Protection training

Merit Badge Process

Requirements for each merit badge can be found:

- Current BSA merit badge pamphlet for each award
- Current edition of Boy Scout Requirements book
- On line www.rcscouts.org, Advancement, Merit Badges

The Scout needs to get approval from his Scoutmaster to begin the merit badge with a counselor. The Scoutmaster needs to sign and date the Application for Merit Badge (blue card) before the merit badge begins.

A merit badge counselor may work with one Scout (with a "buddy"), a small group of Scouts, or the whole Troop. However, Scouts need to be tested and passed individually to make sure he has completed all the required work.

A counselor may **not** meet alone with a Scout. A Scout must have a "buddy" present at all sessions. It can be another Scout, parent, brother, sister, relative, or friend.

A merit badge counselor may **not** modify the merit badge requirements. He may **not** add any requirements or leave any requirements out.

The Scout must do **exactly** what is stated in the requirements: "make", "list", "show or demonstrate", "in the field", "collect, identify, and label".

Counselors may provide instruction and guidance but may not complete the Scout's work. Counselors may share their own knowledge beyond the requirements.

Meet as many times as necessary for the Scout to complete the requirements.

Counselors should initial and date each requirement as the Scout completes them. If the Scout does not finish all the requirements, give him the partial blue card and it is his responsibility to complete the requirements and get back to you. This often happens at summer camp.

There is **no time limit** except for age 18 to finish a merit badge.

The Scout uses the requirements in effect when he began the merit badge, even if the requirements change at a later date. The Scout can choose to change to the new requirements but must do all the new requirements. He can **not** mix old and new requirements.