The Guide to Advancement is a comprehensive resource that helps Scouting leaders understand the requirements for earning merit badges. It is available online and in print, and it is updated regularly to reflect the latest changes in Scouting programs. The Guide includes detailed information on all 137 merit badges, including requirements, optional aids, and guidelines for conducting merit badge counseling. Additionally, the Guide contains important information about the Scouting organization and its mission, as well as insights into the history and philosophy of Scouting. Whether you are a scout leader, a scout, or simply interested in learning more about Scouting, the Guide to Advancement is an essential resource that can help you make the most of your Scouting experience.
Welcome to Merit Badge Counseling

Being a scoutmaster involves a lot of hard work and many responsibilities. You may find it helpful to be at the ready to help your scouts with their merit badge projects. If you’ve never been involved in a merit badge program before, you may be interested in learning more about this exciting and meaningful part of the Boy Scouting program.

Scout leaders who wish to become Merit Badge Counselors must complete the online Adult Volunteer Youth Protection Training, which provides an overview of what is expected of a Merit Badge Counselor. Complete the Adult Volunteer Youth Protection Training at https://www.scouting.org/GuideToAdvancement.aspx.

Requirements—No More, No Less

The Scout is expected to meet the requirements of the merit badge in the order given. The merit badge counselor provides assistance to help the Scout prepare for and understand the project. The counselor is not expected to just announce that the Scout has completed the merit badge. Therefore, the counselor must help the Scout do the work and be sure the work is verified.

The Scout does not have to know how many of his requirements he has completed before the badge is completed. The requirements can be completed any time, as the Scout works on his interests. The requirements also are posted online at www.scouting.org. The Scout does not have to know how many of his requirements he has completed before the badge is completed. The requirements can be completed any time, as the Scout works on his interests. The requirements also are posted online at www.scouting.org.
Welcome to Merit Badge Counseling

Your scout troop meets as a leader and matter-of-fact, but the actual work is in the merit badge counselor. Your role is to give the authoritative, practical advice that is necessary for meeting the requirements. As a merit badge counselor, you have the opportunity to help your trooper to a successful and meaningful experience.

This text is written for all troop leaders, adult advisors, and adults who counsel younger people in Scouting. This text is not intended for the professional counselor or the person who has a high degree of expertise in a particular subject. It is written to help you know what is required to achieve a merit badge, what is the purpose of the badge, how to achieve the badge, and how to make sure the young person gains credit for his or her work.

A Guide for Merit Badge Counseling

I. Advancement and the Merit Badge Plan

As part of the advancement program of the Boy Scouts of America, merit badges are one of the most unique educational tools ever devised. Advancement is the process by which a youth moves from rank to rank in Scouting. Everything done by a Scout with any approved merit badge contributes to advancement in key Scouting, including earning merit badges, as designed for that rank in the program. These merit badges allow the Scout to achieve the merit badge counselor.

This approach recognizes that little knowledge is too little knowledge, and that a reasonably complete knowledge is too much knowledge. The merit badge counselor should be aware of this deeper aspect of the subject from his or her knowledge of the subject.

II. What is a Merit Badge?

The merit badge itself is a simple embroidered patch. Subjects range from careers and life skills to health. The advancement method encourages young men and women to achieve a goal, sometimes overcoming obstacles and solving problems.

The merit badge counselor serves as both a teacher and mentor as Scouts work on a merit badge. In one way, the counselor is an examiner. In a larger sense, the counselor uses the information and skills, and perhaps introduces them to subjects that are not usually covered in the regular curriculum. The intangible end result of earning it, though, is that the Scout has fun while he gains self-confidence and perhaps introduces him or her to a career.

The advancement process in Scouting is designed to help youths have an exciting and meaningful experience.

III. Who Can Be a Merit Badge Counselor?

All merit badge counselors must register with the Boy Scouts of America. Check with your local council to verify counselor requirements. The merit badge counselor should feel free to discuss this with him and be bold in person. Possible reasons why you might not make the badge a better experience for all concerned.

IV. Who Can Be a Merit Badge Counselor?

The merit badge counselor is a bond of mutual respect often develops between you and your youth. A well-qualified merit badge counselor can enhance a youth's attention span through effective models. A well-qualified merit badge counselor can enhance a youth's attention span through effective models. A well-qualified merit badge counselor can enhance a youth's attention span through effective models. A well-qualified merit badge counselor can enhance a youth's attention span through effective models.

V. How to Obtain Your Adult Application

To be approved for the role of merit badge counselor, you must:

1. Be at least 18 years old
2. Be a member of the Boy Scouts of America
3. Complete at least one year of volunteer service
4. Pass a background check
5. Have the required qualifications for the subject
6. Have the ability to evaluate a Scout's work
7. Demonstrate an understanding of the badge requirements
8. Have the ability to explain the requirements
9. Be willing to provide the required commitment
10. Have the time to dedicate to the role

VI. What Must Be Approved by the Local Council

The merit badge counselor must be approved by the local council. Prior to being approved, you will be asked to complete an Adult Application, No. 524-501A. Submit the application to your local council for training dates and registration. After completion, print a copy of the Youth Protection training certificate and attach it to your Adult Application. Submit the completed application to your local council for training dates and registration.

VII. Other Requirements for Serving in This Role

Other requirements for serving in this role are:

• Must have good rapport with youth
• Must be age 18 or older
• Must have the skills and education in the subjects
• Must have good rapport with youth-age youths and their family

VIII. What is My Responsibility?

The counselor's responsibilities include:

1. Assist Scouts as they plan the assigned projects and activities to meet all the requirements.
2. Work with them through the implementation and demonstration on how to meet the various requirements.
3. Sign off with your approval once you are satisfied that the work has been completed.

IX. How Do I Agree to Scout?

Before you work with your youth, you must begin by signing the Boy Scout youth protection application. This ensures that you have access to your membership card.

Current Merit Badge Counselors

In order to register an adult as a merit badge counselor, an adult's volunteer Youth Training must be current with the Indian Heritage Council. A Scout's training is not current, you must go to www.scouting.org, create a user account using your BSA membership ID number, and complete the training. After all internal service committeemen and council volunteers have access to their membership card.

New Merit Badge Counselors

Registering as a merit badge counselor for the first time requires completing the merit badge training prior to registration. Similar to the above procedure, new merit badge counselors should contact the merit badge councilor with whom the volunteer is working to meet the requirements, which allows them to take the training. For those individuals who wish to attend an introductory merit badge counselor training, please contact your local council for training dates and locations.

In addition to a copy of the Youth Protection training certificate and the adult application, the merit badge counselor should be either a Scout Leader, a Scout (not an instructed youth leader, or a Scoutmaster of a counselor to contact. However, you might only want to start by finding out what the Scout already knows. He may already have worked on some of the requirements. You can set up additional meetings with the Scout—not only for the purpose of passing him on the requirements, but also to discuss his progress. You may want to start by finding out what the Scout already knows, and you may want to work with him. If you have any doubts, contact the local scout leader. You may find it helpful to ask some questions about the badge.
Welcome to Merit Badge Counseling

As a Scout counselor, you are a leader and mentor to the boys in your unit. You are responsible for helping the Scout progress through the challenging Scouting experiences. A Scout counsels is a vital part of the Scouting program, and the recognition they will earn for their role will highlight the importance of their service. The Merit Badge Counseling role is a vital part of the Scouting program, and the recognition they will earn for their role will highlight the importance of their service.

Whether you are a new counselor or one who is already serving in the role, consider this opportunity to meet with your local council leadership.

New counselors are strongly urged to check with their local councils and should plan on attending Merit Badge Counselor Orientation. This opportunity allows volunteers to get their questions answered by experienced Scouters. If a training opportunity is unavailable in time to begin teaching merit badges, volunteers can access the online Merit Badge Counseling course.

The Most Important Requirements

1. Must be a qualified adult leader

2. Coach them through interviews and remaining requirements, or give guidance in areas that the Scout needs help with.

3. Must be an individual of good character

4. Must be at least 16 years old

5. Must have the skills and education in the subject

6. Must have good rapport with Scout-age youths and their parents

7. Must be approved by the local council

8. Must qualify as a merit badge counselor with the Boy Scouts of America

9. Must be a registered adult with the BSA Youth Protection training certificate

10. Must have completed all the required steps

Step By Step

Through your association with pupil members, keep in mind you are assisting unit leaders in the advancement program. The subordinate role, therefore, will make a difference. Whether a Scout earns the award or not, a volunteer will become lifelong interests or rewarding careers.

In order to reregister as a merit badge counselor, Current Merit Badge Counselors need to:

1. Assist Scouts as they plan the assigned projects and activities to meet the requirements.

2. Coach them through interviews and all of the remaining requirements, or give guidance in areas that the Scout needs help with.

3. Must be a qualified adult leader

4. Must be at least 16 years old

5. Must have the skills and education in the subject

6. Must have good rapport with Scout-age youths and their parents

7. Must be approved by the local council

8. Must qualify as a merit badge counselor with the Boy Scouts of America

9. Must be a registered adult with the BSA Youth Protection training certificate

10. Must complete all of the required steps

Requirements—No More, No Less

There are more than 130 merit badges a Scout can earn, ranging from cooking to field hockey, sports, and citizenship. Earning these recognitions allows Scouts to explore many fields, helps them round out their education, and can lead to accomplishments that can be a source of pride.

www.scouting.org/meritbadge/counselor

The Scout does not have to know how to do the first step of any of the projects. The requirements do not have to be broken down step by step. The Scout should be able to do the project on his own or with your guidance.

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To serve the Scout with valuable information on merit badges, you must be aware of what is most interesting to you and what is difficult. The final choice—the selection of what he will do with himself in life—is up to him. You can provide the Scout with valuable information on merit badges, even if you are a volunteer with no prior knowledge or experience.

From the Guide to Advancement

The Guide to Advancement specifies Work sheets and other materials that may be of assistance in earning merit badges are available from a variety of places including official sources on the Internet and even troop libraries. Use of these aids is permissible along with the materials contained in the merit badge pamphlets and the Scout handbook. Completing all requirements must be done on an individual basis. A youth may not qualify just by being a member of a group that is working on a merit badge. However, completing the requirements must always be done on an individual basis. A youth must qualify personally satisfying all requirements that they can meet all the requirements. This may be hard to do in a group. When you look across a chapter, that each participant must do, you can see that many of the requirements are written in a way that is most interesting to you and what is difficult. The final choice—the selection of what he will do with himself in life—is up to him. You can provide the Scout with valuable information on merit badges, even if you are a volunteer with no prior knowledge or experience.

If the merit badge subject relates to your present or previous profession, then your place of work might be the best place to meet with Scouts. Ward-related subjects usually are handled in your home. Here you will have the proper materials to do your counseling, and you can find additional information in other materials such as books, pamphlets, or periodicals.

Where Do You Meet?

Frequently the skills of a subject can be taught to a group, but most are handled in your home. Here you will have the proper materials to do your counseling, and you can find additional information in other materials such as books, pamphlets, or periodicals.

Do You Need a Merit Badge Pamphlet?

The information in the pamphlet will be found to be of great interest to you, but it will help you to know that the youth has been instructed in all areas of the requirements. The digital versions include special features such as videos, extra photos, and other supplemental information.

Can You Sell Your Subject?

Your discussion with the Scout on meeting the requirements is of interest to both of you. You might wonder, “If the requirements or pamphlet content, please email your questions to BoyScoutsOfAmerica@scouting.org, or call 800-448-3111.”

Why Volunteer

The BSA recognizes that the merit badge counselor is the cornerstone to the merit badge program. By offering your time, expertise, and other invaluable help to your local Scout groups, you help shape the future of our communities. The Boy Scouts of America is proud of its tradition of volunteer service. It does not endorse merit badge opportunities where pay is paid directly to individuals or groups of individuals.
relating his merit badge work with his life as he goes difficult. The final choice—the selection of what is most interesting to you and what is information on career possibilities, show him You can provide the Scout with valuable knowledge and experience.

Do You Need a Merit Badge Pamphlet?

The information in the pamphlet is the brand to the pin, but it will help you to know what the pin is worth. A reading list appears at the front of each pamphlet, with suggestions for projects that interest them. It’s a good idea to obtain the latest printing of the pamphlet on your subject. It will contain the most recent requirements and information. The printing date can be found on page 2 of each pamphlet. A complete list of merit badge pamphlets is printed in the front of each pamphlet. For the latest revisions, by checking this list in any your pamphlet has been updated. If you are unsure about the requirements or pamphlet content, please email your guide to Advancement

Where Do You Meet?

If the merit badge subject relates to your position or profession, then your place of work might be the best place to meet with Scouts. Hobby-related subjects usually are handled in your home. Here you will have the proper materials for coaching, the space to build a model, or a place to work on a project. Clubs or special equipment is at hand. Biking, Horseback riding, swimming and boating are good activities. Remember, when meeting with your Scouts, always have yourribly with you.

How Many at a Time?

Frequently the skills of a subject can be taught to several Scouts at one time, a real advantage for you. For a few subjects, coaching will happen in the field or where the Scout must discuss, tell, show, or demonstrate, etc. Note that Scouts shall not be suffice where a requirement calls for something in writing, but this would not work for a requirement where the Scout must demonstrate. Note that Scouts shall not be required to use these hearing aids in order to complete a merit badge.

Can You Sell Your Subject?

Quitting is a common trait and programs materials by meetings if you would. The guided approach of several weeks is acceptable in your area and takes all of your knowledge and experience. You can easily expose him to the many skills that are on each are unsuitable for you. You can provide the Scout with valuable information and experiences. How do you know what is the most interesting to you and what is difficult. The final choice—the selection of what he will do with himself in—up to him. However, you will appreciate the help in planning his merit badge work, as if he goes in depth, you enhance, or perhaps a military career.