



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Troop 146

St. Francis Church
308 Jefferson Street
Hoboken, NJ 07030
www.Troop146.org

Scout Rank Requirement 2d

Describe what merit badges are and how they are earned.

NOTE: READ THIS FIRST! IT HAS ALL THE ANSWERS!

_____ Name

Some things to know about Boy Scout merit badges:

- There are lots of merit badges available to earn, over 130. Many of them are genuinely fun. The requirements for each are posted on the web: <http://usscouts.org/meritbadges.asp> Scroll down the list on the left edge of the page.
- You can start working and earning merit badges just as soon as you join the Scout troop. They'll be there waiting for you when you will need them later to advance a rank (see next paragraph).
- There are seven ranks in the Boy Scouts, from "Scout" through "Eagle." The first four ranks require you to learn about 20 skills each, but none of the skills involve merit badges. The last three ranks are all about earning merit badges with a few extra requirements thrown in.
- If you check out the merit badge website mentioned above, you'll see that the list starts with 18 "**Required Merit Badges.**" For example, as a Boy Scout you are expected to know first aid and you are expected to be an experienced camper, so these two merit badges are required for rank advancement. As an example, for the rank of Star Scout, they want you to earn any four out of the required set. Then earn three more for Life. Then earn seven more for Eagle.
- One of the questions below asks, "What are merit badges?" Here's the official answer: "Merit Badges are awards earned by Scouts based on activities within the area of study by completing a list of periodically updated requirements." Note the part about "periodically updated." As an example, the Digital Technology merit badge requirements have changed frequently to keep up with constant changes in the computer industry.
- Several of the questions below talk about a "blue card." This is what one looks like:

Information for Applicant

- A merit badge application can be approved **only** by a registered merit badge counselor.
- You **must** have a buddy with you (Scout buddy system) at each meeting with the merit badge counselor.
- Turn in your approved application to your unit leader. You will be awarded the merit badge emblem and certificate at a suitable occasion.

Information for Counselor

- Merit badge applications **must** be signed in advance by the applicant's unit leader.
- The Scout **must** have his buddy (Scout buddy system) in attendance at all instructional sessions.
- You may not change any requirement, but you may share your knowledge or experience that will make the counseling more interesting and valuable.

Requirement No. and letter	Date of approval	Counselor initial	Requirement No. and letter	Date of approval	Counselor initial

APPLICATION FOR MERIT BADGE

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

is a registered
 Boy Scout Varsity Scout Venturer
of _____ Troop, team, crew, ship No. _____

District _____

Council _____

I have discussed this merit badge with this Scout and recommended at least one merit badge counselor.

Date _____ Signature of unit leader _____

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- Several of the questions below talk about a "merit badge counselor." For each merit badge you plan to work on, you must consult with a counselor who is an adult volunteer with expertise in the area of interest. For example, if you want to earn the Architecture merit badge, you must hook up with a real architect willing to counsel the badge and sign off on your blue card.
- The Boy Scout organization has a library of pamphlets, one for each merit badge. You can buy them from the online Scout catalog store. Each pamphlet starts off with a list of requirements, but you can also see the requirements on the website named above. However, each pamphlet also contains a wealth of information about that merit badge's subject. Many times the pamphlet will contain all the information you will need to earn the badge.
- A completion is when the counselor signs the blue card and gives it to the Scoutmaster. Cloth badges are handed out during a Court of Honor award ceremony in March, June, September, and December. The 18 required badges are embroidered with a silver edge, and the others have a green edge. The way to display them is to buy a sash and sew them on.
- There are three ways to earn a merit badge: easy, medium, and hard. There's a chart with details about easy-medium-hard on the last page of this document, but all three ways to earn involve these 5 steps:
 1. **DECIDE:** Decide which badge you want to earn. For example, Music. Review the requirements -- Music has five.
 2. **BLUE CARD:** Ask the Scoutmaster to sign and give you a blue card.
 3. **COUNSELOR:** Find a registered counselor for the badge and arrange to get together.
 4. **SHOW:** Show the counselor that you can pass all the requirements. He or she will sign the blue card as "complete."
 5. **COMPLETION:** Give the completed signed blue card back to the Scoutmaster. Your chart on the troop website will be updated, and you'll receive the cloth merit badge at the next Court of Honor.

1. What are merit badges? (choose one)
 - A merit badge is earned when a Scout works on a service project, such as collecting food for needy families.
 - A merit badge is earned when a Scout does something heroic, such as saving a drowning person.
 - A merit badge is an award earned by a Scout based on completing activities within some area of study, such as Robotics.

2. How many merit badges do you have to earn to reach Tenderfoot rank? (choose one)
 - You need to earn 4 merit badges to reach Tenderfoot rank.
 - No merit badges are needed to reach Tenderfoot rank, but you have to pass other requirements.

3. How many merit badges do you have to earn to reach Star rank? (choose one)
 - No merit badges are needed to reach Star rank, but you have to pass other requirements.
 - You need to earn 6 merit badges to reach Star rank, but they can be any 6.
 - You need to earn 6 merit badges to reach Star rank, and 4 must come from the "Required" list.

4. Of the 130 or so merit badges that exist, how many are designated as "Required?" For example, "First Aid" is required because we want every Scout to know lots of first aid. (choose one)
 - 0 merit badges are required. They're all optional.
 - 14 merit badges are required. The rest are all optional.
 - 18 merit badges are required. The rest are all optional.

5. **SuperScout jeopardy-style question:** The answer is "14 required merit badges." What is the question?

6. The troop needs a way to track which Scout earned which merit badges, and so we use blue cards, one card per Scout per badge. How do you go about getting a blue card in order to get started? (Hint: see the chart on the last page of this document.)

7. Scout rules specify that you must work with a certified adult merit badge counselor. They will verify that you know your stuff and will sign off on your blue card. How do you find an adult counselor to work with? (Hint: see the chart on the last page of this document.)

Easy way: _____

Medium way: _____

Hard way: _____

8. On a few formal occasions, you'll want to display all the cloth merit badges you have earned. How to do it?

EASY: Attend a week of Boy Scout summer camp	MEDIUM: Earn one of the merit badges handled by Boy Scout Troop 146	HARD: Select an unusual merit badge, such as Dentistry
1. DECIDE: The camp website will post a list of merit badges being offered. Make your selections and click OK.	1. DECIDE: The troop website lists about 30 merit badges. Make a selection. http://www.troop146.org/scout-portal/advancement-resources/ Click on "Troop 146 Merit Badge Counselors"	1. DECIDE: Here's a good website that lists all 130+ merit badges and their requirements: http://usscouts.org/usscouts/meritbadges.asp
2. BLUE CARD: When you arrive at the camp, the Scoutmaster will hand you one blue card for each merit badge you signed up for.	2. BLUE CARD: Ask the Scoutmaster to sign and give you a blue card.	2. BLUE CARD: Ask the Scoutmaster to sign and give you a blue card.
3. COUNSELOR: Show up at the designated location where a counselor will be waiting for you. Give him the blue card.	3. COUNSELOR: The Troop 146 website names the counselor for each badge. Contact them and arrange to get together.	3. COUNSELOR: The Scoutmaster will access a private database and give you 4 or 5 names and contact information. Call around until you find a counselor willing to work with you. Arrange to get together. He may insist that you come with a buddy.
4. SHOW: Show the counselor that you can pass all the requirements. Some of the requirements must be done at home before you arrive at camp. They will sign the blue card as "complete" (or maybe as "partial").	4. SHOW: Show the counselor that you can pass all the requirements. They will sign the blue card as "complete."	4. SHOW: Show the counselor that you can pass all the requirements. They will sign the blue card as "complete."
5. COMPLETION: At the end of the camp week, the Scoutmaster will collect blue cards from all the counselors. You'll receive the cloth merit badges you earned at the next Court of Honor.	5. COMPLETION: Give the completed blue card back to the Scoutmaster. You'll receive the cloth merit badge at the next Court of Honor.	5. COMPLETION: Give the completed blue card back to the Scoutmaster. You'll receive the cloth merit badge at the next Court of Honor.