

## Troop 181 Merit Badge Process

- 1) The Scout selects a merit badge he wishes to earn
- 2) The Scout finds a fellow Scout, friend, or family member willing to attend the merit badge sessions with him. The buddy system will always be followed.
  - a) In the case of Monthly Program Merit Badges, the Program Merit Badge Counselor will inform the interested Scout if there are no other Scouts enrolled for the merit badge. The Scout will need to locate a fellow Scout, family member, or friend to attend merit badge sessions with him.
  - b) All merit badge sessions will have at least three people in attendance in accordance with BSA Youth Protection policy. Those held in public view can preclude this (Scout meetings/bus/car).
- 3) The Scout informs his Scoutmaster of his desire to earn the badge.
- 4) The Scoutmaster verifies that the Scout has a buddy, friend or family member willing to attend the merit badge sessions with him, or that BSA Youth Protection policies will be followed in some other way (other Scouts attending, present, etc.).
- 5) The Scoutmaster conducts a brief counseling interview with the Scout to determine if the merit badge is appropriate for the Scout at this point in time. The following will be considered:
  - a) Has the Scout earned the rank of First Class? Note: BSA does not require boys to have earned any rank before working on a merit badge. Troop practice is to encourage Scouts to work on First Class rank requirements before merit badge requirements.
    - (1) If not, encourage him to work on rank advancement activities.
    - (2) If not encourage him to work on either First Aid or Swimming.
    - (3) If not, and he still wishes to take a merit badge, proceed though the process.
  - b) The Scout's current rank. Does this merit badge help him in the advancement process, or is there another that might be more beneficial? (example: a First Class Scout who needs only one Eagle required merit badge for Star, wants to take basketry).
  - c) Are there prerequisites for the merit badge that must be satisfied? (Lifesaving, & certain summer camp requirements). Can the Scout be guided to the prerequisites first?
  - d) The Scouts workload. As a general rule, any Scout working on three merit badges simultaneously should be encouraged to complete at least one before undertaking another.
- 6) The Scoutmaster issues a Blue Card to the Scout.
- 7) The Scoutmaster provides the name of an approved Merit Badge Counselor from the approved merit badge counselor listing.
- 8) The Scout contacts the Merit Badge Counselor to establish a working schedule.
  - a) In the event the assigned Merit Badge Counselor is unavailable, the Scout must return to the Scoutmaster for a new Merit Badge Counselor assignment.
- 9) The Counselor establishes the merit badge schedule and holds class/activity sessions as required.
  - a) The Counselor should verify that the Scout's Blue Card has been filled out correctly and has the signature of the Scoutmaster as noted above. If not, the Scout should be instructed to see his Scoutmaster.

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- b) The Counselor is responsible for ensuring that every session is held in accordance with BSA Youth Protection policies.
- 10) The Counselor signs and dates each requirement of the merit badge on the Scout's Blue Card as they are completed.
  - 11) Once all merit badge requirements have been met, the Counselor signs and dates the Application for Merit Badge and the Applicants Record sections of the Scouts Blue Card.
    - a) The Counselor should retain the "Counselors Copy" section of the blue card as a back-up record for a minimum of one year.
  - 12) The Counselor encourages the Scout to turn his merit badge completion in to the Troop Advancements Chairperson.
  - 13) The Scout presents the completed and signed Blue Card to the Troop Advancements Chairperson
    - a) The Chairperson will ensures that all required signatures are present
    - b) The Chairperson records the merit badge completion in the Troop Records
    - c) The Chairperson signs and dates the Applicants Record section of the Blue Card under Signature of Unit Leader and returns this section to the Scout. This serves as proof that he has presented the Blue Card to the Advancement Chairperson.
  - 14) The Scout should keep his copy of the Blue Card until he receives the 'official' merit badge card. He should keep the 'official' copy of the merit badge forever – it is a must have for the Eagle package!