



MERIT BADGE – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

There is a lot of misinformation regarding the merit badge process. The following are some frequently asked questions regarding merit badges that we hope you will find helpful and informative.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: Does a Scout have to wait until he is a First Class Scout to begin working on merit badges?

Answer: No, a scout can begin working on merit badges as long as he is a registered scout, regardless of his rank in Scouting.

Question: Can the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster sign off on merit badges?

Answer: No, only the merit badge counselor can signify that the requirements have been satisfied.

Question: Application for Merit Badges are not usually distributed where the merit badge is taught at a Scout camp. Do these merit badges count?

Answer: Yes, BSA acknowledges Scout camp records as an accepted record for merit badges.

Question: If a Scout attends a Scout camp, but does not complete the merit badge at camp, does he have to wait until the next camp to complete the merit badge?

Answer: No, after the camp, if the Scout has not completed the merit badge, the troop will assign him to a merit badge counselor. The Scout would then work with that counselor to complete the merit badge requirements. The Scout will retain full credit for any requirement that were recorded as complete by the Scout camp.

Question: How much time does a Scout have to complete all the requirements for a merit badge?

Answer: There is no time limit as long as the Scout completes all the necessary requirements by the time he reaches age 18.

Question: How many merit badges can a Scout earn by working with any single merit badge counselor?

Answer: A Scout may earn as many merit badges from a counselor as the counselor is qualified and approved to counsel. Again, the spirit of the program is to expose the Scout to a wide circle of adults to

Question: What is the buddy system, and why is it necessary?

Answer: The buddy system is a safety routine that calls for a Scout to be paired with a buddy whenever he participates in Scouting activities such as aquatics, cycling, or hiking, and when he meets with his merit badge counselor. It is a way for Scouts to look after one another, stay safe, and have more fun. During meetings with adult leaders, a Scout's buddy can be another Scout or friend, or a relative.

Question: If the requirements for a merit badge on the required list for the Eagle Scout rank vary among the Boy Scout Handbook, the merit badge pamphlet, and the Boy Scout Requirements book (current edition), which resource takes precedence?

Answer: The current edition of the Boy Scout Requirements book lists the official set of requirements for rank advancement and for each individual merit badge.

Question: What happens when the weather, locale, or some other circumstance makes meeting all of the conditions of the merit badge requirements impractical? Can substitute requirements be created for those stated?

Answer: No additions, deletions, or alterations are permitted. The requirements are to be completed exactly as written.

Question: Can a merit badge counselor require a Scout to work beyond the specific requirements of the merit badge in order to challenge the Scout and allow him to discover more about the subject?

Answer: In fairness to all Scouts, additions, deletions, or other modifications to the requirements are not permitted. The requirements are to be completed exactly as written. However, a merit badge counselor may share additional information and resources that the Scout could use on his own to learn more and challenge himself.

Question: How many merit badges can a merit badge counselor support?

Answer: Merit badge counselors may be approved for as many badges as they are qualified. However, the local council's approving body may impose a limitation based upon the needs of the local council and individual districts.

Question: Can merit badge counselors coach their own sons or close relatives (for instance, a nephew)?

Answer: Yes, but only if the young man is part of a group of Scouts who are all working on the same merit badge. Approved counselors may coach any Boy Scout who contacts them through the proper procedures.

If you have a question about the merit badge process that is not listed above, please send your question to contact@mstroop300.com.