

THE PROCESS FOR INDIVIDUAL SCOUTS TO EARN A MERIT BADGE

From time to time, the Troop offers scouts the chance to earn a merit badge as a group. In those situations, the merit badge counselor leading the class will outline the process for the group to go about completing the requirements needed to earn that merit badge. However, individual scouts can and should from time to time also go about earning individual merit badges at their own pace, starting the merit badge at a time appropriate to their schedule and availability to work on it. Such times occur when needing or wanting to earn many of the less common merit badges, but also from time to time to earn an Eagle-required merit badge. Accordingly, the process below outlines the general process by which a scout can earn a merit badge on his own, without a formal class being offered by the Troop.

1. The scout requests a Merit Badge (MB also known as the “Blue Card”) application from the Advancement/Award Coordinator—Some merit badge counselors have blank Blue Cards. The Troop 459 website has links to paper forms of the Merit Badge cards
2. The Scout then gets the Scoutmaster’s approval by getting the Blue Card signed by the scoutmaster.
3. Obtain the latest edition of the merit badge book (whether by buying it or by borrowing it from the Troop library or another scout.)
4. The scout contacts a Merit Badge Counselor (MBC)
5. The scout may use merit badge worksheet to assist him in the completing all of the requirements. The merit badge worksheet may be found through a link on the troop website’s Advancement Page by clicking on the merit badge.
6. The MBC and Scout have a conference about the MB. The Scout and MBC need to follow the BSA guidelines for Youth Protection.
 - a. The Troop Merit Badge Process is explained to the scout requesting the blue card.
 - b. They discuss in detail what is required and expected for each and every requirement.
 - c. The MBC explains which part can be done at home and what is required for proof of completion. The MBC explains which parts have to be presented in front of troop.
 - d. The MBC explains which parts need to be done in front of the MBC.
 - e. This is all done so everything is understood before starting the Merit Badge.
 - f. At this time it is explained which of the requirements must be recorded on the MB worksheet.

7. Merit Badge Progress.
 - a. Unless specifically discussed by the MBC, it is the Scout's responsibility to initiate communication with the MBC for progress and possible barriers to completion. Do not rely on the MBC to make sure the Merit Badge is completed – that is not their responsibility.
 - b. If worksheets are used, the MBC will initial and date each requirement on the worksheet that has been satisfactorily completed.
 - c. The MBC will initial date each requirement completed on the Blue Card.
8. When all the Merit Badge requirements are complete, the Merit Badge Counselor will verify the Blue Card has all the requirements signed and dated. Then the MBC will complete the three Blue Card sections stating the MB is complete. The MBC will keep the Counselor's section of the Blue Card and give the Scout the two remaining sections.
 - a. The Scout will retain the Applicant's section of the Blue Card and contact the Advancement Coordinator to give him the Troop section of the completed merit badge card so the merit badge completion can be recorded in the Scout's Troop record, currently in Troopmaster software.
 - b. The Advancement Coordinator will examine the blue card for all required signatures.
9. Blue Card is divided into three parts: Troop Record, Applicants Record and Counselors record. The Troop Record is given to the Advancement Chair; the Applicant's Record is retained by the scout for his own records; and the Counselor's Record is retained by the MBC.
10. The Scout is typically recognized for earning the MB by an announcement (by either MBC or Advancement Chair) at the first Monday night meeting after the MB is earned. The Scout will typically receive the actual cloth merit badge at the next Court of Honor for recognition by his peers, parents and leaders of the Troop.

NOTES:

- *MB Worksheet can be typed or hand written as long as it is legible.*
 - *The work MUST be the Scouts work; parents may help but let the scout earn it.*
 - *It's not the badge that's important, but what is learned by completing the requirements.*
 - *One or two word answers on the worksheet are not acceptable.*
 - *The scout should clearly state what he means without the need for interpretation.*
 - *Please feel free to attach ANYTHING to the worksheet, such as pictures, videos, documents from other parties etc.*
 - *Feel free to ask any questions.*
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