

Scout Troop 166/066

Newcomer Guide: Merit Badges

COVID Note: During COVID, email replaces Blue Cards. Scout emails Scoutmaster (Bill for Boys, Kirk for Girls) for permission. Contact counselor to plan. For Merit Badge Classes, sign up directly with the counselor. Once completed, the counselor informs the Advancement Chair (Jim Thompson). Badges are awarded at the next Court of Honor.

What Are Merit Badges?

Merit Badges are the Scouting world's way of exposing scouts to skills, sports, and career paths. Each badge has requirements fulfilled under counselor supervision. Once completed, the scout receives an embroidered badge for the uniform.

Key Facts

Most rank advancements require a certain number of badges to be completed.

Eagle requires a minimum of 21 badges, including 13 Eagle-Required badges.

There is no minimum rank to start working on Merit Badges.

A scout may work on more than one badge at a time (more than a handful is discouraged).

The first badge may be worn on the sleeve; after that, badges go on the sash for ceremonies.

Handbooks for every badge are available from the troop library or purchased at the scout store.

The Process

1. Get a Blue Card

Obtain from the Scoutmaster or Advancement Chair. Fill it out properly before asking for a signature.

2. Get Scoutmaster Approval

The Scoutmaster signs the card. An Assistant Scoutmaster or Advancement Chair can sign if the Scoutmaster is unavailable.

3. Find a Counselor

The troop has an adult leader who keeps track of all Merit Badge counselors.

4. Complete Requirements

As the scout completes each requirement, the counselor initials the Blue Card.

5. Final Sign-Off

The counselor signs the card. The scout keeps one part as proof. The third part goes to the Advancement Chair for council submission.

6. Badge Awarded

The badge is awarded at the next Court of Honor.

Tips & Tricks

A notebook with clear sleeves (like those for baseball or trading cards) is handy for tracking Blue Cards, rank advancement, and keeping patches until they get sewn on.

Train scouts to always put anything they receive at a ceremony (badges, cards, tokens) into the **right-hand shirt pocket** of the uniform. Things are less likely to get lost or sent through the wash.