

Troop 234 Merit Badge Quick Reference Guide

This merit badge quick reference gives you the basics so you know exactly how merit badges work and what your role is.

What is a Merit Badge?

- Scouts explore skills, careers, and hobbies
 - There are **100+ badges available**
 - **21 are required for Eagle Scout**
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Step-by-Step Process (Start to Finish)

1. Choose a Merit Badge

- Scout selects a badge
- Gets approval from the **Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster**

2. Get Assigned a Counselor

- Scout is given:
 - A **Merit Badge Counselor (MBC)**
 - A **blue card**

3. Contact the Counselor

- If in the troop:
 - Speak with them directly (no one-on-one contact)
- If outside the troop:
 - Send an email and **include another adult**
- Counselor will review:
 - Requirements
 - Expectations
- Rule: **Complete requirements exactly as written. No more, no less**

4. Complete Requirements

- Scout meets with counselor as needed
- Counselor reviews work and signs off requirements
- Progress tracked in:
 - Blue card and or Scoutbook

5. Record Completion

- Final completion entered into **Scoutbook**

6. Receive the Badge

- Awarded at the next **Court of Honor (quarterly)**
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Who Can Sign What?

Merit Badges

- Only a **registered Merit Badge Counselor (MBC)** can:
 - Teach
 - Approve
 - Sign off requirements

Parents

- Cannot sign off unless:
 - Registered as an MBC for that badge
- Even if registered:
 - Should work with their Scout in a **group setting only**

Scoutmaster

- Approves starting the badge
 - Assigns counselor
 - Does **not** sign off requirements
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Scoutbook vs Blue Cards

Troop 234 uses both

Blue Card

- Physical record of the badge
- Tracks:
 - Start
 - Progress
 - Completion
- Signed by:
 - Scoutmaster at start
 - Counselor at completion

Scoutbook

- Digital version of the blue card
 - Used for:
 - Tracking progress
 - Official troop records
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Key Rules Scouts Must Follow

- Complete requirements **exactly as written**
 - No adding or skipping
 - Words matter:
 - Do, Explain, Show, Discuss
 - Work must be **their own**
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Tips for New Families

- Start with simple or fun badges

- Focus on one or two at a time
 - Use summer camp opportunities
 - Check Scoutbook regularly
 - Ask questions early
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Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Starting without approval
 - Assuming parents can sign off
 - Skipping requirements
 - Waiting too long to contact a counselor
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How to Become a Merit Badge Counselor

Parents are encouraged to become Merit Badge Counselors. This helps the troop and gives Scouts more opportunities.

Basic Requirements

- Age 18 or older
- Knowledge, skill, or interest in a subject
- Willing to work with Scouts

Steps to Register

1. Complete **BSA Adult Application**
2. Complete **Merit Badge Counselor Information Form**
3. Complete **Safeguarding Youth Training (YPT)** on my.scouting.org
4. Complete **Merit Badge Counselor Training** on my.scouting.org
5. Submit forms to the troop or council (we will help you)

What You Do

- Work with Scouts on a badge

- Review requirements
- Ensure requirements are completed as written
- Sign off when complete

Important Notes

- Must be **approved before signing anything**
- Can work with multiple Scouts
- If working with your own Scout:
 - Must be in a **group setting**, not one-on-one

If interested, contact troop leadership and we will help you get started.

Who to Contact

- **Scoutmaster** → approval and guidance
 - **Advancement Chair** → Scoutbook and records
 - **Merit Badge Counselor** → badge-specific help
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Bottom Line

- Get approval first
- Use a registered counselor
- Follow requirements exactly
- Track everything in Scoutbook