



# Backpacking

## Merit Badge Workbook

This workbook can help you but you still need to read the merit badge pamphlet.

The work space provided for each requirement should be used by the Scout to make notes for discussing the item with his counselor, not for providing the full and complete answers. Each Scout must do each requirement.

No one may add or subtract from the official requirements found in ***Boy Scout Requirements*** (Pub. 33216 – SKU 34765).

The requirements were last issued or revised in 2008 • This workbook was updated in March 2012.

Scout's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Counselor's Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

<http://www.USScouts.Org> • <http://www.MeritBadge.Org>

Please submit errors, omissions, comments or suggestions about improving this workbook to: [Workbooks@USScouts.org](mailto:Workbooks@USScouts.org)

1. Discuss the prevention of and treatment for the health concerns that could occur while backpacking, including hypothermia, heat reactions, frostbite, dehydration, insect stings, tick bites, snakebite, and blisters.

Hypothermia: \_\_\_\_\_

Heat reaction: \_\_\_\_\_

Frostbite: \_\_\_\_\_

Dehydration: \_\_\_\_\_

Insect stings: \_\_\_\_\_

Tick bites: \_\_\_\_\_

Snakebite: \_\_\_\_\_

Blisters: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do the following:

- a. List 10 items that are essential to be carried on any backpacking trek and explain why each item is necessary.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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b. Describe 10 ways you can limit the weight and bulk to be carried in your pack without jeopardizing your health or safety.

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3. Do the following:

a. Define limits on the number of backpackers appropriate for a trek crew. \_\_\_\_\_

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b. Describe how a trek crew should be organized. \_\_\_\_\_

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c. Tell how you would minimize risk on a backpacking trek. \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Do the following:

a. Describe the importance of using Leave No Trace principles while backpacking, and at least five ways you can lessen the crew's impact on the environment.

Importance of using Leave No Trace \_\_\_\_\_

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Ways to lessen the crew's impact on the environment.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_

b. Describe proper methods of handling human and other wastes while on a backpacking trek. \_\_\_\_\_

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Describe the importance of and means to assure personal cleanliness while on a backpacking trek. \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Do the following:

a. Demonstrate two ways to treat water and tell why water treatment is essential. \_\_\_\_\_

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b. Explain to your counselor the importance of staying well hydrated during a trek. \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Do the following:

- a. Demonstrate that you can read topographic maps.
- b. While on a trek, use a map and compass to establish your position on the ground at least three times at three different places, OR use a GPS receiver unit to establish your position on a topographic map at least three times at three different places.

7. Tell how to prepare properly for and deal with inclement weather. \_\_\_\_\_

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8. Do the following:

- a. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of three different types of backpacking stoves using at least three different types of fuel.

Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Fuel: \_\_\_\_\_

Advantages: \_\_\_\_\_

Disadvantages: \_\_\_\_\_

Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Fuel: \_\_\_\_\_

Advantages: \_\_\_\_\_

Disadvantages: \_\_\_\_\_

Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Fuel: \_\_\_\_\_

Advantages: \_\_\_\_\_

Disadvantages: \_\_\_\_\_

- b. Demonstrate that you know how to operate a backpacking stove safely and to handle liquid fuel safely.
- c. Prepare at least three meals using a stove and fuel you can carry in a backpack.
- d. Demonstrate that you know how to keep cooking and eating gear clean and sanitary , and that you practice proper methods for food storage while on a backpacking trek.

9. Do the following:

- a. Write a plan for a patrol backpacking hike that includes a schedule. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- b. Show that you know how to properly pack your personal gear and your share of the crew's gear and food.
- c. Show you can properly shoulder your pack and adjust it for proper wear.
- d. Conduct a pre hike inspection of the patrol and its equipment.
- e. While carrying your pack, complete a hike of at least 2 miles.

10. Using Leave No Trace principles, participate in at least three backpacking treks of at least three days each and at least 15 miles each, and using at least two different campsites. Carry everything you will need throughout the trek.

Trip 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ Miles: \_\_\_\_\_

Campsite 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Campsite 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Trip 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ Miles: \_\_\_\_\_

Campsite 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Campsite 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Trip 3: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ Miles: \_\_\_\_\_

Campsite 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Campsite 2: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Do the following:

- a. Write a plan for a backpacking trek of at least five days using at least three different campsites and covering at least 30 miles. Your plan must include a description of and route to the trek area, schedule (including a daily schedule), a list of food and equipment needs, a safety and emergency plan, and a budget.

Trip: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ Miles: \_\_\_\_\_

Campsite 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Campsite 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Campsite 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Route to area: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Schedule (including a daily schedule):

Day 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Day 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Day 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Day 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Day 5: \_\_\_\_\_

List of food: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Equipment needs: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Safety and emergency plan: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Budget: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- b. Using Leave No Trace principles, take the trek planned and, while on the trek, complete at least one service project approved by your merit badge counselor.

Service Project: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- c. Upon your return, write a report about the trek that includes a day-by-day description of what you did or what happened, and what you might do the same and what you might do differently on your next trek.

Day 1: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Day 2: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Day 3: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Day 4: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Day 5: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What you might do differently \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Requirement resources can be found here:**  
[http://www.meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Backpacking#Requirement\\_resources](http://www.meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Backpacking#Requirement_resources)

## Wilderness Use Policy of the Boy Scouts of America

All privately or publicly owned backcountry land and designated wildernesses are included in the term “wilderness areas” in this policy. The Outdoor Code of the Boy Scouts of America and the principles of Leave No Trace apply to outdoor behavior generally, but for treks into wilderness areas, minimum-impact camping methods must be used. Within the outdoor program of the Boy Scouts of America, there are many different camping-skill levels. Camping practices that are appropriate for day outings, long-term Scout camp, or short-term unit camping might not apply to wilderness areas. Wherever they go, Scouts need to adopt attitudes and patterns of behavior that respect the rights of others, including future generations, to enjoy the outdoors.

- In wilderness areas, it is crucial to minimize human impact, particularly on fragile ecosystems such as mountains, lakes and streams, deserts, and seashores. Because our impact varies from one season of the year to the next, it becomes important for us to adjust to these changing conditions to avoid damaging the environment.
- The Boy Scouts of America emphasizes these practices for all troops, teams, and crews planning to use wilderness areas:
- Contact the landowner or land-managing agency (USDA Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, state and private agencies, etc.) well before an outing to learn the regulations for that area, including group size limits, to obtain required permits and current maps, and to discuss ways Scouts can fulfill the expectations of property owners or land managers.
- Obtain a tour permit (available through local council service centers), meet all of its conditions, and carry it during the trip.
- Review the appropriate BSA safety literature relating to planned activities. (See Safe Swim Defense, Safety Afloat, Climb On Safely, and Trek Safely.) Also see the Guide to Safe Scouting on the BSA Web site at <http://www.scouting.org/pubs/gss/toc.html> for more information on current BSA policies and procedures for ensuring safe activities, as well as the Fieldbook Web site at <http://www.bsafieldbook.org>.
- Match the ruggedness of high-adventure experiences to the skills, physical ability, and maturity of those taking part. Save rugged treks for older unit members who are more proficient and experienced in outdoor skills.
- Conduct pretrip training for your group that stresses proper wilderness behavior, rules, and skills for all of the conditions that may be encountered, including lightning, missing person, wildfire, high winds, flooding, and emergency medical situations.
- Participate in training in how to apply the principles of Leave No Trace, and be proficient and experienced in the leadership and skills required for treks into wilderness areas.
- Adhere to the principles of Leave No Trace.

### ***The Principles of Leave No Trace***

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly (Pack It In, Pack It Out)
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

### ***The Outdoor Code***

As an American, I will do my best to—

***Be clean in my outdoor manners.*** I will treat the outdoors as a heritage. I will take care of it

for myself and others. I will keep my trash and garbage out of lakes, streams, fields, woods, and roadways.

***Be careful with fire.*** I will prevent wildfire. I will build my fires only when and where they are appropriate. When I have finished using a fire, I will make sure it is cold out. I will leave a clean fire ring, or remove all evidence of my fire.

***Be considerate in the outdoors.*** I will treat public and private property with respect. I will follow the principles of Leave No Trace for all outdoor activities.

***Be conservation-minded.*** I will learn about and practice good conservation of soil, waters, forests, minerals, grasslands, wildlife, and energy. I will urge others to do the same.

## Important excerpts from the [‘Guide To Advancement’](#), No. 33088:

Effective January 1, 2012, the ‘Guide to Advancement’ (which replaced the publication ‘Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures’) is now the *official* Boy Scouts of America source on advancement policies and procedures.

- **[ Inside front cover, and 5.0.1.4 ] — Unauthorized Changes to Advancement Program**  
***No council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add to, or subtract from, advancement requirements.***  
(There are limited exceptions relating only to youth members with disabilities. For details see section 10, “Advancement for Members With Special Needs”.)
- **[ Inside front cover, and 7.0.1.1 ] — The [‘Guide to Safe Scouting’](#) Applies**  
Policies and procedures outlined in the ‘Guide to Safe Scouting’, No. 34416, apply to all BSA activities, including those related to advancement and Eagle Scout service projects. [Note: Always reference the online version, which is updated quarterly.]
- **[ 7.0.3.1 ] — The Buddy System and Certifying Completion**  
Youth members must not meet one-on-one with adults. Sessions with counselors must take place where others can view the interaction, or the Scout must have a buddy: a friend, parent, guardian, brother, sister, or other relative —or better yet, another Scout working on the same badge— along with him attending the session. When the Scout meets with the counselor, he should bring any required projects. If these cannot be transported, he should present evidence, such as photographs or adult certification. His unit leader, for example, might state that a satisfactory bridge or tower has been built for the Pioneering merit badge, or that meals were prepared for Cooking. If there are questions that requirements were met, a counselor may confirm with adults involved. Once satisfied, the counselor signs the blue card using the date upon which the Scout completed the requirements, or in the case of partials, initials the individual requirements passed.
- **[ 7.0.3.2 ] — Group Instruction**  
It is acceptable—and sometimes desirable—for merit badges to be taught in group settings. This often occurs at camp and merit badge midways or similar events. Interactive group discussions can support learning. The method can also be attractive to “guest experts” assisting registered and approved counselors. Slide shows, skits, demonstrations, panels, and various other techniques can also be employed, but as any teacher can attest, not everyone will learn all the material.

There must be attention to each individual’s projects and his fulfillment of *all* requirements. We must know that every Scout — actually and *personally*— completed them. If, for example, a requirement uses words like “show,” “demonstrate,” or “discuss,” then every Scout must do that. It is unacceptable to award badges on the basis of sitting in classrooms *watching* demonstrations, or remaining silent during discussions. Because of the importance of individual attention in the merit badge plan, group instruction should be limited to those scenarios where the benefits are compelling.

- **[ 7.0.3.3 ] — Partial Completions**  
Scouts need not pass all requirements with one counselor. The Application for Merit Badge has a place to record what has been finished — a “partial.” In the center section on the reverse of the blue card, the counselor initials for each requirement passed. In the case of a partial completion, he or she does not retain the counselor’s portion of the card. A subsequent counselor may choose not to accept partial work, but this should be rare. A Scout, if he believes he is being treated unfairly, may work with his Scoutmaster to find another counselor. An example for the use of a signed partial would be to take it to camp as proof of prerequisites. Partials have no expiration except the 18th birthday.