



Geocaching

Merit Badge Workbook



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

This Workbook can help you organize your thoughts as you prepare to meet with your merit badge counselor.

You still must satisfy your counselor that you can demonstrate each skill and have learned the information.

You should use the work space provided for each requirement to keep track of which requirements have been completed, and to make notes for discussing the item with your counselor, not for providing full and complete answers.

If a requirement says that you must take an action using words such as "discuss", "show", "tell", "explain", "demonstrate", "identify", etc, that is what you must do.

Merit Badge Counselors may not require the use of this or any similar workbooks.

No one may add or subtract from the official requirements found in Boy Scout Requirements (Pub. 33216 – SKU 621535).

The requirements were last issued or revised in 2010 • This workbook was updated in October 2016.

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 this **workbook** to: Workbooks@USScouts.Org

Comments or suggestions for changes to the **requirements** for the **merit badge** should be sent to: Merit.Badge@Scouting.Org

1. Do the following:

- a. Explain to your counselor the most likely hazards you may encounter while participating in geocaching activities and what you should do to anticipate, help prevent, mitigate, and respond to these hazards.

Hazard:	
Anticipate & Prevent:	
Mitigate & Respond:	

Hazard:	
Anticipate & Prevent:	
Mitigate & Respond:	

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Hazard:	
Anticipate & Prevent:	
Mitigate & Respond:	

Hazard:	
Anticipate & Prevent:	
Mitigate & Respond:	

Hazard:	
Anticipate & Prevent:	
Mitigate & Respond:	

- b. Discuss first aid and prevention for the types of injuries or illnesses that could occur while participating in geocaching activities, including cuts, scrapes, snakebite, insect stings, tick bites, exposure to poisonous plants, heat and cold reactions (sunburn, heatstroke, heat exhaustion, hypothermia), and dehydration.

Cuts:

Scrapes:

Snakebite:

Insect stings:

Tick bites:

Exposure to poisonous plants:

Sunburn:

Heatstroke:

Heat
exhaustion:

Hypothermia:

Dehydration:

- c. Discuss how to properly plan an activity that uses GPS, including using the buddy system, sharing your plan with others, and considering the weather, route, and proper attire.

- 2. Discuss the following with your counselor:

- a. Why you should never bury a cache.

- b. How to use proper geocaching etiquette when hiding or seeking a cache, and how to properly hide, post, maintain, and dismantle a geocache.

- c. The principles of Leave No Trace as they apply to geocaching

- 3. Explain the following terms used in geocaching: log, cache, accuracy, difficulty and terrain ratings, attributes, trackable.

Waypoint:

Log:

Geocaching

Scout's Name: _____

Cache:

Accuracy:

Difficulty ratings:

Terrain ratings:

Attributes:

Trackable:

Choose five additional terms to explain to your counselor.

1.

2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

4. Explain how the Global Positioning System (GPS) works.

Then, using Scouting's Teaching EDGE, demonstrate the use of a GPS unit to your counselor. Include marking and editing a waypoint, changing field functions, and changing the coordinate system in the unit.

5. Do the following:

a. Show you know how to use a map and compass and explain why this is important for geocaching.

- b. Explain the similarities and differences between GPS navigation and standard map reading skills and describe the benefits of each

- c. Explain the UTM (Universal Transverse Mercator) system and how it differs from the latitude/longitude system used for public geocaches.

- d. Show how to plot a UTM waypoint on a map. Compare the accuracy to that found with a GPS unit.

- 6. Describe the four steps to finding your first cache to your counselor.

1.

8. Do ONE of the following:

- a. If a Cache to Eagle® series exists in your council, visit at least three of the 12 locations in the series. Describe the projects that each cache you visit highlights, and explain how the Cache to Eagle® program helps share our Scouting service with the public.

1.	
Project	
2.	
Project	
3.	
Project	

Explain:

- b. Create a Scouting-related Travel Bug® that promotes one of the values of Scouting.
- "Release" your Travel Bug into a public geocache and, with your parent's permission, monitor its progress at www.geocaching.com for 30 days. Keep a log, and share this with your counselor at the end of the 30-day period.
- c. Set up and hide a public geocache, following the guidelines in the Geocaching merit badge pamphlet. Before doing so, share with your counselor a six-month maintenance plan for the geocache where you are personally responsible for the first three months.
- After setting up the geocache, with your parent's permission, follow the logs online for 30 days and share them with your counselor.
- d. Explain what Cache In Trash Out (CITO) means, and describe how you have practiced CITO at public geocaches or at a CITO event.

Then, either create CITO containers to leave at public caches, or host a CITO event for your unit or for the public.

- 9. Plan a geohunt for a youth group such as your troop or a neighboring pack, at school, or your place of worship. Choose a theme, set up a course with at least four waypoints, teach the players how to use a GPS unit, and play the game.

Theme

--

- Set up a course

Waypoints:

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

- Teach the players how to use a GPS unit

- Play the game.

Tell your counselor about your experience, and share the materials you used and developed for this event.

<p>Requirement resources can be found here: http://www.meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Geocaching#Requirement_resources</p>

Important excerpts from the Guide To Advancement - 2015, No. 33088 (SKU-620573)

[1.0.0.0] — Introduction

The current edition of the *Guide to Advancement* is the official source for administering advancement in all Boy Scouts of America programs: Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouts. It replaces any previous BSA advancement manuals and previous editions of the *Guide to Advancement*.

[Page 2, and 5.0.1.4] — Policy on 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 special needs. For details see section 10, "Advancement for Members With Special Needs".

[Page 2] — 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.

[7.0.3.1] — The Buddy System and Certifying Completion

A youth member must not meet one-on-one with an adult. 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. If merit badge counseling or instruction includes any Web-based interaction, it must be conducted in accordance with the BSA Social Media Guidelines (<http://www.scouting.org/Marketing/Resources/SocialMedia>). For example, always copy one or more authorized adults on email messages between counselors and Scouts.

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 verification. 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.

Note that from time to time, it may be appropriate for a requirement that has been met for one badge to also count for another. See "Fulfilling More Than One Requirement With a Single Activity," 4.2.3.6.

[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, fairs, clinics, 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.

It is sometimes reported that Scouts who have received merit badges through group instructional settings have not fulfilled all the requirements. To offer a quality merit badge program, council and district advancement committees should ensure the following are in place for all group instructional events.

- A culture is established for merit badge group instructional events that partial completions are acceptable expected results.
- A guide or information sheet is distributed in advance of events that promotes the acceptability of partials, explains how merit badges can be finished after events, lists merit badge prerequisites, and provides other helpful information that will establish realistic expectations for the number of merit badges that can be earned at an event.
- Merit badge counselors are known to be registered and approved.
- Any guest experts or guest speakers, or others assisting who are not registered and approved as merit badge counselors, do not accept the responsibilities of, or behave as, merit badge counselors, either at a group instructional event or at any other time. Their service is temporary, not ongoing.
- Counselors agree to sign off only requirements that Scouts have actually and personally completed.
- Counselors agree not to assume prerequisites have been completed without some level of evidence that the work has been done. Pictures and letters from other merit badge counselors or unit leaders are the best form of prerequisite documentation when the actual work done cannot be brought to the camp or site of the merit badge event.
- There is a mechanism for unit leaders or others to report concerns to a council advancement committee on summer camp merit badge programs, group instructional events, and any other merit badge counseling issues—especially in instances where it is believed BSA procedures are not followed. See "Reporting Merit Badge Counseling Concerns," 11.1.0.0.
- 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.

It is permissible for guest speakers, guest experts, or others who are not merit badge counselors to assist in the counseling process. Those providing such assistance must be under the direction of a registered and approved counselor who is readily available onsite, and provides personal supervision to assure all applicable BSA policies and procedures—including those related to BSA Youth Protection—are in place and followed.

[7.0.3.3] — Partial Completions

A Scout need not pass all the requirements of one merit badge with the same counselor. It may be that due to timing or location issues, etc., he must meet with a different counselor to finish the badge. 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, the counselor does not retain his or her 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 unit leader to find another counselor. An example for the use of a signed partial would be to take it to camp as proof of prerequisites. Partial completions have no expiration except the Scout's 18th birthday. Units, districts, or councils shall not establish other expiration dates for partial merit badges.

[7.0.4.8] — Unofficial Worksheets and Learning Aids

Worksheets and other materials that may be of assistance in earning merit badges are available from a variety of places including unofficial sources on the Internet and even troop libraries. Use of these aids is permissible as long as the materials can be correlated with the current requirements that Scouts must fulfill. Completing "worksheets" may suffice where a requirement calls for something in writing, but this would not work for a requirement where the Scout must discuss, tell, show, or demonstrate, etc. Note that Scouts shall not be required to use these learning aids in order to complete a merit badge.