MERIT BADGE SERIES

HIKING
HIKING

“Enhancing our youths’ competitive edge through merit badges”
Requirements

Always check www.scouting.org for the latest requirements.

1. Do the following:
   (a) Explain to your counselor the most likely hazards you may encounter while hiking, and what you should do to anticipate, help prevent, mitigate, and respond to these hazards.
   (b) Show that you know first aid for injuries or illnesses that could occur while hiking, including hypothermia, frostbite, dehydration, heat exhaustion, heatstroke, sunburn, hyperventilation, altitude sickness, sprained ankle, blisters, insect stings, tick bites, and snakebite.

2. Do the following:
   (a) Explain and, where possible, show the points of good hiking practices including proper outdoor ethics, hiking safety in the daytime and at night, courtesy to others, choice of footwear, and proper care of feet and footwear.
   (b) Read aloud or recite the Leave No Trace guidelines, and discuss why each is important while hiking.
   (c) Read aloud or recite the Outdoor Code, and give examples of how to follow it on a hike.

3. Explain how hiking is an aerobic activity. Develop a plan for conditioning yourself for 10-mile hikes, and describe how you will increase your fitness for longer hikes.

4. Take four 10-mile hikes and one 20-mile hike, each on a different day, and each of continuous miles. Prepare a written hike plan before each hike and share it with your merit badge counselor or a designee for approval before starting the hike. Include map routes, a clothing and equipment list, and a list of items for a trail lunch. You may stop for as many short rest periods as needed, as well as one meal, during each hike, but not for an extended period such as overnight.*

5. After each of the hikes (or during each hike if on one continuous “trek”) in requirement 4, write a short report on your hike. For each hike, give the date and description (or map) of the route covered, the weather, any interesting things you saw, and any challenges you had and how you overcame them. It may include something you learned about yourself, about the outdoors, or about others you were hiking with. Share this with your merit badge counselor.*

*The required hikes for this badge may be used in fulfilling hiking requirements for rank advancement. However, these hikes cannot be used to fulfill requirements of other merit badges.
Hiking Resources

Scouting Literature
Scouts BSA Handbook for Boys; Scouts BSA Handbook for Girls; Fieldbook; Deck of First Aid; Basic Illustrated Wilderness First Aid; Emergency First Aid pocket guide; Be Prepared First Aid Book; Conservation Handbook; Backpacking, Camping, Cooking, First Aid, Geocaching, Orienteering, and Wilderness Survival merit badge pamphlets

With your parent’s permission, visit the Boy Scouts of America’s official retail website, www.scoutshop.org, for a complete listing of all merit badge pamphlets and other helpful Scouting materials and supplies.

Instruction and Guidebooks


**Organizations and Websites**

**American Hiking Society**
1422 Fenwick Lane
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Toll-free telephone: 800-972-8608
www.americanhiking.org

**Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics**
P.O. Box 997
Boulder, CO 80306
Toll-free telephone: 800-332-4100
www.LNT.org

**Local Hikes**
www.localhikes.com

**Sierra Club**
85 Second St., Second Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105-3441
Telephone: 415-977-5500
www.sierraclub.org

**Student Conservation Association**
Toll-free telephone: 888-722-9675
www.thesca.org
**Magazines**

*Backpacker* magazine  
www.backpacker.com  
*Scout Life* magazine  
www.scoutlife.org

**Acknowledgments**

The Boy Scouts of America is grateful to the men and women serving on the National Merit Badge Subcommittee and to Dr. Gordon Craig for the improvements made in updating this pamphlet.

**Photo and Illustration Credits**

Hansell F. Cross, Georgia State University, Bugwood.org, courtesy—page 56 (*chigger*)

Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, courtesy—pages 6 (*1906 photo*) and 7 (*1906, 1912 photos*)

Mountain Safety Research (MSRGear.com), courtesy—pages 15 (*snowshoes*)

USDA Agricultural Resource Service/Scott Bauer, courtesy—page 56 (*tick*)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/Ken Hammond, courtesy—page 13 (*moose*)

Wikipedia.org, courtesy—6 (*ladybird beetles*), 23 (*Canada geese*), 27 (*nest*), 28 (*ground squirrel, mallard, raccoon, prairie dog*), 39, 55, and 59 (*coyote*)

All other photos and illustrations not mentioned above are the property of or are protected by the Boy Scouts of America.

Dan Bryant—page 34 (*gloves*)

W. Garth Dowling—page 18

Daniel Giles—page 52

Roy Jansen—pages 41–42

John McDearmon—page 49 (*ankle wrapping*)

Roger Morgan page 60 (*hikers*)

Brian Payne—cover (*milk snake*); pages 4, 14 (*applying sunscreen*), 15 (*Scouts in snow*), 19 (*dry streambed*), 30 (*basketball*), 31, 32 (*cleaning shoes*), 36 (*Scout with trekking poles*), 38, 40 (*Scout looking back*), 57, and 60

Randy Piland—page 43

Jesse Scofield—page 41