

TEST LAB TO SCOUTS BSA MERIT BADGES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What Test Lab badges will become official Scouts BSA merit badges?

A: The Test Lab badges that will become official Scouts BSA merit badges are announced on a rolling basis.

Q: I completed a badge in the Test Lab that is now becoming an official Scouts BSA merit badge. How do I get credit for my Test Lab work?

A: The Test Lab certificate you received after completing the Test Lab work and taking the required Test Lab survey is similar to a merit badge “blue card.” Take the certificate to your unit advancement coordinator or unit leader and ask them to enter it into Scoutbook Plus. Just like any other merit badge, you should receive the badge at the next court of honor.

Q: How is earning a Test Lab merit badge recorded in Scoutbook Plus?

A: Once a Test Lab badge becomes an official Scouts BSA merit badge, units can update and approve it in Scoutbook Plus just like any other merit badge. The unit adult entering the badge into Scoutbook Plus should use the date the badge became official as the completion date.

Q: Does a merit badge counselor need to review the work a Scout did in the Test Lab?

A: No. A Scout who completed the Test Lab work, took the required Test Lab survey, and received a certificate has finished work on the badge. If Scouting America adds a Test Lab badge to the official Scouts BSA merit badges, the certificate becomes the equivalent of a completed “blue card.” The Scout does not need to do any more work besides giving the certificate to the unit for entry into Scoutbook Plus.

Q: What if a Test Lab certificate was lost or wasn’t printed?

A: Handle this like a lost “blue card.” The Scout should ask the registered adult who oversaw their Test Lab work to write a letter to the unit leader confirming that the Scout successfully completed the work. This letter serves as the equivalent of the counselor’s portion of the merit badge “blue card.”

Q: Why is it not possible to get a replacement certificate?

A: The Test Lab does not keep a log of Scouts who participate in Test Lab badges or take Test Lab surveys. The certificate a Scout receives after completing both the Test Lab work and the required survey is the proof that the Scout completed the badge.

Q: Will Test Lab progress be documented, or do Scouts need to keep their own records?

A: The Test Lab certificate is the only record of a Scout’s completion of the Test Lab work and required survey. Keep your certificate in a safe place and make a backup copy for good measure.

Q: What happens to partial progress in the Test Lab? Will it move over?

A: No. The Test Lab is designed to measure how much interest there is in a potential Scouts BSA merit badge. If a Test Lab badge becomes an official merit badge, the topic will stay the same, but the requirements will likely be different in some respects. A Scout who did not receive a certificate after

completing both the Test Lab work and the survey will need to work with a merit badge counselor on the official requirements.

Q: What's the timeline for councils to have trained counselors for the new badges?

A: As with any new merit badge, each council will need to recruit volunteers with subject-matter experience to serve as counselors. How quickly that happens depends on the council. If you are interested in a badge, talk to your unit leader and encourage adults who share your interest to volunteer as merit badge counselors.

Q: The requirements of the new Scouts BSA merit badge are different from the Test Lab requirements. Do I have to complete the new requirements if I have my certificate?

A: No. Your Test Lab certificate is the equivalent of a Scouts BSA "blue card." That is enough to show that you earned the badge. The change in requirements between the Test Lab and the new merit badge is no different than when Scouts BSA updates the requirements of an existing merit badge. Scouts who have a signed "blue card" under the prior requirements earned the badge. Once a badge is earned, it is earned.

Q: How long do I have to keep certificates for work I did in the Test Lab?

A: Keep your certificates in a safe place (backup copies are a good idea) until Scouts BSA decides to make the badge an official merit badge or until you turn 18. Not every Test Lab badge will have enough interest to become an official Scouts BSA merit badge.

Q: When will we know if work done in the Test Lab will count toward an official Scouts BSA merit badge?

A: Scouts BSA will make an official announcement if it decides to transition a Test Lab badge to an official Scouts BSA merit badge. There is no set schedule for transitioning Test Lab badges.

Q: I was working on a Test Lab badge but couldn't finish it before the badge was removed from the Test Lab. What do I do now?

A: We are sorry you weren't able to finish work on the Test Lab badge. If it becomes an official Scouts BSA merit badge, talk with your unit leader about finding a counselor so you can earn the merit badge.