

American Business

Merit Badge Workbook

Merit badges are earned by doing: reading the pamphlet, practicing the skills, and showing your counselor what you have learned.
This workbook gives you a place to organize your notes and track your progress along the way.
Merit badge counselors may not require the use of this or any similar workbook.
You still must satisfy your counselor that you can demonstrate each skill and have learned the information.
Use the space under each requirement to note what you have done and what you want to talk about, not to write out full answers.
When a requirement says discuss, show, tell, explain, or demonstrate, that is what you must do.
No one may add to or subtract from the official requirements found on scouting.org (Guide to Advancement 7.0.4.8).
Scouting America last updated this badge's requirements page on December 15, 2025.
Requirements change from time to time. Double-check scouting.org before you start.

Scout's name: _____ Unit: _____ Date started: _____

Counselor's name: _____ Phone no.: _____ Email: _____

Links marked "Scouting America resources" are the ones Scouting America shares on its official badge page.
This workbook is unofficial and not endorsed by Scouting America.

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1. Do the following:

(a) Explain four features of the free enterprise system in the United States. Describe the difference between freedom and license. Tell how the Scout Oath and Scout Law apply to business and free enterprise.

Scouting America resources: What Is the Free Enterprise System? (video) · What Is the Difference Between Freedom and Liberty (video)

Four features of the free enterprise system

Feature	What it means

The difference between freedom and license

How the Scout Oath and Scout Law apply to business and free enterprise

(b) Describe the Industrial Revolution and tell about the major developments that marked the start of the modern industrial era in the United States. Discuss three people who had a great influence on business or industry in the United States and describe what each did.

Scouting America resources: The Industrial Revolution: Crash Course History of Science #21 (video)
Ford, Cars, and a New Revolution: Crash Course History of Science #28 (video) · Man of Steel: Andrew Carnegie | The Gilded Age (video)
Who Was: Henry Ford | Encyclopaedia Britannica (video) · How JP Morgan Built It's Empire (video) · Steve Jobs—Apple CEO (video)

The Industrial Revolution, and the major developments that started the modern industrial era

Three people who influenced business or industry

Person	What they did

(c) Identify and describe to your counselor the five primary areas of business.

Scouting America resources: Functional Areas of a Business (video)

The five primary areas of business

Area of business	What it does

(d) Explain the history of labor unions in the United States and the importance of labor unions and employers working together. Identify two major labor unions currently in existence.

Scouting America resources: The Labor Movement in the United States | History (video) · List of US Labor Unions (website)

The history of labor unions in the United States

Why it matters for labor unions and employers to work together

Labor union 1 Labor union 2

(e) Discuss with your counselor how business impacts the local, national, and global economy.

Scouting America resources: Small Businesses: Their Importance to the Global Economy (video)

How business impacts the economy

Economy	How business impacts it
Local	
National	
Global	

Requirement 1 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

2. Do the following:

(a) Explain the three basic types of financial statements (income statement, balance sheet, and statement of cash flows). Discuss with your counselor how each statement can help business leaders make better decisions.

Scouting America resources: 4 Types of Financial Statements (video)

The three basic types of financial statements

Statement	What it shows	How it helps leaders make better decisions
Income statement		
Balance sheet		
Statement of cash flows		

(b) Explain how changes in interest rates, taxes, and government spending affect the flow of money into or out of business and industry.

Scouting America resources: How Interest Rates Affect Interest Rates, Financial Flows, and Exchange Rates (video)

Change in	How it affects the flow of money into or out of business and industry
Interest rates	
Taxes	
Government spending	

(c) Explain how a sole proprietorship, partnership, or limited liability company gets its capital. Discuss and explain four ways a corporation obtains capital.

Scouting America resources: How To Choose the Right Business Structure: LLC vs Corporation vs Sole Proprietorship (video)

How each one gets its capital

Type of business	How it gets its capital
Sole proprietorship	
Partnership	
Limited liability company	

Four ways a corporation obtains capital

Way	How it works

(d) Name five kinds of insurance useful to business. Describe their purposes.

Scouting America resources: 5 Types of Insurance Your Business Needs (video)

Five kinds of insurance useful to business

Kind of insurance	Its purpose

Requirement 2 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

3. Do the following:

(a) Explain the place of profit in business.

Scouting America resources: What Is Profit? (Gross Profit, Operating Profit, Net Income) | From a Business Professor (video)

The place of profit in business

(b) Describe to your counselor green marketing and sustainable business practices.

Scouting America resources: What Is Eco Marketing or Green Marketing? | Needs and Significance of Eco Marketing (video)

Topic	What it is
Green marketing	
Sustainable business practices	

(c) Explain how ethics plays a role in business decision making.

Scouting America resources: Top 5 Business Ethics Lessons for Making the Right Decisions at Work (video)

How ethics plays a role in business decision making

(d) Discuss the differences between operating a brick-and-mortar business versus an online business.

Scouting America resources: eCommerce vs Brick and Mortar Business (video)

Brick-and-mortar versus online

What I compared	Brick-and-mortar business	Online business

Requirement 3 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

4. Describe the role of the U.S. Department of Labor. Discuss TWO of the following topics with your counselor: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), or Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA).

Scouting America resources: Summary of the Major Laws of the Department of Labor (website)
What Is the Fair Labor Standards Act? (video) · Intro to OSHA (video)
What's FMLA? FMLA Explained + What You Need To Know About FMLA (video) · What Is ERISA? Part 1 (video)
What Is ERISA? Part 2 (video)

The role of the U.S. Department of Labor

☐ Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
☐ Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA)
☐ Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
☐ Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA)

The two topics I discussed

Topic	What I learned

Requirement 4 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

5. Choose a business and research how it applies to each of the primary areas of business (accounting, finance, economics, marketing, and management). Share what you have learned with your counselor.

The business I chose _____ Date shared _____

How my business applies to each primary area

Area	How it applies to this business
Accounting	
Finance	
Economics	
Marketing	
Management	

Requirement 5 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

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6. Do ONE of the following:

☐ **(a)** Choose one of the primary areas of business and identify three career opportunities. Select one and research the education, training, and experience required for this career. Discuss this with your counselor and explain why this interests you.

Scouting America resources: Careers in Business (video) · Business Administration: A Complete Guide and Career Insight (video)

The primary area of business I chose _____

Three career opportunities

Career	Notes

The one I picked: education, training, and experience required

Why this career interests me

☐ **(b)** Select a business leader and interview this individual to learn more about his or her company and career path. Discuss the role ethics plays in making business decisions. Share what you have learned with your counselor.

Business leader _____ Company _____ Date _____

What I learned about their company and career path

The role ethics plays in their business decisions

Requirement 6 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

Counselor sign-off

Your counselor signs your blue card or approves the badge in Scoutbook, and your unit records it. This line is for your own records.

Counselor's signature _____ Date completed _____

Official Scouting America resources

Scouting America resources: American Business merit badge page (requirements and resources)
American Business merit badge pamphlet (free PDF) · All merit badges



Made by Cole at ScoutSmarts.com, an Eagle Scout who loves helping Scouts.
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