

Forestry

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 January 27, 2026.
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. Prepare a field notebook, make a collection, and identify 15 species of trees, wild shrubs, or vines in a local forested area. Write a description in which you identify and discuss the following:

Scouting America resources: How To Press Leaves (video) · Best Tree ID Apps Reviewed (app)

Local forested area _____ Dates _____

- ☐ Field notebook prepared
- ☐ Collection made

(a) The characteristics of leaf, twig, cone, or fruiting bodies

(b) The habitat in which these trees, shrubs, or vines are found

(c) The important ways each tree, shrub, or vine is used by humans or wildlife and whether the species is native or was introduced to the area (If it is not native, explain whether it is considered invasive or potentially invasive.)

My 15 trees, shrubs, or vines (1 to 7)

#	Species	Leaf, twig, cone, or fruiting bodies	Habitat	Uses by humans or wildlife	Native or introduced (invasive?)
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					

My 15 trees, shrubs, or vines (8 to 15)

#	Species	Leaf, twig, cone, or fruiting bodies	Habitat	Uses by humans or wildlife	Native or introduced (invasive?)
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					

Requirement 1 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

2. Do ONE of the following:

☐ **(a)** Collect and identify wood samples of 10 species of trees. List several ways the wood of each species can be used.

Scouting America resources: How to Identify Wood Species (video) · Mississippi State University Wood ID Team (video)

Wood samples of 10 tree species

Tree species	Ways the wood can be used

☐ **(b)** Find and examine three stumps, logs, or core samples that show variations in the growth rate of their ring patterns. In the field notebook you prepared for requirement 1, describe the location or origin of each example (including elevation, aspect, slope, and the position on the slope), and discuss possible reasons for the variations in growth rate. Photograph or sketch each example.

Scouting America resources: Reading a Tree's Stump (video) · Aging of Trees; Studying Tree Rings (video)

Three examples of ring patterns

Example	Stump, log, or core sample	Location: elevation, aspect, slope, position on slope	Possible reasons for the variations
Example 1			
Example 2			
Example 3			

Photos or sketches of each example (draw here or attach)

☐ **(c)** Find and examine two types of animal, insect, or disease damage to trees. In the field notebook you prepared for requirement 1, identify the damage, explain how the damage was caused, and describe the effects of the damage on the trees. Photograph or sketch each example.

Scouting America resources: Ask an Arborist: How Do I Check for Tree Pests? (video)
Why You Should Stomp Every Spotted Lanternfly (video) · 10 Pictures of Tree Diseases and Pests to Help You Spot Problems (website)

Two types of damage

Example	The damage (animal, insect, or disease)	How it was caused	Effects on the trees
Damage 1			
Damage 2			

Photos or sketches of each example (draw here or attach)

Requirement 2 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

3. Do the following:

Scouting America resources: Top 10 Benefits of Forestry (website) · How Forests Make Our Lives Better (video)

(a) Describe the contributions forests make to:

(1) Our economy in the form of products

(2) Our social well-being, including recreation

(3) Soil protection and increased fertility

(4) Clean water

(5) Clean air (carbon cycling, sequestration)

(6) Wildlife habitat

(7) Fisheries habitat

(8) Threatened and endangered species of plants and animals

Contributions forests make

Contribution to	How forests contribute
Our economy in the form of products	
Our social well-being, including recreation	
Soil protection and increased fertility	
Clean water	
Clean air (carbon cycling, sequestration)	
Wildlife habitat	
Fisheries habitat	
Threatened and endangered species of plants and animals	

(b) Tell which watershed or other source your community relies on for its water supply.

Scouting America resources: Watersheds! (video)

Watershed or other source my community relies on for water

Requirement 3 completed on counselor initials

4. Describe what forest management means, including the following:

What forest management means

(a) Multiple-use management

Scouting America resources: Managing Forests for Multi-Use (video)

Multiple-use management

(b) Sustainable forest management

Scouting America resources: Serious Science: Sustainable Forests (video)

Sustainable forest management

(c) Even-aged and uneven-aged management and the silvicultural systems associated with each

Scouting America resources: Akhlaq Wani Education and Nature Series? (video)

Even-aged and uneven-aged management

Type	What it is	Silvicultural systems associated with it
Even-aged		
Uneven-aged		

(d) Intermediate cuttings

Scouting America resources: Tree Thinning Explained (video)

Intermediate cuttings

(e) The role of prescribed burning and related forest-management practices

Scouting America resources: Prescribed Fire Explained (video) · How Do We Minimize Risk of Catastrophic Wildfires (video)

The role of prescribed burning and related practices

Requirement 4 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

5. With your parent or guardian's and counselor's approval, do ONE of the following:

☐ Parent or guardian approved
☐ Counselor approved

☐ **(a)** Visit a managed public or private forest area with the manager or a forester who is familiar with it. Write a brief report describing the type of forest, the management objectives, and the forestry techniques used to achieve the objectives.

Scouting America resources: International Paper Managed Forest Tour (video)

Forest I visited _____ Manager or forester _____ Date _____

My brief report

Topic	What I found
Type of forest	
Management objectives	
Forestry techniques used to achieve them	

☐ **(b)** With a knowledgeable individual, visit a current or past logging operation or wood-using manufacturing plant. Write a brief report describing the following:

Scouting America resources: A Possible Virtual Tour: Big Logging Equipment in Action (video)

(1) The species and size of trees harvested or used

(2) The origin of the forest or stands of trees utilized (e.g., planted or natural)

(3) The forest's successional stage, its future, and—if it is a past logging operation—the regeneration that is occurring, whether planted or natural

(4) Where the trees are coming from (land ownership) or where they are going (type of mill or processing plant)

(5) The products that are made from the trees

(6) How the products are made and used

(7) How waste materials from the logging operation or manufacturing plant are or were disposed of or utilized

Operation or plant I visited _____ Knowledgeable person _____ Date _____

My brief report

Topic	What I found
Species and size of trees harvested or used	
The origin of the forest or stands of trees utilized (planted or natural)	
The forest's successional stage, its future, and any regeneration (planted or natural)	
Where the trees come from (land ownership) or where they go (type of mill or processing plant)	
The products that are made from the trees	
How the products are made and used	
How waste materials from the operation or plant are or were disposed of or used	

☐ **(c)** Take part in a forest-fire prevention campaign in cooperation with your local fire warden, state wildfire agency, forester, or counselor. Write a brief report describing the campaign, how it will help prevent wildfires, and your part in it.

Scouting America resources: Your Home Can Survive a Wildfire (video)

Campaign _____ Worked with _____ Dates _____

My brief report

Topic	What I wrote
The campaign	
How it will help prevent wildfires	
My part in it	

Requirement 5 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

6. In your camp, local recreation area (park or equivalent), or neighborhood, do ONE of the following:

Scouting America resources: Tree Risk Assessment (video)

☐ **(a)** Inventory the trees within a specific area above (campsite, road, trail, street, etc.) that may be a hazard to structures or people. Note the species and hazardous condition, and suggest a remedy (removal or trimming). Make your list available to the proper authority or agency.

Specific area _____ Date _____

Trees that may be a hazard

Species	Location	Hazardous condition	Suggested remedy (removal or trimming)

List given to (authority or agency) _____ Date _____

☐ **(b)** Review a hazardous tree report done by a professional for this area and visit those trees and the results of the prescription to prune or remove them.

Report done by _____ Area _____ Date of visit _____

What I saw at the trees, and the results of the pruning or removal

Requirement 6 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

7. Do the following:

(a) Describe the consequences to forests that result from FIVE of the following elements: wildfire, absence of fire, destructive insects, loss of pollinating insect population, tree diseases, air pollution, overgrazing, deer or other wildlife overpopulation, improper harvest, and urbanization.

Scouting America resources: Wildfires (video) · How Decades of Stopping Forest Fires Made Them Worse (video)
How too Many Deer are Affecting Maryland's Forests (website) · This Tiny Beetle Is Devastating Forests in the Worst Outbreak Ever (video)
What Happens If You Cut Down All of a City's Trees? (video)
Deforestation and Diseases: Why Disrupting Ecosystems May Put Us at Risk (video)
How Do You Pollinate 40 Million Almond Trees? (video)

Five elements and their consequences

Element	Consequences to forests

(b) Explain what can be done to reduce the consequences you discussed in 7(a).

Reducing the consequences

Element	What can be done to reduce the consequences

(c) Describe what you should do if you discover a forest fire and how a professional firefighting crew might control it. Name your state or local wildfire control agency.

Scouting America resources: Fire: Be Safe by Doing the Following (website)

If I discover a forest fire

Topic	My notes
What I should do	
How a professional crew might control it	

My state or local wildfire control agency

Requirement 7 completed on counselor initials

8. Visit one or more local foresters and write a brief report about the person (or persons) OR write about a forester's occupation including the education, qualifications, career opportunities, and duties related to forestry.

Scouting America resources: Forestry Degree Requirements (website)
How to Become a Forester - Forestry Jobs, Forest Ecology, and Other Environmental Jobs! (video)

☐ I visited one or more local foresters
☐ I wrote about a forester's occupation

Forester or foresters I visited _____ Date _____

My brief report about the person

A forester's occupation

Topic	What I found
Education	
Qualifications	
Career opportunities	
Duties related to forestry	

Requirement 8 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: Forestry merit badge page (requirements and resources) · Forestry merit badge pamphlet (free PDF)
All merit badges

Made by Cole at ScoutSmarts.com, an Eagle Scout who loves helping Scouts.
Spot an error or a requirement change? Tell me at scoutsmarts.com/contact.
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