

Game Design

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 September 19, 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) Analyze four games you have played, each from a different medium. Identify the medium, player format, objectives, rules, resources, and theme (if relevant). Discuss with your counselor the play experience, what you enjoy in each game, and what you dislike. Make a chart to compare and contrast the games.

Scouting America resources: What Is a Game? (video)

My chart comparing four games

	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3	Game 4
Game				
Medium				
Player format				
Objectives				
Rules				
Resources				
Theme (if relevant)				
What I enjoy				
What I dislike				

Notes on the play experience, for my counselor

(b) Describe four types of play value and provide an example of a game built around each concept. Discuss with your counselor other reasons people play games.

Scouting America resources: What Is 8 Kinds of Fun? (video) · What Is Play Value? (website)

Four types of play value

Type of play value	What it means	Example game

Other reasons people play games

Requirement 1 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

2. Discuss with your counselor FIVE of the following 17 game design terms. For each term that you pick, describe how it relates to a specific game: story, setting, characters, play sequence, level design, interface design, difficulty, balance, depth, pace, replay value, age appropriateness, single-player vs. multiplayer, cooperative vs. competitive, turn-based vs. real-time, strategy vs. reflex vs. chance, or abstract vs. thematic.

Scouting America resources: Game Balance (video) · User Interface (video)

The five game design terms I picked

Term	Game	How the term relates to that game

Requirement 2 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

3. Define the term intellectual property. Describe the types of intellectual property associated with the game design industry. Describe how intellectual property is protected and why protection is necessary. Define and give an example of a licensed property.

Scouting America resources: Intellectual Property Rights in the Gaming Industry (video)
What Game Designers Should Know About Copyrights and Trademarks (video) · Intellectual Property Protection (website)
The Role of IP in the Gaming Industry (website)

Intellectual property, in my own words

Types of intellectual property in game design

Type	What it covers in the game design industry

How intellectual property is protected, and why protection is necessary

Licensed property: what it means, and an example

Requirement 3 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

4. Do the following:

(a) Pick a game where the players can change the rules or objectives (examples: basketball, hearts, chess, kickball). Briefly summarize the standard rules and objectives and play through the game normally.

Scouting America resources: P.E. Games—Kickball (video)

Game I picked _____ Date we played it normally _____

Summary of the standard rules and objectives

(b) Propose changes to several rules or objectives. Predict how each change will affect gameplay.

Scouting America resources: Survival Kickball (video)

My proposed changes

Change to a rule or objective	My prediction of how it will affect gameplay

(c) Play the game with one rule or objective change, observing how the players' actions and emotional experiences are affected by the rule change. Repeat this process with two other changes.

Scouting America resources: 11 Kickball Games and Variations (website) · Over-Under Kickball (video)

Playing with one change at a time

	The change we played	How players' actions changed	How their emotional experience changed
Change 1			
Change 2			
Change 3			

(d) Explain to your counselor how the changes affected the actions and experience of the players. Discuss the accuracy of your predictions.

How accurate were my predictions?

	What I predicted compared with what happened
Change 1	
Change 2	
Change 3	

Requirement 4 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

5. Design a new game. Any game medium or combination of mediums is acceptable. Record your work in a game design notebook.

Scouting America resources: The Art of Game Design—Generating & Refining Ideas (video)
The Art of Game Design: A Deck of Lenses (app)

My game's working title _____

(a) Write a vision statement for your game. Identify the medium, player format, objectives, and theme of the game. If suitable, describe the setting, story, and characters.

Scouting America resources: How to Make Your Own Board Game (video)

My game at a glance

	My game
Medium	
Player format	
Objectives	
Theme	
Setting (if suitable)	

My game at a glance (continued)

	My game
Story (if suitable)	
Characters (if suitable)	

My vision statement

(b) Describe the reason that someone would want to play your game.

Why someone would want to play my game

(c) Make a preliminary list of the rules of the game. Define the resources.

Scouting America resources: Game Design Tips—Rules (video)

My preliminary list of rules

#	Rule
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

The resources in my game

Resource	What it is and how players use it

(d) Draw the game elements.

Scouting America resources: Paper Prototypes—A Secret Weapon for Strong and Fun Game Design! (video)

My game elements (draw here or attach)

Requirement 5 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

6. Do the following: Note: You must have your counselor's approval of your concept before you begin creating the prototype.

My counselor approved my concept on _____

(a) Prototype your game from requirement 5. If applicable, demonstrate to your counselor that you have addressed player safety through the rules and equipment. Record your work in your game design notebook.

Scouting America resources: Why Your Game NEEDS a Protoype! (video) · Mastering Game Prototyping (video)

Date I finished my prototype _____ Materials or tools I used _____

How I addressed player safety through the rules and equipment (if applicable)

(b) Test your prototype with as many other people as you need to meet the player format. Compare the play experience to your descriptions from requirement 5(b). Correct unclear rules, holes in the rules, dead ends, and obvious rule exploits. Change at least one rule, mechanic, or objective from your first version of the game, and describe why you are making the change. Play the game again. Record in your game design notebook whether or not your change had the expected effect.

Scouting America resources: How Playtesting Can Make Your Game Awesome! (video)

Date of my first playtest | Who played

How the play experience compared with my description in 5(b)

Problems I corrected

Problem (unclear rule, hole, dead end, or exploit)	How I corrected it

The rule, mechanic, or objective I changed, and why

Playing again: did my change have the expected effect?

(c) Repeat 6(b) at least two more times and record the results in your game design notebook.

Repeating 6(b)

	Repeat 1	Repeat 2
Date and who played		
How it compared with 5(b)		
Rules I corrected		
What I changed, and why		
Did it have the expected effect?		

Requirement 6 completed on | counselor initials

7. Blind test your game. Do the following:

(a) Write an instruction sheet that includes all of the information needed to play the game. Clearly describe how to set up the game, play the game, and end the game. List the game objectives.

Scouting America resources: Playtests Are So Important in Game Dev! (video)

- ☐ How to set up the game
- ☐ How to play the game
- ☐ How to end the game
- ☐ The game objectives

My instruction sheet (draft here or attach)

(b) Share your prototype from requirement 6 with a group of players that has not played it or witnessed a previous playtest. Provide them with your instruction sheet(s) and any physical components. Watch them play the game, but do not provide them with instruction. Record their feedback in your game design notebook.

Date of my blind test _____ Players _____

What I saw while they played

Their feedback

Player	Feedback

(c) Share your game design notebook with your counselor. Discuss the player reactions to your project and what you learned about the game design process. Based on your testing, determine what you like most about your game and suggest one or more changes.

Shared my notebook with my counselor on _____

Player reactions, and what I learned about the game design process

What I like most about my game

Changes I suggest

Requirement 7 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

8. Do ONE of the following:

☐ **(a)** With your parent or guardian's permission and your counselor's approval, visit with a professional in the game development industry and ask them about their job and how it fits into the overall development process.

Scouting America resources: International Game Developers Association (IGDA) (website)

Professional I visited _____ Job title _____ Date _____

Their job, and how it fits into the overall development process

☐ **(b)** Meet with a professional in game development education and discuss the skills they emphasize in the classroom.

Scouting America resources: Student Game Developer Alliance (SGDA) (website)

Professional I met _____ School or program _____ Date _____

The skills they emphasize in the classroom

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: Game Design merit badge page (requirements and resources) · Game Design merit badge pamphlet (free PDF)
All merit badges

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