

Genealogy

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 31, 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 to your counselor what the words genealogy, ancestor, and descendant mean.
Scouting America resources: What Is Genealogy? Terminology (video)

Word	What it means
genealogy	
ancestor	
descendant	

(b) Explain what a family tree is and what information would be kept there.
Scouting America resources: The Family Tree (video)

What a family tree is, and the information kept there

(c) Explain what a family group record is and what information would be kept there.
Scouting America resources: What Are Family Group Sheets and Pedigree Charts? (video)

What a family group record is, and the information kept there

Requirement 1 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

2. Do ONE of the following:

☐ **(a)** Create a timeline for yourself or for a relative. Then write a short biography based on that timeline.

Scouting America resources: All About Timelines (video)

Whose timeline (me or which relative) _____

My timeline

Date	Event

My short biography

☐ **(b)** Keep a journal for six weeks. You must write in it at least once a week.

Scouting America resources: How to Journal (video)

Start date _____ End date _____

My six-week journal record

Week	Date(s) I wrote	What I wrote about
Week 1		
Week 2		
Week 3		
Week 4		
Week 5		
Week 6		

Requirement 2 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

3. With your parent or guardian's help, choose a relative or a family acquaintance you can interview in person, by telephone, or by email or letter. Record the information you collect so you do not forget it.

Scouting America resources: How to Master the Art of Interviewing With 5 Easy Journalist Techniques (video)

Person I interviewed _____ Relationship to me _____ Date _____

☐ In person
☐ By telephone
☐ By email
☐ By letter

My interview record

Question I asked	What I learned

Requirement 3 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

4. Do the following:

(a) Name three types of physical genealogical resources and where you can find them, and explain how these resources can help you chart your family tree.

Scouting America resources: 8 Places to Look for an Ancestor's Birth Record (video)

Three physical genealogical resources

Resource	Where I can find it	How it helps me chart my family tree

(b) Name three types of digital genealogical resources and where you can find them, and explain how these resources can help you chart your family tree.

Scouting America resources: 7 Free Genealogy Websites (video)

Three digital genealogical resources

Resource	Where I can find it	How it helps me chart my family tree

(c) Obtain at least one genealogical document that supports an event that is or can be recorded on your pedigree chart or family group record.

Document I obtained _____ Event it supports _____

(d) Tell how you found it and how you would evaluate the genealogical information you found for requirement 4(c).

How I found it

How I would evaluate the information I found

(e) Tell a likely place to find these type of genealogical records: marriage record, census record, birth record, and burial information.

Scouting America resources: Vital Records (video)

Type of record	A likely place to find it
marriage record	
census record	
birth record	
burial information	

Requirement 4 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

5. Contact ONE of the following individuals or institutions. Ask what genealogical services, records, or activities this individual or institution provides, and report the results:

Who I contacted (pick one below) _____ Date _____ How I contacted them _____

My report: the genealogical services, records, or activities they provide

- ☐ **(a)** A genealogical or lineage society
  Scouting America resources: Why Join a Genealogical Society (video)
- ☐ **(b)** A professional genealogist (someone who gets paid for doing genealogical research)
  Scouting America resources: How to Hire a Professional Genealogist (video)
- ☐ **(c)** A surname organization, such as your family's organization
  Scouting America resources: Facebook Surname Groups (video)
- ☐ **(d)** A genealogical educational facility or institution
  Scouting America resources: Getting Started With the Genealogy Center (video)
- ☐ **(e)** A genealogical record repository of any type (courthouse, genealogical library, state or national archive, state library, etc.)
  Scouting America resources: Where to Find Records for Family History Research (video)

Requirement 5 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

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6. Begin your family tree by listing yourself and include at least two additional generations. You may complete this requirement by using the chart provided in the Genealogy merit badge pamphlet or the genealogy software program of your choice.

Scouting America resources: How to Make a Family Tree (on Paper, Not Online To Avoid Putting Private Information Online) (video)

My family tree (or attach the pamphlet chart or a software printout)

Person	Name	Birth date and place	Other dates and places
Me			
Parent 1			
Parent 2			
Parent 1's parent			
Parent 1's parent			
Parent 2's parent			
Parent 2's parent			

Requirement 6 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

7. Complete a family group record form, listing yourself and your brothers and sisters as the children. On another family group record form, show your parent or guardian and his or her brothers and sisters as the children. This requirement may be completed using the chart provided or the genealogy software program of your choice.

Scouting America resources: How To Use Family Group Sheets (video)

Family group record 1: my family (or attach the pamphlet form or a software printout)

Person	Name	Birth date and place	Other dates and places
Parent or guardian			
Parent or guardian			
Child: me			
Child			
Child			

Family group record 2: my parent or guardian's family (or attach the pamphlet form or a software printout)

Person	Name	Birth date and place	Other dates and places
Parent			
Parent			
Child: my parent or guardian			
Child			
Child			

Requirement 7 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

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8. Do the following:

(a) Explain the effect computers and the internet are having on the world of genealogy.

Scouting America resources: How to Use Internet Archive for Genealogy (video)

The effect of computers and the internet on genealogy

(b) Explain how photography (including microfilming) has influenced genealogy.

Scouting America resources: Getting Involved: Quick Name Review (video)

How photography and microfilming have influenced genealogy

(c) Explain how record indexing works and how that has influenced genealogy.

Scouting America resources: Getting Involved: Quick Name Review (video)
How to Get Involved with Family Search on your Phone (video) · Family Search: Get Involved Introduction (video)

How record indexing works, and how it has influenced genealogy

Requirement 8 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

9. Discuss what you have learned about your family and your family members through your genealogical research.

What I have learned about my family and my family members

Requirement 9 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: Genealogy merit badge page (requirements and resources) · Genealogy 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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