

Hiking

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 February 19, 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.
Links marked "ScoutSmarts" open the matching part of Cole's guide. This workbook is unofficial and not endorsed by Scouting America.

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1. Do the following:

(a) Explain to your counselor the most likely hazards you may encounter while hiking, and what you should do to anticipate, help prevent, mitigate, and respond to these hazards.

Scouting America resources: Surviving the Wild - Essential Hiking Safety Tips (video) · **ScoutSmarts:** Requirement 1a explained

Hiking hazards

Hazard	How I anticipate and help prevent it	How I respond

(b) Show that you know first aid for injuries or illnesses that could occur while hiking, including hypothermia, frostbite, dehydration, heat exhaustion, heatstroke, sunburn, hyperventilation, altitude sickness, sprained ankle, blisters, insect stings, tick bites, and snakebite.

Scouting America resources: Backpacking First Aid (What To Carry + Foot Care, Snakes, Poison Plants, Hypothermia, etc) (video)
How to Apply a Compression Wrap for a Sprained Ankle (picture) · **ScoutSmarts:** Requirement 1b explained

First aid on the trail

Condition	First aid
hypothermia	
frostbite	
dehydration	
heat exhaustion	
heatstroke	

First aid on the trail (continued)

Condition	First aid
sunburn	
hyperventilation	
altitude sickness	
sprained ankle	
blisters	
insect stings	
tick bites	
snakebite	

Requirement 1 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

2. Do the following:

(a) Explain and, where possible, show the points of good hiking practices including proper outdoor ethics, hiking safety in the daytime and at night, courtesy to others, choice of footwear, and proper care of feet and footwear.
Scouting America resources: The ONE Tip You Need to Choose Between Hiking Boots, Shoes, and Trail Runners (video)
ScoutSmarts: Requirement 2a explained

Good hiking practices

Practice	Key points
Outdoor ethics	
Safety in the daytime	
Safety at night	
Courtesy to others	
Choice of footwear	
Care of feet and footwear	

(b) Read aloud or recite the Leave No Trace Seven Principles, and discuss why each is important while hiking.
Scouting America resources: Principles of LNT (video) · Principles of LNT (website) · **ScoutSmarts:** Requirement 2b explained

Leave No Trace Seven Principles

Principle	Why it matters while hiking

Leave No Trace Seven Principles (continued)

Principle	Why it matters while hiking

(c) Read aloud or recite the Outdoor Code, and give examples of how to follow it on a hike.

Scouting America resources: The Outdoor Code (website) · **ScoutSmarts:** Requirement 2c explained

Examples of following the Outdoor Code on a hike

Requirement 2 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

3. Explain how hiking is an aerobic activity. Develop a plan for conditioning yourself for 10-mile hikes, and describe how you will increase your fitness for longer hikes.

Scouting America resources: Planning and Training for a Hike (video) · Training for Elevation Gain (video)

ScoutSmarts: Requirement 3 explained

Why hiking is an aerobic activity

My conditioning plan for 10-mile hikes

Week	Activity and distance

How I'll build fitness for longer hikes

Requirement 3 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

4. Take four 10-mile hikes and one 20-mile hike, each on a different day, and each of continuous miles. Prepare a written hike plan before each hike and share it with your counselor or a designee for approval before starting the hike. Include map routes, a clothing and equipment list, and a list of items for a trail lunch. You may stop for as many short rest periods as needed, as well as one meal, during each hike, but not for an extended period such as overnight.

Scouting America resources: Maps and Ideas for Hikes (website) · Find Your Next Adventure (app) · Pre-Hike Plan Template (PDF)
ScoutSmarts: Requirement 4 explained

(a) 10-mile hike #1

Date _____ Route _____

- ☐ Written plan approved before the hike
- ☐ Map route
- ☐ Clothing and equipment list
- ☐ Trail lunch list

(b) 10-mile hike #2

Date _____ Route _____

- ☐ Written plan approved before the hike
- ☐ Map route
- ☐ Clothing and equipment list
- ☐ Trail lunch list

(c) 10-mile hike #3

Date _____ Route _____

- ☐ Written plan approved before the hike
- ☐ Map route
- ☐ Clothing and equipment list
- ☐ Trail lunch list

(d) 10-mile hike #4

Date _____ Route _____

- ☐ Written plan approved before the hike
- ☐ Map route
- ☐ Clothing and equipment list
- ☐ Trail lunch list

(e) 20-mile hike

Date _____ Route _____

- ☐ Written plan approved before the hike
- ☐ Map route
- ☐ Clothing and equipment list
- ☐ Trail lunch list

Requirement 4 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

5. After each of the hikes (or during each hike if on one continuous trek) in requirement 4, write a short report on your hike. For each hike, give the date and description (or map) of the route covered, the weather, any interesting things you saw, and any challenges you had and how you overcame them. It may include something you learned about yourself, about the outdoors, or about others you were hiking with. Share this with your counselor.

ScoutSmarts: Requirement 5 explained

Hike report: 10-mile hike #1 (date, route, weather, what I saw, challenges and how I handled them)

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Hike report: 10-mile hike #2

Hike report: 10-mile hike #3

Hike report: 10-mile hike #4

Hike report: 20-mile hike

Requirement 5 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: Hiking merit badge page (requirements and resources) · Hiking merit badge pamphlet (free PDF)
All merit badges · **ScoutSmarts:** Hiking Merit Badge Guide, Part 1 · Hiking Merit Badge Guide, Part 2

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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