

Pottery

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. Explain to your counselor the precautions that must be followed for the safe use and operation of a potter's tools, equipment, and other materials.

Scouting America resources: 6 Steps to a Safe Pottery Studio (video)

Safety precautions I will explain

Area	Precautions for safe use and operation
Tools	
Equipment	
Other materials	

Requirement 1 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

2. Do the following:

(a) Explain the properties and ingredients of a good clay body for the following:

Scouting America resources: Best Clay for Pottery: Hand-Building, Wheel Throwing & Sculpting Explained (video)

(1) Making sculpture using the hand-building method

Properties and ingredients of a good clay body for hand-built sculpture

(2) Throwing on the wheel

Properties and ingredients of a good clay body for throwing on the wheel

(b) Tell how three different kinds of potter's wheels work.

Scouting America resources: Selecting a Potter's Wheel (PDF) · Pottery Wheels - a Buyers Guide (website)

Three kinds of potter's wheels

Kind of wheel	How it works

Requirement 2 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

3. Make two drawings of pottery forms, each on an 8½-by-11-inch sheet of paper. One must be a historical pottery style. The other must be of your own design.

Scouting America resources: Ancient Greek Pottery Shapes: The Pure and Useful Forms of Greek Vases (website)

My two drawings (each on its own 8½-by-11-inch sheet)

Drawing	The pottery form I drew	Done
Historical pottery style		
My own design		

Requirement 3 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

4. Explain the meaning of the following pottery terms: bat, wedging, throwing, leather hard, bone dry, greenware, bisque, terra-cotta, grog, slip, score, earthenware, stoneware, porcelain, pyrometric cone, and glaze.

Scouting America resources: Ceramics 101: Clay Vocabulary and Processes (video) · Ceramic and Pottery Glossary (website)

Pottery terms

Term	What it means
bat	
wedging	
throwing	
leather hard	
bone dry	
greenware	
bisque	
terra-cotta	
grog	
slip	
score	
earthenware	

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Pottery terms (continued)

Term	What it means
stoneware	
porcelain	
pyrometric cone	
glaze	

Requirement 4 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

5. Do the following: Each piece is to be painted, glazed, or otherwise decorated by you.

(a) Make a slab pot, a coil pot, and a pinch pot.

Scouting America resources: How to Make a Slab-Built Cup (video) · How to Use the Coil Hand Building Technique With Clay (video) How to Make a Pinch Pot (video)

My three pots

Pot	Date made	How I decorated it (painted, glazed, or other)
Slab pot		
Coil pot		
Pinch pot		

(b) Make a human or animal figurine or decorative sculpture.

Scouting America resources: How to Sculpt a Human Face in Clay (video) · Make a Dragon Out of Clay (video) · Clay Owl (video) Top 5 Sculpting Animals That Look Hard but Super Easy to Make (video)

What I made _____ Date _____

How I decorated it _____

(c) Throw a functional form on a potter's wheel.

Scouting America resources: 5 Steps to Centering Clay on the Wheel (video) · How to Throw a Cylinder on the Potters Wheel (video)

Functional form I threw _____ Date _____

How I decorated it _____

(d) Help an experienced adult to load and fire a kiln OR describe in detail how to load and fire a kiln.

Scouting America resources: Loading Your Ceramics Kiln for Beginners (video) · How to Load a Kiln (PDF)

☐ I helped an experienced adult load and fire a kiln

☐ I described how to load and fire a kiln

Date _____ Adult I helped _____

How to load and fire a kiln, step by step

Requirement 5 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

6. Explain the scope of the ceramic industry in the United States. Tell some things made other than craft pottery.

Scouting America resources: What Are Ceramics? (website)

The scope of the ceramic industry in the United States

Some things made other than craft pottery

Requirement 6 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

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

☐ **(a)** Visit the kiln yard at a local college or other craft school. Learn how the different kinds of kilns work, including low fire electric, gas or propane high fire, wood or salt/soda, and raku.

Scouting America resources: Types of Kilns (website)

Kiln yard I visited _____ Date _____

Kinds of kilns

Kind of kiln	How it works
low fire electric	
gas or propane high fire	
wood or salt/soda	
raku	

☐ **(b)** Visit a museum, art exhibit, art gallery, artists' co-op, or artist's studio that features pottery. After your visit, share with your counselor what you have learned.

Scouting America resources: Ceramics in the US (website)

Place I visited _____ Date _____

What I learned, to share with my counselor

☐ **(c)** Using resources from the library, magazines, the internet (with your parent or guardian's permission), and other outlets, learn about the historical and cultural importance of pottery. Share what you discovered with your counselor.

Scouting America resources: Why Pottery Is a Cornerstone of Human History (website)
History Behind Southwestern Arts: Pottery (video) · Artifact Exploration: Greek Vases (video)

Sources I used

Source (library, magazine, website, other)	What I found

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The historical and cultural importance of pottery: what I discovered

Requirement 7 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

8. Find out about career opportunities in pottery. Pick one and find out the education, training, and experience required for this profession. Discuss this with your counselor, and explain why this profession might interest you.

Scouting America resources: Dream Jobs - Potter (video) · Jobs for Potters (website)

Career opportunities in pottery

Career	What the work involves

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

Why this profession might interest me

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

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