

# Traffic Safety

## 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.** Preventing Impaired Driving. Do the following:

**(a)** Explain why a distracted driver must not operate a motor vehicle. List five common distractions, explain how driver distractions contribute to traffic accidents, and tell how drivers can minimize distractions.

**Scouting America resources:** Distracted Driving (video)

**Why a distracted driver must not drive**

**Five common distractions**

| Distraction | How it contributes to traffic accidents |
|---|---|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

**How drivers can minimize distractions**

**(b)** Explain why a driver impaired by alcohol, drugs, or other substances must not operate a motor vehicle. Describe how alcohol, cold medications, and prescription and illegal drugs affect driving abilities. For the state where you live, find out what is the legal blood alcohol concentration and what are the consequences for driving while intoxicated or driving under the influence. Find out what the open-container law is in your state.

**Scouting America resources:** The Deadly Truth About Drinking and Driving (video)
Blood Alcohol Content & Driving: What You Need to Know (video)

**Why an impaired driver must not drive**

**How substances affect driving**

| Substance | How it affects driving abilities |
|---|---|
| Alcohol | |
| Cold medications | |
| Prescription drugs | |
| Illegal drugs | |

My state _____ Legal blood alcohol concentration _____

**Consequences for driving while intoxicated or under the influence in my state**

**My state's open-container law**

**(c)** Explain why a fatigued driver must not operate a motor vehicle. Describe how drivers must plan to be alert for safely transporting families, friends, Scouts, and themselves.

**Scouting America resources:** Recognizing Fatigue—Warning Signs (video) · Driver Tiredness, Fatigue, and Road Safety (video)

**Why a fatigued driver must not drive**

**How drivers plan to be alert when transporting others and themselves**

**(d)** Describe mistakes that new drivers make, how those mistakes increase their risk of collisions, how drivers can reduce this risk, and how driving behavior affects automobile insurance rates.

**Scouting America resources:** 7 Common Mistakes New Drivers Make—and How to Avoid Them (website)
Most Common Driving Mistakes to Avoid (video)

**New driver mistakes**

| Mistake | How it raises the risk of a collision | How to reduce the risk |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

**How driving behavior affects insurance rates**

Requirement 1 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

## 2. Vehicle Safety. Do the following:

**(a)** Demonstrate how to wear a lap and shoulder belt properly. Explain why it is important for the driver and all passengers, including children sitting in age-appropriate seats, to always wear their seat belts.

**Scouting America resources:** How to Wear a Seat Belt Properly (video) · Car Seat Safety (video)

Demonstrated to _____ Date _____

**Why the driver and every passenger should always wear a seat belt**

**(b)** List five safety features found in motor vehicles besides occupant restraint systems. Describe each safety feature, how each works, and how each contributes to safety.

**Scouting America resources:** 10 Car Safety Features That Every Car Must Have (video)

**Five safety features (besides occupant restraint systems)**

| Safety feature | How it works | How it adds to safety |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Requirement 2 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

**3.** Auto Maintenance and Safety Checkups. With adult supervision and using a vehicle that you have access to, do the following:

Vehicle I used _____ Supervising adult _____

**(a)** Demonstrate that all driving lights and signaling lights are clear and operational. Show where the switches are for these lights. Explain how drivers use lights to drive safely and courteously and to communicate with other drivers.

**Scouting America resources:** Types of Car Lights & Their Purposes (video)

- ☐ Driving lights are clear and working
- ☐ Signaling lights are clear and working
- ☐ Showed where the light switches are

**How drivers use lights**

| To... | How drivers use their lights |
|---|---|
| Drive safely | |
| Drive courteously | |
| Communicate with other drivers | |

**(b)** Explain issues that might affect the driver's ability to see through the front, rear, and side windows. Demonstrate with a smear-and-clear test if the windshield wiper blades will clear the windshield completely or need to be replaced. Describe instances in good and bad weather when windshield wipers are important to safe driving.

**Scouting America resources:** How to Check Your Wipers (video)

**What can block the driver's view**

| Windows | Issues that might affect seeing through them |
|---|---|
| Front | |
| Rear | |
| Side | |

Smear-and-clear test date _____ Result (clears fully or needs new blades) _____

**When wipers matter**

| Weather | Times when wipers are important to safe driving |
|---|---|
| Good weather | |
| Bad weather | |

**(c)** Demonstrate how to find the vehicle's recommended tire pressures, how to check tire pressures, and how to check for adequate tire tread depth. Explain why proper tire pressure and tread depth are important to traction, stopping distances, tire wear, and fuel economy.

**Scouting America resources:** How to Check Your Tires (video)

Where I found the recommended pressures _____ Recommended pressures _____

**My tire check**

| Tire | Pressure I measured | Tread depth check |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

**Why pressure and tread depth matter**

| Area | Why it matters |
|---|---|
| Traction | |
| Stopping distances | |
| Tire wear | |
| Fuel economy | |

**(d)** Check the vehicle for tools needed to change a flat tire or to use tire sealant to fix a puncture. Demonstrate you know how to change a flat tire and how to use tire sealant.

**Scouting America resources:** Tire Inflator and Sealant Kit (video)

Tools I found in the vehicle _____

☐ Showed how to change a flat tire

☐ Showed how to use tire sealant

**(e)** In a location away from traffic hazards, mark off the reaction distances and braking distances that a car will travel as it makes an emergency stop at 25, 55, and 70 miles per hour on level dry and level wet pavement. Discuss how these distances change for normal and impaired drivers, for day and night driving, and for weather conditions. Note: Use the graphics template in the Traffic Safety merit badge pamphlet or one approved by your counselor to set up this demonstration.

**Scouting America resources:** Stopping Distance Table and Graphs (PDF) · Thinking, Braking, and Stopping Distances (video) Stopping Distance Demonstration (video)

Date _____ Location (away from traffic) _____

**Distances I marked off**

| Speed | Dry: reaction | Dry: braking | Wet: reaction | Wet: braking |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 25 mph | | | | |
| 55 mph | | | | |
| 70 mph | | | | |

**How the distances change**

| Compare | What changes and why |
|---|---|
| Normal and impaired drivers | |
| Day and night driving | |
| Weather conditions | |

Requirement 3 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

**4.** Traffic Safety and the Law. Do the following:

**(a)** Describe at least three examples of traffic laws that apply to drivers of motor vehicles and to bicyclists.

**Scouting America resources:** Bicycle Rules of the Road (video)

**Traffic laws for drivers and bicyclists**

| Traffic law | How it applies to drivers and bicyclists |
|---|---|
| | |
| | |
| | |

**(b)** Explain procedures and etiquette a driver should follow if a law enforcement officer stops their vehicle.

**Scouting America resources:** Traffic Stop Etiquette (video)

**Procedures and etiquette a driver should follow if stopped by an officer**

**(c)** Explain procedures that drivers should follow if they are involved in a car accident.

**Scouting America resources:** What to Do After a Car Accident (video)

**What a driver should do after a car accident**

**(d)** Name the three documents that drivers are required by law to carry whenever they operate a motor vehicle.

**Scouting America resources:** Three Documents You Should Always Have in Your Car (website)

Document 1 _____ Document 2 _____ Document 3 _____

Requirement 4 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

**5.** Road Designs and Signs. Do the following:

**(a)** Explain how road designs for intersections, medians, and road shoulders contribute to traffic safety. Discuss safety features of interstate highways.

**Scouting America resources:** How Highways Are Designed and Built (video)

**Road design and safety**

| Road design | How it contributes to traffic safety |
|---|---|
| Intersections | |
| Medians | |
| Road shoulders | |
| Interstate highways | |

**(b)** Explain how color and shape help drivers recognize and understand the information presented on traffic and roadway signs. Explain the purpose of different types of signs, signals, and pavement markings.

**Scouting America resources:** Understanding Road Signs (video) · Traffic Signals (video) · Pavement Markings (video)

**How color and shape help drivers understand signs**

**Types of signs and their purpose**

**Types of signals and their purpose**

**Types of pavement markings and their purpose**

Requirement 5 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

**6.** Sharing the Road. Do the following:

**(a)** Describe the difference in nighttime visibility between a properly lit bicycle and rider (or a pedestrian) wearing reflective material and a bicycle and rider with no lights (or a pedestrian) dressed in dark clothing without reflective material.

**Scouting America resources:** Bike Safety - Sharing the Road (video) · The Basics of Bicycle Safety (video)
What to Do to Make Driving at Night Safer (video)

**Nighttime visibility**

| Bicycle and rider (or pedestrian) | How visible they are at night |
|---|---|
| Properly lit, wearing reflective material | |
| No lights, dark clothing without reflective material | |

**(b)** Name at least four safety measures that pedestrians, including hikers, should follow as they walk along or across streets or roadways.

**Scouting America resources:** The Basics of Pedestrian Safety (video)

**Pedestrian safety measures**

| Safety measure |
| --- |
| |
| |
| |
| |

**(c)** Name at least four safety measures that drivers of motor vehicles should follow if they approach a school bus making its stops at pick-up and drop-off locations.

**Scouting America resources:** Driving Safety 101: School Bus Safety (video)

**Safety measures near a stopping school bus**

| Safety measure |
| --- |
| |
| |
| |
| |

**(d)** Discuss the risks associated with blind spots on cars and trucks and how drivers can prevent lane change crashes.

**Scouting America resources:** Blind Spots Lessons (video) · Lane Changes (video)

**Risks of blind spots on cars and trucks**

**How drivers can prevent lane change crashes**

Requirement 6 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

**7.** Traffic, Your Community, and You. Do ONE of the following:

☐ **(a)** Interview a traffic law enforcement officer or a traffic safety professional in your community to identify what three traffic safety problems the officer is most concerned about. Discuss with your counselor possible ways to solve one of those problems.

**Scouting America resources:** Engineering and Inspector Careers (video) · Women in Road Safety Careers (video)

Person I interviewed _____ Their role _____ Date _____

**Three traffic safety problems they are most concerned about**

| Problem | Notes from the interview |
|---|---|
| | |
| | |
| | |

**Possible ways to solve one of these problems**

☐ **(b)** Write a personal traffic safety pledge, addressing three of your most concerning issues relating to traffic safety. Discuss your pledge with your counselor.

**Scouting America resources:** Take the Pledge (website) · Parent-Teen Driving Agreement (website)

**My traffic safety pledge**

| Issue that concerns me | My pledge |
|---|---|
| | |
| | |
| | |

Discussed with my counselor on _____

☐ **(c)** Initiate and organize an activity or event to demonstrate the importance of traffic safety.

**Scouting America resources:** Teen Driving Safety Event (video)

Activity or event _____ Date _____ Where _____

**How I organized it, and what it showed about traffic safety**

Requirement 7 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

**8.** Careers. Explore careers related to traffic safety. Research one career to learn about the training and education needed, costs, job prospects, salary, job duties, and career advancement. Your research methods may include—with your parent or guardian's permission—an internet or library search, an interview with a professional in the field, or a visit to a location where people in this career work. Discuss with your counselor both your findings and what about this profession might make it an interesting career.

**Scouting America resources:** What It's Like to Work in Traffic Control and Safety in Road Construction (video)
On The Job: Traffic Signal Technician (video)

**Careers related to traffic safety**

| Career | What the job involves |
|---|---|
| | |
| | |
| | |

Career I researched _____ How I researched it _____

**What I learned**

| Topic | My findings |
|---|---|
| Training and education | |
| Costs | |
| Job prospects | |
| Salary | |
| Job duties | |
| Career advancement | |

**What might make this an interesting career**

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:** Traffic Safety merit badge page (requirements and resources) · Traffic Safety 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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