EARNING RANKS USING SCOUTBOOK

Scout Point of View
KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR ADVANCEMENT

You can monitor your rank and merit badge advancement easily with Scoutbook.

Ensure you have an active Scoutbook account. Scoutbook is truly the easiest and most effective way to track merit badges especially those that are earned over a long period of time. Your parent can invite you to join Scoutbook by going into your profile in Scoutbook and inviting you. They should contact your troop’s Scoutbook administrator for assistance.

The Grand Canyon Council has videos that can assist in training on Scoutbook here.

Once you have an account, Just log in, click on My Dashboard, click on My Account and click on My Advancement. All the ranks you are working on are listed with your progress indicated by a check mark or a dashboard dial showing percent complete.

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You can drill down into any rank to see which requirements you have comped, which ones your leaders have approved as earned and which you still need to work on. You can tell your leaders that you think a requirement is completed by clicking on the requirement and putting in a completed date. Your Scoutmaster or someone he designates will have to make sure you are tested on the requirement and approve it before you are done with the requirement. When approved the check mark next to the requirement will be blue.

HOW TO ADD NOTES AND PICTURES TO ADVANCEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Sometimes a Scout or a leader may wish to put in a note about advancement progress on a requirement, or attach a photo showing completion or examples for a requirement. Notes and images may be placed under any advancement rank, merit badge, any rank requirement or merit badge requirement.

To do so follow these instructions:

- Go to the Rank, Merit Badge, or open the Rank Requirement or Merit Badge Requirement page and go to the bottom of the page. You will see there a Note field.
- Place text in note
- Attach picture by clicking on the camera icon (optional) You may add up to 4 pictures to a note, you upload and save them one at a time.
- Click on Post Note – Important! If you don’t click on Post Note the note and file will not be saved.
- If you have completed the requirement, you can update the date at the top or click TODAY if the requirement was completed today. Otherwise click SAVE at the top to save all changes to the page.
Scoutmaster

KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR SCOUTS ADVANCEMENT

The primary responsibility of advancement in the troop is the Scoutmaster’s. You can approve any Scout’s advancement by going to the troop roster and drilling down to a Scout’s advancement and approve either requirements or entire ranks inside Scoutbook. Scoutbook makes it very easy to do this as the requirements are being earned so the record keeping is not forgotten later on.

For multiple Scouts use the Quick Entry feature on the Troop Page
EARNING MERIT BADGES USING SCOUTBOOK

Overview

Earning merit badges is an important part of scouting, and it is a cooperative effort between the Scouts, adult leaders and parents. Because these achievements are usually earned over a long period of time, having a good system to track progress is essential. The use of Scoutbook facilitates the tracking merit badge accomplishments. There is a basic flow to the merit badge process, although the specific requirements and responsibilities depend on your point of view: Scout, Merit Badge (MB) counselor, or Scoutmaster.

The Process

Here is an overview of the basic steps in the process. Position specific details and instructions are provided below.

1. Scout requests initiation of a merit badge. He should make this request to the Scoutmaster.
2. The Scoutmaster recommends a MB counselor and assigns one in Scoutbook, as described below under the Scoutmaster duties.
3. Scoutmaster provides the Scout a blue card for paper tracking of completion. This card can be created and printed via Scoutbook and serves as a paper backup.
4. As requirements are completed, the MB counselor checks those requirements in Scoutbook.
5. The Scout should concurrently be tracking his own activity completion via blue card and Scoutbook.
6. Once the merit badge is complete (in Scoutbook) the Scout attends a Scoutmaster Conference and presents his blue card. The Scoutmaster will notify the Advancement Coordinator who will enter the badge into Internet Advancement, and purchase the badge.
7. The badge will be presented at the next available meeting.

Scout

From the Scout’s perspective, maximum effort should be devoted to earning the merit badge. However, he also shares responsibility for tracking his own progress. The Scout and MB counselor will be responsible for maintaining the MB blue card as a paper based backup tracking mechanism and should also ensure completed requirements are being properly annotated in Scoutbook.

- First, discuss your plan with your Scoutmaster.

Note: You must meet with your Scoutmaster before you start earning your merit badge!
● Once signed in, select My Dashboard, and then select your account. Once you are viewing your account, select My Advancement:

Scroll to the bottom of your advancement page and Start Another Merit Badge.

On the next screen, you can select the merit badge that you have coordinated to earn. Once you have done so, you will see this merit badge in your advancement list, **but there will not yet be a merit badge counselor assigned**.

● At this point, the Scoutmaster should already be aware that you intend to
start a new merit badge (because you have coordinated this with him), and they will ensure the MB counselor is assigned in Scoutbook.

To mark requirements complete go into the merit badge in Scoutbook and click on the requirement. You can mark it complete and you can leave notes for your merit badge counselor about the requirement. You can even attach photos or other attachments to the requirement for him to review.

- As you complete requirements, you should frequently check Scoutbook to ensure completed requirements are being signed off (by the MB counselor) and you should also keep a record on your blue card.

Note: You also have the ability to mark MB requirements complete in Scoutbook, but your MB Counselor must approve all requirements.

HOW SCOUTBOOK ASSIGNS MERIT BADGES TO RANKS

Scoutbook automatically assigns merit badges to the different ranks. These assignments match the way the BSA computer systems assign the badges and complies with BSA requirements and policies.

Scoutbook will initially assign merit badges to ranks as started in the proper categories (Eagle Required, or Optional.) Once completed and approved they will be reassigned to the ranks in order of completion.

In other words, once a Scout has had his first Eagle merit badge signed off by a merit badge counselor, that merit badge would then count for the 1st Eagle Badge for Star. After the 2nd one is approved, it would apply for the 2nd one in Star. etc.

As the Scout starts new merit badges Scoutbook will fill them in the vacant spots for the different ranks in the order of percent complete. As soon as he completes each merit badge, Scoutbook will push the "in progress" merit badges into future open rank slots and put in the completed merit badges in, according to the type of badge (Eagle Required, or Optional) and date of completion.

Extra earned Eagle required badges can fill in for optional badges in the ranks (but not visa versa.) For example, it is possible for a Scout to earn more than four Eagle Required badges for Star and not have earned any or only one optional badge. The completed and approved Eagle badges would count for the optional badges for completing the Star rank. Later on, while working on his Life rank, when optional badges are earned they replace the Eagle badge filling in for the optional badge in the Start rank and will “bump” the Eagle badges to count towards Life or Eagle rank. In the end, the Scout must earn 21 total badges.
badges for Eagle, 13 of which come from the Eagle Required list as stated in the Eagle rank requirements.

Here is another example: A Scout may earn six Eagle-required merit badges to complete the merit badge requirement for Star. Remember, the requirement is for six merit badges, but four must be Eagle-required. Then for Life, he must earn another Eagle-required merit badge (to total seven in all) plus the four optional merit badges (these four may also be Eagle-required). When it comes to Eagle, only 13 of the Eagle-required merit badges may count. Only one of the merit badges listed in categories ‘h’ (Emergency Preparedness or Lifesaving), ‘i’ (Environmental Science or Sustainability), and ‘k’ (Swimming, Hiking, or Cycling) may apply toward Eagle. If the other Eagle-required merit badges are earned, they may apply toward the optional ones.

**Merit Badge Counselor**

The MB counselor has a significant responsibility, since they not only teach and guide the Scout through the MB skills, but also track progress of the Scouts as they complete the work to earn their MB. This may involve several meetings, often over weeks, with each Scout at various stages of accomplishment. A tracking system is essential! The MB counselor becomes involved in this process when they are approached by a Scout or the Scoutmaster to initiate a MB activity. The steps below follow the basic process, but are unique to the role of MB counselor. For more information about merit badge counselling contact your local Council Service Center.

- First, ensure you have an active [Scoutbook account](http://www.scoutbook). Scoutbook is truly the easiest and most effective way to track merit badges especially those that are earned over a long period of time. If you have difficulty logging on, try clicking on Forgot Password at the bottom of the login page.

- Once signed in, first confirm that you are signed up as a counselor for the correct merit badges. Do this by accessing your account from the Dashboard.
From your account page, select My Positions and then follow the Merit Badge Counselor link to see what badges you are approved to counsel. As a general rule, you should also mark yourself as “Available”.

You will only be able to sign off requirements for merit badges associated with your Scoutbook account, so it is important that your account is up to date before you begin helping Scouts with a merit badge.

- After confirming your availability, the Scoutmaster will assign you in Scoutbook as the MB counselor for the Scouts currently working on that merit badge. Once this assignment is made, you will be able to sign off requirements for all Scouts you are counseling (even if you are not associated with their patrol).

- When you are ready to start tracking merit badge completion, find the Scout you want to work with (from the Troop home page) and select their advancement page. At this point, you should see your name listed as their MB counselor. If you do not, inform the Scoutmaster.

**Note:** If you do not see the merit badge listed on this Scout’s advancement page, confirm with the Scout that he has initiated that merit badge through his own Scoutbook account.
Select the merit badge you are working with and check the items that the Scout has completed.

Note: Some merit badges may have different requirements for different years; be sure you've selected the correct version.

Note: The Scout may annotate requirements as complete using his own Scoutbook profile, but the MB counselor is ultimately responsible for ensuring completion prior to approving any requirement. Remember, approval means you know the Scout personally completed the requirement as stated exactly as written.

When annotating completion of an activity, ensure you enter the correct date and select the “Counselor approved” box only. To remove completion, erase the date and save.

- The blue card features in Scoutbook are not required for the MB counselor. The MB coordinator should provide the Scout with a blue card (printed via Scoutbook) as a backup tracking mechanism.
Note: There may be times when it is inconvenient or not possible to update requirements in Scoutbook in real time. In that case, the blue card or another paper based tracking system is useful. However, it is important that all requirements are eventually annotated in Scoutbook as this will become a permanent record of completion.

The Grand Canyon Council has videos that can assist you in your role.

Scoutmaster
Merit Badge Process

The primary job of the Scoutmaster is to ensure Scouts have easy access to MB counselors and to ensure the MB process runs efficiently. The process below is described from the point of view of the Scoutmaster.

Before any Scouts can work on merit badges, the Scoutmaster must solicit volunteers to fill MB counselor positions.

Note: The Scoutmaster should assist MB counselors with establishing their MB role in Scoutbook, using the procedures described above.

Once a Scout has approached the Scoutmaster requesting the initiation of a MB, the Scoutmaster should assign an available MB counselor. The Scoutmaster should first ensure the MB counselor is approved for that merit badge. In Scoutbook that is done by selecting the troop from the My Dashboard page, and then accessing the list of MB counselors.
Write down the name of the merit badge counselor, you will need it in the next step.

- Go to the Scout’s Advancement page and select the merit badge they are working on. If you have already held the initial Scoutmaster conference with the Scout to discuss the merit badge and signed his blue card on the front page, enter the date in the Blue Card Signed line (note: this date only is the date of the conference, it does not indicate the date the card was signed off by the merit badge counselor; that is indicated by the Percent Completed being 100% and approved.

- To assign the MB counselor, first enter that Scout’s Advancement page and select the merit badge they are working on. From here, you will be able to invite a counselor.

When prompted on the next page, if the merit badge counselor is one from your troop, their name should display on the page. If not or if not from your troop, click the ADD button and search for them. Click on their name to invite the counselor.

There can only be one counselor assigned. This assignment can be made to any active adult (in Scoutbook) but that adult must be council approved and show up in Scoutbook as a counselor for that merit badge to sign off requirements on that badge.

Note: It is important that you assign the correct permissions on the next page. For MB counselors, select Merit Badge Counselor and the correct badge. Other permissions (e.g., Edit Advancement) are not required for MB counselors and can be left alone.
Once you have assigned the MB counselor, you should use the Print Blue Card feature to print a blue card that will be provided to the Scout.