

# Troop 7

## Process for Earning a Merit Badge



The process of earning a merit badge isn't only focused on learning and demonstrating specific skills. The process also involves the challenge for the Scout (not a parent) to initiate each of the steps.

1. The Scout identifies a merit badge he's interested in working on, and discusses it with his unit leader (the Scoutmaster, or another leader that works with Scouts on their advancement).
  - The unit leader will advise the Scout if the merit badge is appropriate, based on interests and skill level.
  - The unit leader will then identify an approved merit badge counselor, and provide the Scout with a three-part merit badge "blue card" for the badge.
    - If the Scout has identified an approved counselor he wants to work with, that will be acceptable.
    - The Scout should not change counselors without first discussing the change with the unit leader.
2. Prior to beginning work on the badge, the Scout contacts the counselor. (Note again – this contact must be made by the Scout, not a parent.)
  - The Scout introduces himself, and tells the counselor that he wants to earn the merit badge.
  - The counselor may ask to meet prior to the beginning of the work on the badge, explain what is expected, and may offer to help support the Scout in completing the requirements.
  - In the case of "Partials" previously completed with another counselor, the Scout should also discuss work that has been signed off by that other counselor.
3. The Scout completes the requirements. \*Note: If a Scout has already started working on a merit badge when a new edition of a merit badge pamphlet is introduced, he may continue to use the original pamphlet.
  - Scouts must meet the requirements as they are stated – no more and no less. For instance, if a requirement says "show" or "demonstrate," that is what must be done – just telling about it isn't enough.
4. Once he's completed the requirements, the Scout calls the counselor again to make an appointment.
  - The Scout should remember to take the blue card!
  - The Scout should take along any items that were made to meet the requirements. If they are too big or can't be moved, discuss this in advance with the counselor – he/she might recommend taking pictures or telling in writing what was done.
  - The counselor should test the Scout to make sure the Scout can meet all requirements.
  - It is the counselor's decision whether or not to accept work or activities completed prior to the initial contact of the Scout with the counselor.
5. The counselor approves the merit badge and signs the blue card. The counselor will keep the "Counselor's Record" portion, and will return the other two portions to the Scout.
6. The Scout returns the two portions of the signed blue card to the unit leader. The unit leader signs the "Applicant Record" section of the card and returns this to the Scout. (Don't lose this.)
7. The unit leader then coordinates with the Advancement Chair, who reports the merit badge to the council.
8. The Scout receives his merit badge as per the Troop's procedures.

### Several notes:

- Particularly for the first one or two badges that a Scout works on, it might be advisable for a Scout to "rehearse" the phone conversation he expects to have with his counselor.
- Scouts should wear their uniform to all meetings with counselors.
- All meetings must include a "buddy" (a parent or another Scout) – There should never be a one-on-one meeting between a Scout and a counselor.