

# How to earn a merit badge



An important reminder from the *Guide to Advancement*:

*Earning merit badges should be Scout initiated, Scout researched, and Scout learned. It should be hands-on and interactive, and should not be modeled after a typical school classroom setting. Instead, it is meant to be an active program so enticing to young men that they will want to take responsibility for their own full participation.*

## The official Boy Scouts of America process for earning merit badges

1. The Scout develops an interest in a merit badge and may begin working on the requirements.
2. The Scout discusses his interest in the merit badge with his unit leader.
3. **The unit leader signs a blue card and provides the Scout with at least one counselor contact.**
4. The Scout contacts the counselor.
5. The counselor considers any work toward requirements completed prior to the initial discussion with the unit leader.
6. The Scout, his buddy and the counselor meet (often several times).
7. The Scout finishes the requirements.
8. The counselor approves completion.
9. The Scout returns the signed blue card to his unit leader, who signs the applicant record section of the blue card.
10. The unit leader gives the Scout the applicant record.
11. The unit reports the merit badge to the council.
12. The Scout receives his merit badge.

## For more explanation, consult the *Guide to Advancement*

These 12 steps offer a great overview, but they don't tell the whole story. For that you'll want to review Section 7 of the *Guide to Advancement*.