



Advancement Education

BSA

Prepared. For Life.®

Orange County Council Merit Badge Day Coordinator Training

Written and approved by the Orange County Council
Advancement Committee. Reviewed 2/1/2020.



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Prepared. For Life.®

What's the History Behind this Training?

- ♣ Started around 2015
- ♣ Merit Badge Days run amuck!
 - ♣ Units holding 3, 4 sometimes 5 MB Days/year!
- ♣ Guide to Advancement – 2015
 - ♣ Specific rules about group MB Days



What's the History Behind this Training?

❖ Council providing guidance:

❖ Quality.

❖ Standardization.

❖ Merit Badge Days are Advancement Activities not fund raisers.

❖ Align Merit Badge Day Policy with Group Merit Badge Instruction practices in the Guide to Advancement.



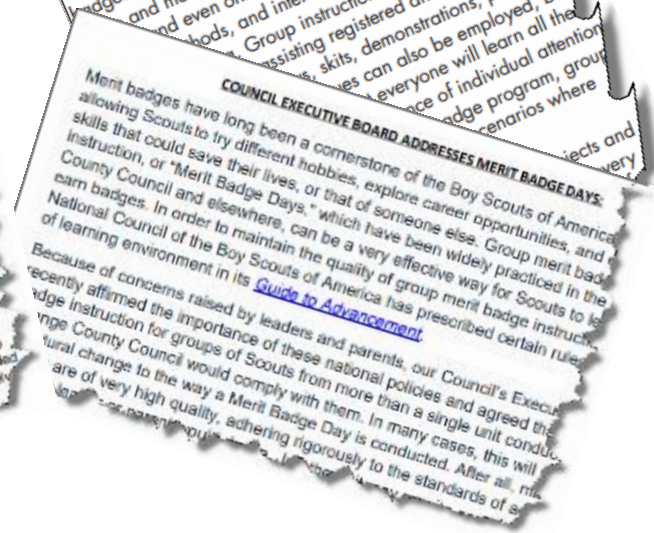
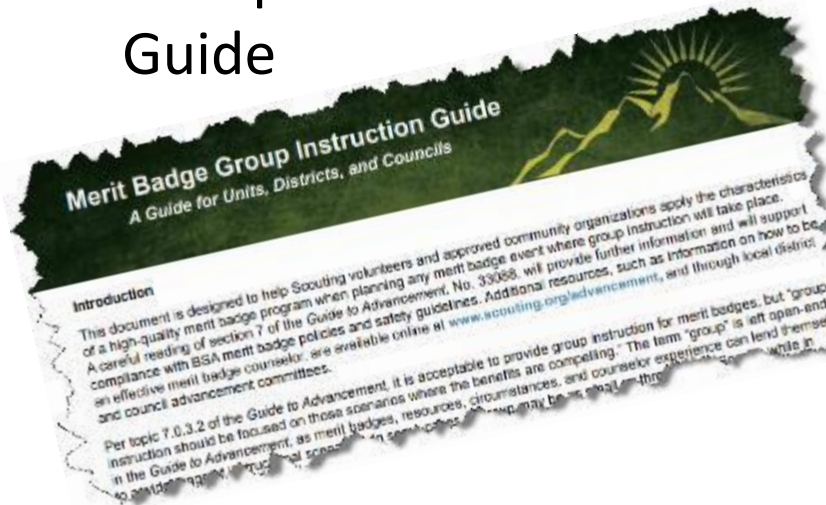
In the end, the Scout must be reviewed individually by the counselor to ensure completion of the badge's requirements.



Expectation

❖ Synchronization between many policies/processes:

- ❖ OCBSA Policy & Board statement
- ❖ Guide to Advancement
- ❖ National Merit Badge Group Instruction Guide



Bottom Line

- ❖ Each Merit Badge Day host will have at least two registered, youth protection trained adults that are certified through Council training as Merit Badge Day Coordinators.
- ❖ Standardized rules ensuring quality and consistency across all Orange County Council Merit Badge Days



Merit Badge Program

- ❖ An integral part of the advancement program.
- ❖ Advancement is only one of the Aims of Scouting.
 - ❖ Ideals
 - ❖ Patrols
 - ❖ Outdoor Program
 - ❖ **Advancement**
 - ❖ **Association with Adults**
 - ❖ Personal Growth
 - ❖ Leadership Development
 - ❖ Uniform
- ❖ The Merit Badge Program encourages Scouts to speak with their Unit Leader to obtain MB Counselor information, and discuss working on that merit badge with their Unit Leader.

Guide to Advancement 7.0.2.2



The Merit Badge Process

Scout indicates interest;
discusses with unit leader;
gets MBC name and blue card

Scout contacts counselor

Scout/counselor first meeting

Subsequent
Scout/counselor meetings

Unit reports advancement and
obtains badge for presentation

Scout returns completed
merit badge card to unit leader

Counselor approves completion

Scout completes requirements



Merit Badge Counselor Qualifications

- ❖ At least 18 years of age.
- ❖ Registered with Orange County Council as a BSA Merit Badge Counselor.
- ❖ Recognized as having skill or knowledge in the subject for which they are serving as a Counselor.
- ❖ Approved by the Council Advancement Committee, which has been delegated to the District Advancement Committees for the Badge being counseled.



Guide to Advancement 7.0.1.1



Merit Badge Counselor Qualifications (Continued)

❖ All Counselors are required to complete Merit Badge Counselor Training.

❖ Online at My.scouting.org

OR

❖ Scheduled Merit Badge Counselor Training sessions (such as University of Scouting)



Merit Badge Counselor Qualifications (Continued)

- ✦ Additional Merit Badge Counselor qualifications for specialty Merit Badges.



Guide to Advancement 7.0.1.1



Specialty Merit Badges

- ♣ Archery,
- ♣ Canoeing,
- ♣ Climbing,
- ♣ Kayaking,
- ♣ Lifesaving,
- ♣ Motor Boating,
- ♣ Rifle Shooting,
- ♣ Scuba Diving,
- ♣ Shotgun Shooting,
- ♣ Small Boat Sailing,
- ♣ Snow Sports,
- ♣ Swimming,
- ♣ Water Sports,
- ♣ Whitewater

NOTE: None of the specialty merit badges are recommended for Merit Badge Days.

Guide to Advancement 7.0.1.1



Merit Badge Counselor Lists

- ❖ Each District maintains their own merit badge counselor lists.
- ❖ MB Counselor lists are available only to Unit Leaders, Committee Chairs and Advancement Chairs.
 - ❖ The confidentiality of Merit Badge Counselor personal contact information is important
 - ❖ Counselor lists are not given to Scouts or their parents/guardians.

Guide to Advancement 7.0.2.0



Application for Merit Badge

The Blue Card

The unit leader signature:

- ❖ Required for Scouts to work with counselors.
- ❖ Does not indicate unit leader “approval”.
- ❖ Evidence of discussion between unit leader and Scout.
- ❖ Indicates registered counselor has been recommended.
- ❖ Not required for Scout to get started on requirements.

“I have discussed this merit badge with this Scout and recommended at least one merit badge counselor.”

APPLICATION FOR MERIT BADGE

Name _____
Address _____
City _____

Is a registered
 Boy Scout Varsity Scout Venturer
of _____ No. _____
Post, Term, Crew, Ship

District _____
Council _____

I have discussed this merit badge with this Scout and recommended at least one merit badge counselor.

Date _____ Signature of unit leader _____

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
34124

Application for Merit Badge


The Blue Card

Information for Applicant

- A merit badge application can be approved only by a registered merit badge counselor.
- You must have a buddy with you (Scout buddy system) at each meeting with the merit badge counselor.
- Turn in your approved application to your unit leader. You will be awarded the merit badge emblem and certificate at a suitable occasion.

Information for Counselor

- Merit badge applications must be signed in advance by the applicant's unit leader.
- The Scout must have his buddy (Scout buddy system) in attendance at all instructional sessions.
- You may not change any requirement, but you may share your knowledge or experience that will make the counseling more interesting and valuable.

SKU 34124

 7 30176 34528 4
 34124 2012 Printing
 ©2012 Boy Scouts of America

Counselor Initial	Date of approval	Requirement No. and letter	Counselor Initial	Date of approval	Requirement No. and letter

APPLICATION FOR MERIT BADGE

Name _____

Address _____

City _____


is a registered
 Boy Scout Varsity Scout Venturer
 of _____ Troop, team, crew, ship No. _____

District _____

Council _____

I have discussed this merit badge with this Scout and recommended at least one merit badge counselor.

Date _____ Signature of unit leader _____

 BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
34124

← Scout's information

↑
Record of completed requirements



Application for Merit Badge

The Blue Card – Reverse Side

Counselor's information →

Counselor signs in *two* places → once all requirements are complete

Unit leader's second signature

1/3 goes to the unit as application for the badge

1/3 goes to Scout for his records

1/3 goes to the counselor's records

Guide to Advancement 7.0.0.2



Recruiting Merit Badge Counselors

- ❖ Interface with your District Advancement Chair, or District Merit Badge Coordinator for help.
- ❖ Ensure the Merit Badge Counselor is Qualified.
- ❖ Ensure the Merit Badge Counselor recruited understands what he or she should expect at your Merit Badge Day.
- ❖ Recruit assistants to help the merit Badge Counselors with their classes.



Preparing for a Merit Badge Day

All available on Council Website

- ♣ Application and Instructions
 - ♣ Submit to District Advancement Chair at least **90 Days in advance**.
- ♣ Prerequisites
 - ♣ Not just a minimum. Adding more may preclude the ability to conduct the badge at a group session.
 - ♣ Certain MB's must be conducted as full day (both sessions).
- ♣ Merit Badge Day Flyers
 - ♣ Specific items must be included.
- ♣ Promotion
 - ♣ Council will post to OCBSA Website once approved.



Merit Badge Day Policy Specifics

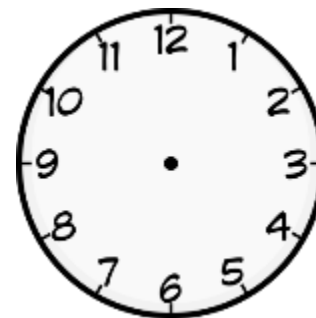
- ❖ Merit Badges recommended for Merit Badge Day are listed on the OCC website with their listed prerequisites.
 - ❖ Recommended For Merit Badge Days,
 - ❖ Not Recommended for Merit Badge Days,
 - ❖ Recommended for Summer Camp
- ❖ Any Merit Badges that are not on the recommended list that wish to be done for a Merit Badge Day must be approved by the Council Advancement Committee prior to being offered at a Merit Badge Day.

Guide to Advancement 7.0.4.11



Merit Badge Day Policy Specifics (continued)

- ❖ All Merit Badge Days will have the same schedule,
 - ❖ 3 Hour morning classes,
 - ❖ 1 hour lunch and,
 - ❖ 3 Hour afternoon classes.
- ❖ Minimum Counselor to Scout ratio
 - ❖ One registered Merit Badge Counselor per 8 scouts.
 - ❖ Helpers in a merit badge class does not dilute the 8 to 1 ratio of Counselor to students.
- ❖ YPT procedures will be used in Merit Badge Classes (never alone with Scouts, Two Deep Leadership, etc.)
- ❖ Maximum Merit Badges for a Scout to earn during a Merit Badge Day is 2 Merit Badges. 1 Eagle Required Merit Badge.



Merit Badge Day Policy Specifics (continued)

♣ Merit Badge Worksheets

- ♣ May not be a requirement.
- ♣ May be used as an aide in helping a Merit Badge Counselor but cannot replace proof of completing a requirement or of requirements that have the Scout “show”, “demonstrate”, or “discuss”.

Guide to Advancement 7.0.4.8

♣ No expectation of completion

- ♣ Partial completions are a reasonable expectation for attending a Merit Badge Day. There should be no expectations given that if the Scout registers for a Merit Badge completion is assured.

Guide to Advancement 7.0.3.3



Merit Badge Day Policy Specifics (continued)

- ❖ Merit Badge day fees will not exceed \$20.00 per scout per Merit Badge Day, and \$5.00 for Lunch.
 - ❖ Any reasonable materials fee for a specific Merit Badge class may be charged in addition to the \$20.00 fee **IF THE EXTRA FEES ARE NECESSARY.**

Guide to Advancement 7.0.4.10

- ❖ Only one Merit Badge Day per Unit per Year will be approved.
- ❖ Merit Badge Days may not be conducted on Council property.



Merit Badge Day Policy Specifics (continued)

- ❖ Certificates of Insurance (if needed) need to be requested of Council two weeks in advance of a Merit Badge Day.

Email address: COI@ocbsa.org

- ❖ Scholarships for Scouts in need will be the responsibility of the Merit Badge Day host unit.



Merit Badge Day Policy Specifics (continued)

- ❖ All Merit Badge Day Registrations will be done through the council program “Black Pug”.
 - ❖ Walkups not allowed.
 - ❖ Switching Scouts **IS** allowed.
- ❖ All monies for Merit Badge Days will be collected through “Black Pug”.
 - ❖ All monies collected by the Council for Unit Merit Badge Days will be remitted back to the host unit.
 - ❖ **NO REFUNDS.**



Merit Badge Day Feedback

- ❖ Each Unit Merit Badge Day will have a member of the Council or District Advancement team as an observer.
- ❖ Each Scout participant and parent will have a survey to complete to give feedback on the Merit Badge Day the Scout has attended.
- ❖ Each Council or District observer will also provide feedback
- ❖ Feedback will be shared with the host Unit and the Council Advancement Committee to help make a better Merit Badge experience for participants.



Registration And Fee Collection

- ❖ Setting up a Merit Badge Day through “Black Pug”.
- ❖ Contact Council’s department of Camping Assistance
- ❖ Remember: All fees will be collected through “Black Pug”.



Wrap Up

- ❖ We want all Scouts to have a quality experience when attending a Unit Merit Badge Day. We know through the work of many volunteers this can be a great experience for the Scout.
- ❖ We will share all Feedback with host units and use the information on the Council Advancement Committee to make improvements.
- ❖ We ask your cooperation to make this a great program for Scouts.



For More Information

Other advancement presentations available at:

www.scouting.org/advancement

Resources

- ♣ Guide to Advancement, No. 33088
- ♣ BSA's Guide to Safe Scouting, No. 34416
- ♣ Merit badge pamphlets
- ♣ Boy Scout Requirements, No. 616334
- ♣ Application for Merit Badge, No. 34124
- ♣ A Guide for Merit Badge Counseling, No. 34532
- ♣ Boy Scout Handbook, No. 34554
- ♣ Merit Badge Counselor Information, No. 34405
- ♣ BSA Adult Application, No. 524-501
- ♣ Merit Badge Group Instruction Guide No. 512-066



Questions...

