



Fly Fishing

Merit Badge Workbook



This workbook can help you but you still need to read the merit badge pamphlet.
This Workbook can help you organize your thoughts as you prepare to meet with your merit badge counselor

Merit Badge Counselors may not require the use of this or any similar workbooks.

You still must satisfy your counselor that you can demonstrate each skill and have learned the information.
You should use the work space provided for each requirement to keep track of which requirements have been completed, and to make notes for discussing the item with your counselor, not for providing full and complete answers.

If a requirement says that you must take an action using words such as "discuss", "show", "tell", "explain", "demonstrate", "identify", etc, that is what you must do.

No one may add or subtract from the official requirements found in Scouts BSA Requirements (Pub. + 33216) and/or on Scouting.org.
The requirements were last revised on January 1, 2024 • This workbook was updated in January 2024.

Scout's Name: _____ Unit _____ Date Started _____

Counselor's Name: _____ Phone No.: _____ Email: _____

Please submit errors, omissions, comments or suggestions about this **workbook** to: Workbooks@USScouts.Org

Comments or suggestions for changes to the **requirements** for the **merit badge** should be sent to: Merit.Badge@Scouting.Org

1. Do the following:

- a. Explain to your counselor the most likely hazards you may encounter while participating in fly-fishing activities, and what you should do to anticipate, help prevent, mitigate, and respond to these hazards.

Hazards:

What you should do to anticipate, help prevent, mitigate, and respond to these hazards.

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Name and explain five safety practices you should always follow while fly-fishing.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

b. Discuss the prevention of and treatment health concerns that could occur while fly-fishing, including cuts, scratches, puncture wounds, insect bites, hypothermia, dehydration, heat exhaustion, heatstroke, and sunburn.

Cuts:

Scratches:

Puncture wounds:

Insect bites:

Hypothermia:

Dehydration:

Heat exhaustion:

Heatstroke:

Sunburn:

c. Explain how to remove a hook that has lodged in your arm.

2. Demonstrate how to match a fly rod, line and leader to achieve a balanced system. Discuss several types of fly lines, and explain how and when each would be used. Review with your counselor how to care for this equipment.

Type	Use & Care

3. Demonstrate how to tie proper knots to prepare a fly rod for fishing:
- a. Tie a backing to the arbor of a fly reel spool using an arbor knot
 - b. Tie backing to the fly line using a nail (tube) knot
 - c. Attach a leader to the fly line using a nail (tube) knot or a loop-to-loop connection
 - d. Add a tippet to a leader using a surgeon's knot or a loop-to-loop connection
 - e. Tie a fly onto the terminal end of the leader using an improved clinch knot
4. Explain how and when each of the following types of flies is used: dry flies, wet flies, nymphs, streamers, bass bugs, poppers and saltwater flies. Tell what each one imitates.

Dry flies

Use:

Imitates:

Wet flies

Use:

Imitates:

Nymphs

Use:

Imitates:

Streamers

Use:

Imitates:

Bass bugs

Use:

Imitates:

Poppers

Use:

Imitates:

Saltwater flies

Use:

Imitates:

Tie at least two types of the flies mentioned in this requirement.

1.

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2.

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5. Demonstrate the ability to cast a fly 30 feet consistently and accurately using both overhead and roll cast techniques.

6. Go to a suitable fishing location and observe what fish may be eating both above and below the water's surface.

Above:

Below:

Look for flying insects and some that may be on or beneath the water's surface. Explain the importance of matching the hatch.

7. Do the following:

- a. Explain the importance of practicing Leave No Trace techniques. Discuss the positive effects of Leave No Trace on fishing resources.

- b. Discuss the meaning and importance of catch and release.

Describe how to properly release a fish safely to the water.

- 8. Obtain and review a copy of the regulations affecting game fishing where you live. Explain why they were adopted and what you accomplish by following them.

- 9. Discuss what good sportsmanlike behavior is and how it relates to anglers.

Tell how the Outdoor Code of the Boy Scouts of America relates to a fishing enthusiast, including the aspects of littering, trespassing, courteous behavior, and obeying fishing regulations.

How it relates to fishing:

Littering:

Trespassing:

Courteous behavior:

Obeying fishing regulations:

10. Catch at least one fish on a fly and identify it.
11. If regulations and health concerns permit, clean and cook a fish you have caught. If you are unable to catch a fish for eating, acquire a fish, clean the fish you acquired, and cook the fish you acquired. (It is not required that you eat the fish.)

When working on merit badges, Scouts and Scouters should be aware of some vital information in the current edition of the *Guide to Advancement* (BSA publication 33088). Important excerpts from that publication can be downloaded from <http://usscouts.org/advance/docs/GTA-Excerpts-meritbadges.pdf>.

You can download a complete copy of the *Guide to Advancement* from <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/33088.pdf>.

Wilderness Use Policy of the Boy Scouts of America

All privately or publicly owned backcountry land and designated wildernesses are included in the term “wilderness areas” in this policy. The Outdoor Code of the Boy Scouts of America and the principles of Leave No Trace apply to outdoor behavior generally, but for treks into wilderness areas, minimum-impact camping methods must be used. Within the outdoor program of the Boy Scouts of America, there are many different camping-skill levels. Camping practices that are appropriate for day outings, long-term Scout camp, or short-term unit camping might not apply to wilderness areas. Wherever they go, Scouts need to adopt attitudes and patterns of behavior that respect the rights of others, including future generations, to enjoy the outdoors.

- In wilderness areas, it is crucial to minimize human impact, particularly on fragile ecosystems such as mountains, lakes and streams, deserts, and seashores. Because our impact varies from one season of the year to the next, it becomes important for us to adjust to these changing conditions to avoid damaging the environment.
- The Boy Scouts of America emphasizes these practices for all troops, teams, and crews planning to use wilderness areas:
- Contact the landowner or land-managing agency (USDA Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, state and private agencies, etc.) well before an outing to learn the regulations for that area, including group size limits, to obtain required permits and current maps, and to discuss ways Scouts can fulfill the expectations of property owners or land managers.
- Obtain a tour permit (available through local council service centers), meet all of its conditions, and carry it during the trip.
- Review the appropriate BSA safety literature relating to planned activities. (See Safe Swim Defense, Safety Afloat, Climb On Safely, and Trek Safely.) Also see the Guide to Safe Scouting on the BSA Web site at <http://www.scouting.org/pubs/gss/toc.html> for more information on current BSA policies and procedures for ensuring safe activities, as well as the Fieldbook Web site at <http://www.bsafieldbook.org>.
- Match the ruggedness of high-adventure experiences to the skills, physical ability, and maturity of those taking part. Save rugged treks for older unit members who are more proficient and experienced in outdoor skills.
- Conduct pretrip training for your group that stresses proper wilderness behavior, rules, and skills for all of the conditions that may be encountered, including lightning, missing person, wildfire, high winds, flooding, and emergency medical situations.
- Participate in training in how to apply the principles of Leave No Trace, and be proficient and experienced in the leadership and skills required for treks into wilderness areas.
- Adhere to the principles of Leave No Trace.

The Principles of Leave No Trace

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly (Pack It In, Pack It Out)
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Outdoor Code

As an American, I will do my best to—

Be clean in my outdoor manners. I will treat the outdoors as a heritage. I will take care of it for myself and others. I will keep my trash and garbage out of lakes, streams, fields, woods, and roadways.

Be careful with fire. I will prevent wildfire. I will build my fires only when and where they are appropriate. When I have finished using a fire, I will make sure it is cold out. I will leave a clean fire ring, or remove all evidence of my fire.

Be considerate in the outdoors. I will treat public and private property with respect. I will follow the principles of Leave No Trace for all outdoor activities.

Be conservation-minded. I will learn about and practice good conservation of soil, waters, forests, minerals, grasslands, wildlife, and energy. I will urge others to do the same.