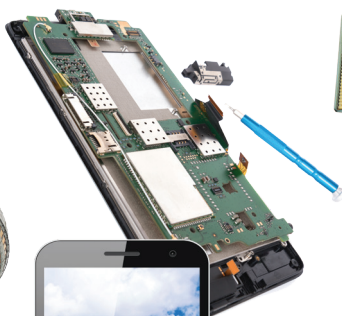


MERIT BADGE SERIES



RADIO



SCOUTING AMERICA
MERIT BADGE SERIES

RADIO



"Enhancing our youths' competitive edge through merit badges"

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Requirements

Always check www.scouting.org for the latest requirements.

1. Explain what radio is. Then discuss the following:
 - a. The differences between broadcast radio and hobby radio
 - b. The differences between broadcasting and two-way communications
 - c. Radio station call signs and how they are used in broadcast radio and amateur radio
 - d. The phonetic alphabet and how it is used to communicate clearly
2. Do the following:
 - a. Sketch a diagram showing how radio waves travel locally and around the world.
 - b. Explain how the radio stations WWV and WWVH can be used to help determine what you can expect to hear when you listen to a shortwave radio.
 - c. Explain the difference between a distant (DX) and a local station.
 - d. Discuss what the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) does and how it is different from the International Telecommunication Union.
3. Do the following:
 - a. Draw a chart of the electromagnetic spectrum covering 300 kilohertz (kHz) to 3,000 megahertz (MHz).
 - b. Label the MF, HF, VHF, UHF, and microwave portions of the spectrum on your diagram.

- c. Locate on your chart at least eight radio services, such as AM and FM commercial broadcast, citizens band (CB), television, amateur radio (at least four amateur radio bands), and public service (police and fire).
4. Explain how radio waves carry information. Include in your explanation: transceiver, transmitter, receiver, amplifier, and antenna.
5. Do the following:
 - a. Explain the differences between a block diagram and a schematic diagram.
 - b. Draw a block diagram for a radio station that includes a transceiver, amplifier, microphone, antenna, and feed line.
 - c. Discuss how information is sent when using amplitude modulation (AM), frequency modulation (FM), continuous wave (CW) Morse code transmission, single sideband (SSB) transmission, and digital transmission.
 - d. Explain how NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) can alert you to danger.
 - e. Explain how cellular telephones work. Identify their benefits and limitations in an emergency.
6. Explain the safety precautions for working with radio gear, including the concept of grounding for direct current circuits, power outlets, and antenna systems.
7. Visit a radio installation (an amateur radio station, broadcast station, or public service communications center, for example) approved in advance by your counselor. Discuss what types of equipment you saw in use, how it was used, what types of licenses are required to operate and maintain the equipment, and the purpose of the station.



8. Find out about three career opportunities in radio. Pick one and find out the education, training, and experience required for this profession. Discuss this with your counselor, and explain why this profession might interest you.

9. Do ONE of the following (a OR b OR c OR d):

a. AMATEUR RADIO

(1) Tell why the FCC has an amateur radio service. Describe activities that amateur radio operators can do on the air, once they have earned an amateur radio license.

(2) Explain differences between the Technician, General, and Extra Class license requirements and privileges. Explain who administers amateur radio exams.

(3) Explain at least five Q signals or amateur radio terms.

(4) Explain how you would make an emergency call on voice or Morse code.

(5) Explain the differences between handheld transceivers and home “base” transceivers. Explain the uses of mobile amateur radio transceivers and amateur radio repeaters.

(6) Using proper call signs, Q signals, and abbreviations, carry on a 10-minute real or simulated amateur radio contact using voice, Morse code, or digital mode. (Licensed amateur radio operators may substitute five QSL cards as evidence of contacts with five amateur radio operators.) Properly log the real or simulated ham radio contact, and record the signal report.



b. RADIO BROADCASTING

- (1) Discuss with your counselor FCC broadcast regulations. Include power levels, frequencies, and the regulations for low-power stations.
- (2) Prepare a program schedule for radio station “KBSA” of exactly one-half hour, including music, news, commercials, and proper station identification. Record your program on audiotape or in a digital audio format, using proper techniques.
- (3) Listen to and properly log 15 broadcast stations. Determine the program format and target audience for five of these stations.
- (4) Explain to your counselor at least eight terms used in commercial broadcasting, such as segue, cut, fade, continuity, remote, Emergency Alert System, network, cue, dead air, PSA, and playlist.
- (5) Discuss with your counselor alternative radio platforms such as internet streaming, satellite radio, and podcasts.



c. SHORTWAVE AND MEDIUM-WAVE LISTENING

- (1) Listen across several shortwave bands for four one-hour periods—at least one period during daylight hours and at least one period at night. Log the stations properly and locate them geographically on a map, globe, or web-based mapping service.
- (2) Listen to several medium-wave stations for two one-hour periods—one period during daylight and one period at night. Log the stations properly and locate them on a map, globe, or web-based mapping service.
- (3) Compare your daytime and nighttime shortwave logs; note the frequencies on which your selected stations were loudest during each session. Explain differences in the signal strength from one period to the next.
- (4) Compare your medium-wave broadcast station logs and explain why some distant stations are heard at your location only during the night.

- (5) Demonstrate listening to a radio broadcast using a smartphone/cellphone. Include international broadcasts in your demonstration.

d. AMATEUR RADIO DIRECTION FINDING

- (1) Describe amateur radio direction finding and explain why direction finding is important as an activity and in competition.
- (2) Describe what frequencies and equipment are used for ARDF or foxhunting.
- (3) Build a simple directional antenna for either of the two frequencies used in ARDF.
- (4) Participate in a simple fox hunt using your antenna along with a provided receiver.
- (5) Show, on a map, how you located the “fox” using your receiver.



Radio Resources

Scouting Literature

Digital Technology, Electricity, Electronics, Emergency Preparedness, Energy, Engineering, Geocaching, Orienteering, Programming, Robotics, Search and Rescue, Signs, Signals, and Codes, and Space Exploration merit badge pamphlets

With your parent or guardian's permission, visit Scouting America's official retail site, scoutshop.org, for a complete list of merit badge pamphlets and other helpful Scouting materials and supplies.

K2BSA

The non-profit K2BSA Amateur Radio Association is dedicated to extending the reach of amateur radio within the Scout movement. To assist in this, they provide a great deal of Radio Scouting information for Amateur Radio Operators, Scout leaders, and Scouts at www.k2bsa.net.

Books and Other Resources

Many of the books, CDs, and other resources listed here are available from the American Radio Relay League. See page 95 for contact information.

AMATEUR RADIO

The ARRL Ham Radio License Manual, 5th ed. ARRL Inc., 2022. A beginners' guide to amateur radio and preparation for the Technician Class ham-radio license exam.

Brownstein, Rob and Jim Talens. *Morse Code Operating for Amateur Radio*. ARRL Inc., 2013. Introduction to Morse code along with operating techniques.

Hallas, Joel, W1ZR. *Basic Radio: Understanding the Key Building Blocks*. ARRL Inc., 2005. An introduction to radio with simple, build-it-yourself projects.

Silver, H. Ward. *Ham Radio for Dummies*, 4th ed. John Wiley & Sons, 2021.

BROADCAST RADIO AND SHORTWAVE LISTENING

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. *Occupation Outlook Handbook*. Bernan Press, 2022. See "Media and Communication," at www.bls.gov/ooh/

Chuday, Liz. *National Association of Broadcasters Guide to Careers in Radio*. 2nd ed. Thorough discussion of each role within a radio broadcasting station. Online at www.nab.org/documents/radio/NABRadioCareersSecondEdition.pdf

World Radio TV Handbook: The Directory of Global Broadcasting. WRTH Publications. Published annually, a guide to the world of radio including domestic radio services and broadcasters transmitting internationally.

AMATEUR RADIO DIRECTION FINDING

Titterington, Bob, G3ORY; David Williams, M3WDD; and David Deane, G3ZOI. *Radio Orienteering: The ARDF Handbook*. Radio Society of Great Britain, 2007. Available through www.arrl.org/shop/.

Homing In: The Art and Science of Radio Direction Finding. Website hosted by Joe Moell, K0OV, at www.homingin.com

The Joe Leggio Tape Measure Antenna on the Xenia Skywarn webpage: xwarn.net/2022/01/04/joe-leggio-wb2hol-tape-measure-antenna/

The Tape Measure Antenna. Webpage by jcoman at www.instructables.com/The-Tape-Measure-Antenna/

Acknowledgments

Jim Wilson, K5ND, for overall coordination and writing

National Radio Scouting Committee for their work in making suggestions and reviewing the pamphlet: Mark Abramowitz, NT3V; Bill Bode, N4WEB; Doug Cook, KX5DC; Ed Dudley, WA4ISA; Scott Hooper, KTOP; Christian Ingerslev, AB2SN; Keith Kaiser, WA0TJT; Frank Kisselbach, W7PAQ; Frank Krizan, K5HS; Grant Laughlin, W5XJ; Russ Mickiewicz, N7QR; Brian Walker, K9BKW; Gary Wilson, K2GW; Ron Wood, K0BRO

Skip Arey, N2EI, for Shortwave and Medium-Wave Listening review and update

Michael Thorp for Radio Broadcasting review and revision recommendations

For ARDF requirements development, manuscript suggestions, and review: Brian Coleman, KB0MAP; Dick Arnett, WB4SUV; Joe Moell, K0OV; Harley Leach, KI7XF; Marvin Johnson, KE6HTS

Scouting America thanks the staff and volunteers of the American Radio Relay League for many contributions over the years, and for those materials reprinted with the permission of the ARRL from its publications and website.

Acknowledgments are due to the following for their contributions to previous versions of the book, which were incorporated into this revision: Scott Hooper, KTOP; Mike Brown, WB2JWD, Harford, New York, who

coordinated the overall revision of 2008; Bill Burns, WA6QYR, Ridgecrest, California; Allan Koch, KA8JJN, Clinton Township, Michigan; and Larry Wolfgang WR1B, Newington, Connecticut, for contributing to the Amateur Radio section and related portions of the pamphlet. Thanks to Donald L. Perkins, N2IVW, operations manager and engineer, Central New York Radio Group, for his help in revising the Broadcast Radio section.

Thanks also to Mike Brown, WB2JWD, and Laurence A. Eichel, K2NA, for the original 1989 version; and to Rosalie White, K1STO; Mary Garcia, N7IAL; Robin M. Mickett, N1WAL; Karen A. Leyton; Jean Wolfgang, WB3IOS; and Labron Morgan of Westwood One, Dallas, Texas, for their assistance with the 1996 revision.

Scouting America is grateful to the men and women serving on the National Merit Badge Subcommittee for the improvements made in updating this pamphlet.

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and 94

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(*broadcast console*)

WZ6BSA, League of Gentleman Scouters—page 54

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