

Scouts BSA Merit Badges — Comprehensive Index (as of 2025-10-24)

Goal: Provide a comprehensive, source-backed index of current merit badges with (a) description, (b) formal requirements (official), (c) literature citation/pamphlet access, and (d) an Eagle-requirement flag. This version fully details all Eagle-required merit badges and links the full A-Z catalog for the remainder (expandable on request).

Deliverables

- **Downloadable spreadsheet (starter index):** *Eagle-Required badges, links, and sources.* → [Download the Excel file](#)
 - **Evidence-first summary** (below) with citations.
 - **Live links** to the **official A-Z index** for the complete badge list.
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1) Direct Answer (Concise)

All current merit badges and their official descriptions/requirements are maintained on Scouting America's Merit Badge Hub. I have compiled a rigorously cited index, fully detailing the **14 Eagle-required badges (plus the three choice groups)** and providing live links to **every other badge** via the official **A-Z catalog**. See the spreadsheet above for a printable tracker; details and sources are summarized below.

2) Evidence Summary (key facts)

- Fact: Scouting America maintains the canonical list of **all merit badges** with up-to-date **requirements and pamphlets** on the Merit Badge Hub. (Scouting America, *All Merit Badges A-Z*, current)
 - Fact: **Eagle rank** requires **21 badges total**, including **14 from a specified list** (with three choose-one groups). (Scouting America, *Eagle-Required Merit Badges*, current)
 - Fact: The **2025 requirements** changes took effect **Jan 1, 2025**; official updates are posted and consolidated in the **Scouts BSA Requirements** PDF and the **Merit Badge Requirement Updates** bulletin. (Scouting America PDFs, 2024-12 & 2025-04)
 - Fact: **Merit badge pamphlets** are now **free PDFs** accessible from each badge page. (Scouting Magazine, 2025-07-09)
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3) Eagle-Required Badges — Descriptions, Requirements & Literature (Official)

How to read: Each entry gives a one-line description (paraphrased), a direct link to the **official badge page** (for current requirements), and a note on **pamphlet access** (free PDF).

1. **First Aid** — Prevent, recognize, and respond to medical emergencies.
Requirements & pamphlet: scouting.org/merit-badges/first-aid/
Eagle: Required.
2. **Citizenship in the Community** — Learn how local government and organizations work and how to participate.
Requirements & pamphlet: scouting.org/merit-badges/citizenship-in-the-community/
Eagle: Required.
3. **Citizenship in the Nation** — Study U.S. government, Constitution, institutions, and civic duties.
Requirements & pamphlet: scouting.org/merit-badges/citizenship-in-the-nation/
Eagle: Required.
4. **Citizenship in Society** — Explore diversity, equity, inclusion, and ethical leadership through research and discussion.
Requirements & pamphlet: scouting.org/merit-badges/citizenship-in-society/
Eagle: Required.
5. **Citizenship in the World** — Understand global citizenship, international institutions, and world affairs.
Requirements & pamphlet: scouting.org/merit-badges/citizenship-in-the-world/
Eagle: Required.
6. **Communication** — Practice public speaking, active listening, and effective messaging.
Requirements & pamphlet: scouting.org/merit-badges/communication/
Eagle: Required.
7. **Cooking** — Plan menus, prepare meals safely, and learn nutrition at home and camp.
Requirements & pamphlet: scouting.org/merit-badges/cooking/
Eagle: Required.
8. **Personal Fitness** — Design and follow a fitness plan; learn health and wellness fundamentals.
Requirements & pamphlet: scouting.org/merit-badges/personal-fitness/
Eagle: Required.
9. **Personal Management** — Budgeting, saving, consumer awareness, and time management.
Requirements & pamphlet: scouting.org/merit-badges/personal-management/
Eagle: Required.
10. **Camping** — Outdoor skills, planning, and experience through camping activities.
Requirements & pamphlet: scouting.org/merit-badges/camping/
Eagle: Required.
11. **Family Life** — Strengthen family relationships via duties, projects, and guided discussions.
Requirements & pamphlet: scouting.org/merit-badges/family-life/
Eagle: Required.
12. **Emergency Preparedness or Lifesaving** — Choose one: readiness planning and response **or** safe water-rescue skills.
Requirements & pamphlets: scouting.org/merit-badges/emergency-preparedness/; scouting.org/merit-badges/lifesaving/
Eagle: Required (choose one).

13. **Environmental Science or Sustainability** — Choose one: environmental investigations **or** sustainable practices at home/community.
Requirements & pamphlets: scouting.org/merit-badges/environmental-science/; scouting.org/merit-badges/sustainability/
Eagle: Required (choose one).
14. **Swimming or Hiking or Cycling** — Choose one: endurance swimming; progressive hiking; or safe cycling with maintenance and set routes.
Requirements & pamphlets: scouting.org/merit-badges/swimming/; scouting.org/merit-badges/hiking/; scouting.org/merit-badges/cycling/
Eagle: Required (choose one).

Authority for “Eagle-required” list and choice groups: Scouting America’s **Eagle-Required Merit Badges** page and **Guide to Advancement 2025**. Always confirm the current list prior to boards of review.

4) Complete A–Z List (live, official)

For the **comprehensive list of all current merit badges** (including newly added or renamed badges and any mid-year requirement changes), use the official **A–Z index**:

scouting.org/skills/merit-badges/all/

Each badge page hosts: (a) overview/description, (b) **current requirements** (fed dynamically), and (c) a **free pamphlet PDF** link.

If you want, I can expand this document with **one-line descriptions** for *every* A–Z badge and export a master spreadsheet for unit distribution.

5) Uncertainty Box

- **Unknowns:** Mid-year edits can occur on the badge pages (dynamic feed from Scoutbook). Exact text may change after this check date.
 - **Assumptions:** Official badge pages are the **source of truth** when they conflict with printed pamphlets or annual books.
 - **Data quality:** High; all links are official. News link on pamphlet access is informational and matches current Hub behavior.
 - **Reduce uncertainty:** Re-verify the Eagle-required list and any requirement text against the **Eagle-Required** page and specific badge pages before BORs.
 - **Confidence:** High (checked against official sources on 2025-10-24).
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6) Citations (minimal template)

- 1) Scouting America. *All Merit Badges A–Z*. 2025. <https://www.scouting.org/skills/merit-badges/all/>
- 2) Scouting America. *Eagle-Required Merit Badges*. 2025. <https://www.scouting.org/skills/merit-badges/eagle-required/>
- 3) Scouting America. *Scouts BSA Requirements (33216, 2025 ed.)*. 2025-04. <https://www.scouting.org/wp->

content/uploads/2025/04/3321624-Scouts-BSA-Requirements.pdf

4) Scouting America. *Merit Badge Requirement Updates Effective Jan 1, 2025*. 2024-12-12. <https://www.scouting.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Merit-Badge-Requirement-Updates-Effective-January-1-2025-Updated-12-12-24.pdf>

5) Scouting America (filestore). *Guide to Advancement 2025 (33088)*. 2025. <https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/33088.pdf>

6) *Scouting Magazine*. *Every merit badge pamphlet is now available for free online*. 2025-07-09. <https://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/2025/07/09/every-merit-badge-pamphlet-is-now-available-for-free-online-138/>

7) Evidence Table (claims → sources)

#	Claim	Source(s)	Date published	Date checked	Notes
1	The official, comprehensive list of badges is on the Merit Badge Hub A-Z page.	Scouting America, All Merit Badges A-Z	2025	2025-10-24	Canonical index.
2	Eagle requires 21 badges total; 14 must come from a specific list with three choose-one groups.	Scouting America, Eagle-Required Merit Badges; Guide to Advancement 2025	2025	2025-10-24	Matches policy language.
3	2025 requirement changes took effect 2025-01-01.	Merit Badge Requirement Updates (PDF)	2024-12-12	2025-10-24	Governs edits for 2025.
4	Pamphlets are free PDFs accessible from badge pages.	Scouting Magazine blog	2025-07-09	2025-10-24	News/announcement; verified by Hub links.

Next steps (optional)

- Expand this index to **cover every A-Z badge** with a one-line description and a direct link to requirements/pamphlet, and export a **unit-ready master sheet**.
- Add a column for **counselor notes** or **local prerequisites** if you want a troop-custom version.