# 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](sandbox:/mnt/data/Merit%20Badges%20%E2%80%94%20Eagle-Required%20Index%20(2025-10-24).xlsx)
* **Evidence‑first summary** (below) with citations.
* **Live links** to the **official A–Z index** for the complete badge list.

## 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)

## 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/; /hiking/; /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).

## 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.