

MERIT BADGE CHALLENGE 2020
Parent and Scout Orientation Handbook



MERIT BADGE CHALLENGE 2020

Contents

Welcome to Merit Badge Challenge.....	3
Site Coordinators, Locations and Dates.....	5
Checklist for Parents & Scouts.....	6
Top Ten Tips for Success.....	6
The Matrix – Merit Badges Offered at Merit Badge Challenge.....	7
Recommendations for Younger Scouts	7
Venue Schedule.....	7
Site Matrix and Merit Badge Prework.....	8
Scout Registration Information Form.....	9

MERIT BADGE CHALLENGE 2020

Welcome to Merit Badge Challenge!

We offer this information to help with all questions you have about Merit Badge Challenge (MBC). There is a lot of information, so please read it completely and feel free to contact us if you have additional questions. (See contact information below.)

The goal of MBC is to “provide an opportunity for youth to earn multiple merit badges.”

What does this mean? Just what it says. We are providing an opportunity for your Scout(s) to earn merit badges. The completion of his/her merit badges will depend on the completion of requirements, whether it be all in class, by pre-requisites, or through other means deemed appropriate by the counselor. Attendance at Challenge does NOT guarantee completion of a merit badge.

If a Scout completes some of the requirements but not all of them, the counselor can acknowledge and initial those completed requirements on the blue card and return it to the Scout so that he/she can complete the MB on his/her own after Challenge (typically referred to as a “partial”). Challenge counselors are usually willing to make arrangements with the youth if they choose to finish their MB outside of MBC, but the Scouts need to communicate that to the counselors and coordinate the arrangements. This is why it is important that the Scout get the counselor’s contact information on the first day of class and keep it handy. Each counselor will provide contact information to the class during MBC sessions. Again, it is up to the Scout to make use of it.

When your Scout receives his/her blue cards after Challenge, if any questions arise about what is signed or initialed on the blue card please contact that counselor as soon as possible, as they will best know the status of completion. In the rare case that a counselor’s response (or lack of response) is unsatisfactory, please contact the Site Coordinator for your Challenge to get the issue resolved (see contact information below). Keep in mind that the longer you wait to communicate that there is a problem, the harder it will be to resolve it.

(NOTE: When counselors use email to contact Scouts, they must also CC a parent or adult leader to avoid one-on-one contact with the youth, which is prohibited by BSA’s youth protection guidelines.)

To help your Scout’s success, obtaining a copy of the merit badge pamphlet is a necessary requirement. The MB requirements and most of the information needed to complete them are contained in the material in the pamphlet. We currently use the official Scouts BSA Requirements, 2019 edition.

Please be aware that if a course has less than 5 scouts registered for that class, that class may be cancelled. As soon as that decision is made, you and the troop contact will be notified so your Scout(s) can register for another course. Decisions are usually made soon after registration closes. (Please make sure you include your email address during registration so that we can get in touch with you directly.)

MBC serves thousands of Scouts and there are many volunteer opportunities. Each site is looking for volunteers at various levels of Challenge. You can volunteer to be a counselor, an assistant counselor or second adult in the classroom (we maintain 2-deep leadership) or help staff the registration table or event security. If you have time on any of the Challenge dates or all of them, let the Site Coordinator know as soon as possible and they will assign you to a position you choose. They would greatly appreciate your assistance.

MERIT BADGE CHALLENGE 2020

Scouts can bring a brown-bag snack or lunch (depending on your site's schedule). Some venues offer a concession stand or snack bar. Either way, please make sure your Scout knows that **NO ONE** is to leave the school/campus/site during Challenge without prior notice given to the Site Coordinator. This is for your Scout's safety.

OK, you are all set for MBC and ready to register! How do you do that? (**Please note: Your Scout must be a registered Scout prior to registration.**) We recommend that you register with the Troop through your Troop Contact (usually your Advancement Coordinator or an Assistant Scoutmaster). Why would you want to register with the Troop?

- Troop contacts know what merit badges your Scout already has and can prevent them from working on duplicates.
- Troop contacts can ensure that your Scout is taking appropriate merit badges for his/her age, rank and ability.
- Troop contacts know what merit badges are most beneficial for your Scout on his/her Path to Eagle.
- Troop contacts can communicate with Site Coordinators to ask questions and resolve problems that arise for several troop members.

If you choose to register as an individual, you still need to contact your troop contact or advancement coordinator to guide your Scout in selecting MB classes. Your Scout will also need a blue card approved (signed) by their unit leader for each merit badge prior to attending his or her first class.

We have provided a registration form for your scout at the end of this packet, to be filled out and turned in to your troop contact. All of the information needed for registration is included on this form to make it easier for you to provide it to your Troop Contact.

Some merit badges also have age recommendations noted in the class grid (The Matrix; available for each site). These recommendations have been given by counselors to help optimize each Scout's experience at MBC while taking certain courses. If there is a MB your Scout would like to take but does not meet the age recommendation, consider asking that counselor to work with your Scout on that merit badge outside of MBC where he/she will have a better chance of success. Some Scouts need special attention on certain subjects, and these recommendations are intended to keep those Scouts out of the classroom setting so the counselor can use his/her time most efficiently there. It stands to reason that sometimes Scouts learn the merit badge material more in a small setting versus in a room with up to 19 other Scouts!

The four site teams have worked diligently to provide troop leaders, Scouts, and parents with concise guides. Please review the Matrix and Pre-work for your particular site with your Scouts, unit advancement chair or Scoutmaster.

The MBC Committee works diligently to have the most accurate information available to you, but sometimes life happens and things come up that are unavoidable. Pre-work changes, personal issues with counselors or Scouts, cancelling specific classes, snow emergencies, etc. all have an impact on operating Challenge events. The Site Coordinators make every effort to contact the Scouts affected by these occurrences in a timely manner to help the Scouts be prepared. If anything changes prior or at MBC (including counselors, schedules, and pre-requisites), please be understanding and know we are doing our best (again, please make sure your email address is included on the registration so we can contact you directly)!

MERIT BADGE CHALLENGE 2020

As for snow emergencies, please check Channel 12 for information about cancellations at your site. Some sites also use email or other means necessary to contact families. The Dan Beard Council website is also a resource to see if a date is cancelled. As soon as the Site Coordinator makes a decision to cancel, all of these outlets are notified.

We hope this packet will be informative and helpful as you prepare for MBC. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact your site coordinator listed below.

MBC Site Coordinators, Locations, and Dates: 2020

Bethel

Michael Banish – mbanish@zoomtown.com
Grant Career Center/Bethel, OH
February 8, February 22, March 7 (March 21 – Snow Date)

Northern Kentucky

Michelle Hathorn - dixiembc@gmail.com
Location: Scott High School
March 7, March 28

Fairfield

Joe Kihm – Site Coordinator kihmfamily@aol.com
Mary Beth Vogerl – Registrar mb.byrne55@gmail.com
Fairfield High School
February 1, February 15, February 29 (March 7 – Snow Date)

Sycamore

Bill Shefcik – Event Chair billshfcik@gmail.com
Bob Dennedy – Registrar dennedytr@gmail.com
Sycamore High School
February 1, February 15, February 22

MERIT BADGE CHALLENGE 2020

Checklist for Parents & Scouts (regardless of merit badges to be taken):

1. Scout dress uniform is to be worn all Saturdays. No Hats unless official BSA uniform hat or religious headwear.
2. Scouts are expected to arrive to class on time and stay until dismissed by the counselor.
3. Read the merit badge pamphlet ahead of time and bring it to your first class.
4. On the first Saturday the Scout needs to bring the following:
 - Signed and filled out Merit Badge Application (blue card) for each merit badge
 - Self-addressed stamped envelope for each merit badge (for the counselors to send blue cards back after the event)
 - Completed Prework and Fees (see other section of this packet)
 - Pen/Paper/Merit Badge Books
5. Parents: After the first Saturday class, please verify or observe that your Scout has written the Counselor contact information in his/her Merit Badge Book or somewhere safe.

Top Ten Tips for Success at Merit Badge Challenge

1. Finish your pre-work before the event and bring it to your first class.
2. Read the Merit Badge Pamphlet beforehand and bring it to class.
3. On your first day, write down the counselor's name, email address, and phone number in case you need to contact him/her between classes or after classes to ask questions or notify them of unforeseen absences.
4. Make sure you put the right mailing address and a stamp on your self-addressed, stamped envelope and give it to the counselor on your first day (seems obvious, but...).
5. Give a Merit Badge Application (blue card) for the merit badge signed by your troop leader to the counselor on the first day of class.
6. Make sure that you meet the age and experience qualifications listed in the matrix and the prework section of this packet. If you do not, check with your troop contact before signing up for that class.
7. Be aware that some requirements may be too complex to be completed in the classroom setting. Your counselor will inform you of these, either in the prework or in class, and provide guidance on completing them.
8. Come to class prepared to work on all of the requirements for the merit badge. Counselors are expected to hold each Scout accountable for completing the listed requirements before they sign the blue card.
9. If you do not meet the age and experience requirements listed or have no interest in the subject matter of a specific merit badge, please do not take it at Challenge. You can always get special attention from a counselor to work on something outside of Challenge.
10. Make sure you are prepared for class on the first day: bring pen and paper, the MB pamphlet, and all pre-work. Come to class with a "ready-to-learn" attitude.

If you follow these guidelines you should have a successful Merit Badge Challenge.

Please read the rest of the information in this packet – it includes information about pre-work, obtaining pamphlets, blue cards, age and experience guidelines, and other pertinent information.

BE PREPARED!!!

Make this Merit Badge Challenge successful!

For more information, see other parts of this packet or contact your Site Coordinator (listed below).

MERIT BADGE CHALLENGE 2020

The Matrix – Merit Badges Offered at Merit Badge Challenge Venues

The following pages (The Matrix) list all of the merit badges offered at the four Challenge venues, including their sessions and notes about prework and age/maturity requirements. Scouts should review the badges in The Matrix to make decisions about their schedules and then review the following document for details about the prework for those merit badges.

The following Merit Badges are suggested for younger Scouts:

- Art
- Chess (Beginner)
- Collections
- Coin Collecting
- Game Design
- Genealogy
- Geology
- Fingerprinting
- Fire Safety
- Indian Lore
- Pets
- Public Speaking
- Railroading
- Reading
- Safety
- Space Exploration
- Wood Carving (Totin' Chip card)

Venue Schedules

For some of the Eagle-required Merit Badges there are multiple sessions going on simultaneously; these are listed such as A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2; or just A, B, C with multiple classes.

Bethel and Sycamore

A = 8:30-9:45
B = 10:00-11:15
C = 11:30-12:45
A-B = 8:30-11:15
A-C = 8:30-12:45
B-C = 10:00-12:45
A-B-C = 8:30-12:45

Northern Kentucky

A = 8:30-9:50
B = 10:05-11:25
C = 12:05-1:25
D = 1:40-3:00
A-B = 8:30-11:25
B-C = 10:05-1:25
C-D = 12:05-3:00

Fairfield

A: 8:30-9:45
B: 10:00-11:15
C: 11:30-12:45
A-B: 8:30 - 11:15 (Cooking)
B-C: 10:00 to 12:45 (Aviation, Railroading)
A-C: 8:30 to 12:45 (First Aid and Emergency Preparedness)

PLEASE NOTE: Not all merit badges are offered at all venues. The Matrix (separate for each site) allows you to see which merit badges are offered and at what sessions, as well as the limitations or special circumstances that relate to each merit badge at each venue. It is ultimately the Scout's responsibility, with guidance from the Troop Contact and other adult troop leaders, to decide which merit badges to schedule. **View the Matrix and Prework for your chosen site.**

Blanks after sessions reflect merit badges not offered at that venue

MERIT BADGE CHALLENGE 2020

MATRIX:

Bethel

Grant Career Center/Bethel, OH

February 8, February 22, March 7 (March 21 – Snow Date)

Northern Kentucky

Location: Scott High School

March 7, March 28

Fairfield

Fairfield High School

February 1, February 15, February 29 (March 7 – Snow Date)

Sycamore

Sycamore High School

February 1, February 15, February 22

PREWORK: *(click the site name below to access the merit badges offered and the prework necessary)*

These links below list the required Merit Badge prework and any additional class fees for Merit Badge Challenge 2020 for all locations as well as the class schedules for each site.

- Bethel
- Northern Kentucky
- Fairfield
- Sycamore

Please Note: Not all merit badges shown on the Matrix are offered at each event. Requirements reflect those found in the 2019 BSA Requirements book and are to be used for the MBC 2020.

MERIT BADGE CHALLENGE 2020

Scout Registration Information Form Merit Badge Challenge 2020

(Scouts can use this form to provide the Troop Contact needed information for registering.)

Return to unit contact by: _____

Scout Name: _____

Scout Email (if available): _____

Troop #: _____

Best Email for Scout/Contact: _____

Phone # _____

Parent Email: _____

Any Special Needs: _____ (shared with Counselors)



	Class 1 st choice	Class 2 nd choice
Session A		
Session B		
Session C		
Session D		
Session E		
Session F		

Refer to Page 7 of this packet for session times. Note that session letters and times are different at each venue.

Age of Scout as of Jan. 1st 2020 _____

Rank as of Jan. 1st 2020 _____

Please note:

Anyone who is a rank of Scout, Tenderfoot, or Second Class is only permitted to take one Eagle-Required merit badge. Scouts who are First Class and above are entitled to take up to two Eagle-Required merit badges. If you are attending Bethel MBC, Scouts may take up to three Eagle-Required merit badges, if they so choose.