

Advancement and Merit Badges

Scout advancement is sequential and not dependent upon the age of the scout. The Scout Handbook has key reference material for rank advancement. All the general requirements are outlined and much of the material is within the handbook. In addition, as the scout moves up in rank, they will be required to complete merit badges, some of which are specifically designated as required for the Eagle rank.

It is up to the scout to take advantage of advancement opportunities and to take the initiative to ask someone to test them when they feel they are ready to demonstrate a requirement. Making sure their book is signed off is also their responsibility.

In our scout-led troop, scouts can sign off on rank requirements for the rank below theirs once they have attained First Class. The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters also may sign off scouts who demonstrate they have mastered their rank requirements. The Troop Guide and Instructors have a particular responsibility for working with new scouts on rank requirements.

It is not necessary to complete all the rank requirements for a lower rank before completing specific requirements for a higher rank unless the requirement specifically states otherwise.

A scout should keep pictures of the rank requirement pages of their handbook and of their merit badge cards— updating as changes are made. A lost handbook could mean starting all over again if the scout had no other evidence of completion, so make new copies along the way. This is critical for those who want to attain Eagle rank, as the scout must have evidence of all completed requirements.



A Hidden Gem

The advancement program provides a multitude of diverse learning opportunities and recognition for a job well done. This may be seen clearly, but there is a hidden opportunity that is perhaps more precious than any of these obvious ones.

The interaction with Adults in making appointments, discussing progress and the topics of scouting and life in general is a very important and easily overlooked learning opportunity for our young scouts. Each interaction hones their communication and interpersonal skills and prepares them to enter the greater community as strong and effective citizens. There are very few programs that recognize this or provide this opportunity. Scouting is somewhat unique in this way.

We encourage parents and other adults to give our youth the tools and encouragement to make appointments and engage in discussion with adult leaders with sufficient training and support, but to avoid doing it for them.

