MERIT BADGE SERIES







KAYAKING



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Requirements

1. Do the following:
   a. Explain to your counselor the hazards you are most likely to encounter while participating in kayaking activities, including weather and water-related hazards, and what you should do to anticipate, help prevent, mitigate, and respond to these hazards.
   b. Review prevention, symptoms, and first-aid treatment for the following injuries or illnesses that can occur while kayaking: blisters, cold-water shock and hypothermia, heat-related illnesses, dehydration, sunburn, sprains, and strains.
   c. Review the BSA Safety Afloat policy. Explain to your counselor how this applies to kayaking.
2. Before doing requirements 3 through 8, successfully complete the BSA swimmer test: Jump feetfirst into water over the head in depth. Level off and swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy, resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be completed in one swim without stops and must include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating.
3. Do the following:
   a. Review the characteristics of life jackets most appropriate for kayaking and understand why one must always be worn while paddling. Then demonstrate how to select and fit a life jacket for kayaking.
   b. Review the importance of safety equipment such as a signal device, extra paddle, sponge, bilge pump, and throw bag.
4. Do the following:
   a. Name and point out the major parts of a kayak.
   b. Review the differences in the design between recreational, whitewater, and sea or touring kayaks. Include how length, width, stability, and rocker are involved in the design of each type.
   c. Review the advantages and disadvantages of the materials most commonly used to make kayaks. Explain the care, maintenance, and storage of a kayak.
   d. Using the trucker's hitch and bowline, demonstrate how to secure a kayak to a rack on a vehicle or a trailer, or to a rack on land.

5. Discuss the following:
    a. How to choose a kayak paddle.
    b. The different materials from which paddles are made, parts of a paddle, and the care and maintenance of a paddle.
6. Using a properly equipped kayak with an open cockpit, a sit-on-top, or an inflatable kayak, do the following:
    a. Safely capsize and perform a wet exit.
    b. Reenter the kayak with assistance from a buddy boat.
    c. Demonstrate a kayak-over-kayak rescue.
    d. Demonstrate the HELP position.
    e. Capsize the kayak, swim it and the paddle to shore, and empty water from the kayak with assistance, if needed.
7. As a solo paddler, use a properly equipped kayak to demonstrate the following:
    a. Forward stroke
    b. Backstroke
    c. Forward sweep
    d. Reverse sweep
    e. Draw stroke
    f. Stern draw
8. As a solo paddler, use a properly equipped kayak to demonstrate the following:
    a. Paddle a straight line for 25 yards, make a sharp turn, and return 25 yards in a straight line.
    b. Spin or pivot 360 degrees to the right and 360 degrees to the left.
    c. Move abeam to the right 10 feet and to the left 10 feet.
    d. Stop the boat in one boat length.
    e. Paddle a buoyed course of a length determined by your counselor that includes two right turns and two left turns performed while under way.

Kayaking Resources

Scouting Literature

Boy Scout Handbook; Fieldbook; Aquatics Supervision; Kayaking BSA; Camping, Canoeing, First Aid, Lifesaving, Rowing, Scuba Diving, Small-Boat Sailing, Swimming, Water Sports, and *Whitewater* merit badge pamphlets.

Visit the Boy Scouts of America's official retail website (with your parent's permission) at http://www.scoutstuff.org for a complete listing of all merit badge pamphlets and other helpful Scouting materials and supplies.



Books

American Canoe Association. *Essentials of Kayak Touring.* Menasha Ridge Press, 2005.

American Canoe Association, Dillon, Pam, and Jeremy Oyen, eds. *Kayaking.* Human Kinetics, 2009.

Burnham, Bill, and Mary Burnham. *Kayaking for Everyone.* Globe Pequot Press, 2010.

Whiting, Ken. Recreational *Kayaking: The Ultimate Guide.* The Heliconia Press, 2008.

Organizations and Websites

American Canoe Association

108 Hanover St.
Fredericksburg, VA 22401
Telephone: 540-907-4460
Website: www.americancanoe.org

Paddling.net

Website: www.paddling.net

Acknowledgments

This merit badge was produced through the combined skills and efforts of a team of Boy Scout and American Canoe Association paddlers and BSA aquatic leaders. Special thanks to Pat Noack, Aquatics Instructor BSA and chair, BSA National Aquatics Task Force, for his leadership and guidance of the project. The following individuals also were members of the workgroup that developed and refined the requirements for this merit badge as well as served as reviewers of the text: David Bell, Mike Chicanowski, Keith Cooke, Jay Fox, Jeremy Oyen, Robin Pope, Charles Rose, Richard Thomas, and Jim Virgin. The writing team consisted of the following adult volunteer Scouters and American Canoe Association leaders and trainers:

- Richard Thomas, BSA Aquatics Instructor; member, BSA National Aquatics Task Force; ACA Canoeing Instructor Trainer; and Kayaking merit badge project leader
- Jeremy Oyen, REI Curriculum and Training coordinator; former ACA director of Safety Education, Instruction, and Outreach; and ACA Coastal Kayaking Instructor Trainer Educator and Canoeing/Adaptive Paddling Instructor Trainer
- Robin Pope, president, ACA board of directors; chair, ACA Safety Education and Instruction Council; and ACA Advanced Whitewater Kayaking Instructor Trainer Educator
- Jim Virgin, member, BSA National Aquatics Task Force; vice president, ACA board of directors; and ACA Costal Kayaking and Whitewater Kayaking Instructor

The Kayaking merit badge and pamphlet were prepared with the support of the American Canoe Association and its leadership.

