

TROOP 852 ADVANCEMENT PROCESS

Welcome to Troop 852! You have embarked upon a journey of fun and achievement. The fun part takes care of itself. But our goal is for all of the boys to reach as high as they can in Scouts. But if you are new to Boy Scouts or just new to our troop, we thought it would be helpful if we outlined a few basics on the advancement process.

There are two very important rules that you should always remember:

1. The Scout (and only the Scout) is responsible for keeping track of and reporting his advancement progress.
2. Only Scout leaders or authorized merit badge counselors can approve advancements or achievements.

Both of these will be a change for recently crossed-over Cub Scouts, but they are important to remember throughout your Boy Scout career.

Rank Advancements

If you are not yet a First Class, it is very important to remember to bring your book to every meeting, outing or activity. You never know when you'll have the chance to complete a requirement, but they have to be signed off in your book.

Also, remember rule #2 above. Your mom or dad cannot sign off any achievements by themselves unless they are Troop leaders.

When you think you have everything you need to advance to the next rank, you need to ask the Scoutmaster for a Scoutmaster's Conference. These take only 5-10 minutes and can be accomplished during a regular Scout meeting. But nobody is going to schedule that for you. You have to ask for it.

The last step is a Board of Review, which is where two or three adults will talk to you about your advancement, the next steps along the Scouting trail, your school work, etc. You request a Board of Review from the Advancement Committee Chairman, and you can do that at the same time you schedule your Scoutmaster's Conference. The Board of Review is 5-10 minutes and also can take place at a regular Scout meeting.

Merit Badges

The first step in earning any merit badge is to get the merit badge book. The Troop has a pretty good collection that any Scout leader or older Scout can show you. Or you can buy your own. Either way, all the information you need to earn the badge is in that book.

To get any merit badge, you need a completed "blue card." You can get one from the Scoutmaster, the Advancement Committee Chairman, or a merit badge counselor. Any of them can show you how to fill it out.

The only way you can get your merit badge is by giving the completed blue card showing all the completed requirements to the Advancement Committee Chairman. Nobody else is responsible for doing that, including the merit badge counselor. The card must be completely filled out and signed by the merit badge counselor and the Scoutmaster.

You have several options for keeping track of merit badges that you are working on. You can keep the blue card and have your counselor fill it out as you go. But be warned that if you lose the blue card, you may need to start all over on the merit badge. Another option is to have the Advancement Committee Chairman keep your partially completed card. You just need to remember which merit badges are partially completed. Or, some merit badge counselors may keep track of your progress for you, especially if the merit badge is being earned by a group of Scouts.

TROOP 852 ADVANCEMENT PROCESS

Many merit badges can be earned just by attending the regular meetings. We try to cover at least part of a badge every month. Another great way to earn merit badges is by attending summer camp. For those Scouts working on Star, Life or Eagle, it isn't unusual to earn two to three merit badges in just the five days of camp.

There may be some merit badges that interest you that we don't cover at the meetings or at camp. For those all you need to do is contact an authorized merit badge counselor to get started. The Advancement Committee Chairman has a full list. But only counselors can sign off on completed requirements, so they are important people.

When you have completed a merit badge, one part of the blue card goes to the Advancement Committee Chairman, one part goes to the merit badge counselor, and the third segment is for you to keep. These are important, however, and if they are lost you may not be able to earn your Eagle. So we offer Scouts the option of storing their portion of the blue cards with the Advancement Committee Chairman.

Getting Your Badges

If you have notified the Advancement Committee Chairman of a rank advancement or given him a completed blue card, you will get your badge at an upcoming troop meeting. We try to hand out awards about once a month. Two or three times a year we hold a more formal Court of Honor where you will be recognized along with all the other Scouts who have taken another step along the Scouting trail.

If awards are handed out and you didn't get one you thought you had earned, please see the Advancement Committee Chairman. But remember, if you didn't give him your blue card, or notify him of your rank advancement, then you don't have any awards coming!