FISHING

“Enhancing our youths’ competitive edge through merit badges”
Requirements

1. Do the following:
   a. Explain to your counselor the most likely hazards you may encounter while participating in fishing activities, and what you should do to anticipate, help prevent, mitigate, and respond to these hazards.
   b. Discuss the prevention of and treatment for the following health concerns that could occur while fishing, including cuts and scratches, puncture wounds, insect bites, hypothermia, dehydration, heat exhaustion, heatstroke, and sunburn.
   c. Explain how to remove a hook that has lodged in your arm.
   d. Name and explain five safety practices you should always follow while fishing.

2. Discuss the differences between two types of fishing outfits. Point out and identify the parts of several types of rods and reels. Explain how and when each would be used. Review with your counselor how to care for this equipment.

3. Demonstrate the proper use of two different types of fishing equipment.

4. Demonstrate how to tie the following knots: improved clinch knot, Palomar knot, uni knot, uni to uni knot, and arbor knot. Explain how and when each knot is used.

5. Name and identify five basic artificial lures and five natural baits and explain how to fish with them. Explain why baitfish are not to be released.
6. Do the following:
   a. Explain the importance of practicing Leave No Trace techniques. Discuss the positive effects of Leave No Trace on fishing resources.
   b. Discuss the meaning and importance of catch and release. Describe how to properly release a fish safely to the water.

7. Obtain and review the regulations affecting game fishing where you live. Explain why they were adopted and what is accomplished by following them.

8. Explain what good outdoor sportsmanlike behavior is and how it relates to anglers. Tell how the Outdoor Code of the Boy Scouts of America relates to a fishing sports enthusiast, including the aspects of littering, trespassing, courteous behavior, and obeying fishing regulations.

9. Catch at least one fish and identify it.

10. If regulations and health concerns permit, clean and cook a fish you have caught. Otherwise, acquire a fish to clean and cook it. (You do not need to eat your fish.)

Earning the BSA Complete Angler Award could help you expand your fishing knowledge and experiences. To become eligible for the award, start by earning these three merit badges: Fishing, Fly-Fishing, and Fish and Wildlife Management. Then complete one or more of the following projects:

- Teach a Fishing or Fly Fishing merit badge skill to your troop, crew, or team as part of a unit program activity.
- Help instruct Cub Scouts on fishing skills or fishery management as part of a Cub Scout meeting or outing.
- Participate in a local fishing derby or tournament, either a Scouting or community event.
- Complete a conservation project that will benefit a local fishery.

With the Complete Angler Award, you can become a mentor for younger Scouts, sharing your knowledge and helping others to enjoy a positive fishing experience. For more information, visit www.scouting.org/Home/OutdoorProgram/Fishing.aspx.
Fishing Resources

Scouting Literature

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


DVD

Organizations and Websites

**American Sportfishing Association**
1001 North Fairfax St., Suite 501
Alexandria, VA 22314
Telephone: 703-519-9691
Websites: http://www.asafishing.org

**Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum**
P.O. Box 1295
Livingston Manor, NY 12758
Telephone: 845-439-4810
Website: http://www.cffcm.com

**Federation of Fly Fishers**
5237 U.S. Highway 89 South, Suite 11
Livingston, MT 59047
Telephone: 406-222-9369
Website: http://www.fedflyfishers.org

**Future Fisherman Foundation**
5998 North Pleasant View Road
Ponca City, OK 74601
Telephone: 330-993-0014
Website: http://www.futurefisherman.org

**International Game Fish Association**
300 Gulf Stream Way
Dania Beach, FL 33004
Telephone: 954-927-2628
Website: http://www.igfa.org

**Izaak Walton League of America**
707 Conservation Lane
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
Telephone: 301-548-0150
Website: http://www.iwla.org

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries**
1315 East West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Telephone: 301-713-2334
Website: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov

**National Park Service**
1849 C St., NW
Washington, DC 20240
Telephone: 202-208-3818
Website: http://www.nps.gov

**Trout Unlimited**
1300 N. 17th St., Suite 500
Arlington, VA 22209-2404
Toll-free telephone: 800-834-2419
Website: http://www.tu.org

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**
1849 C St., NW
Washington, DC 20240
Toll-free telephone: 800-344-9453
Website: http://www.fws.gov

The Federation of Fly Fishers, International Game Fish Association, and Trout Unlimited have each signed a memorandum of mutual support with the Boy Scouts of America that emphasizes an ongoing relationship to promote mutually beneficial programs for recreational fishing.

Acknowledgments

The Boy Scouts of America thanks Douglas Precourt; Robert J. Sousa, Ph.D., U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (retired); and Ben Jelsema, volunteer Scouter, for preparing this revised version of the Fishing merit badge pamphlet. Sousa and Jelsema have put in countless hours as coordinators of the fishing programs for the last 10 National Scout Jamborees. Thanks also to Howard Kern, Master Leave No Trace Trainer, for his valuable assistance.

We are grateful to Howard E. Evans, Ph.D., and Edward Brothers of Ithaca, N.Y., for their expertise and invaluable input, and to Bob Cary, who wrote and illustrated the previous edition of the pamphlet, upon which this edition was based. Several of his illustrations remain in this edition. Thanks also to Trout Unlimited for its support.

The Boy Scouts of America is grateful to the men and women serving on the Merit Badge Maintenance Task Force for the improvements made in updating this pamphlet.