

# MERIT BADGE SERIES



# LIFESAVING



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

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The Boy Scouts of America is indebted to the American Red Cross for its subject matter expertise, review, and other assistance with this edition of the *Lifesaving* merit badge pamphlet.



**American  
Red Cross**

*"Enhancing our youths' competitive edge through merit badges"*



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# Requirements

1. Before doing requirements 2 through 15:
  - a. Complete Second Class rank requirements 7a through 7c and First Class rank requirements 9a through 9c.

*Second Class rank requirements 7a through 7c:*

    - (7a) Tell what precautions must be taken for a safe swim.
    - (7b) Demonstrate your ability to jump feetfirst into water over your head in depth, level off and swim 25 feet on the surface, stop, turn sharply, resume swimming, then return to your starting place.
    - (7c) Demonstrate water rescue methods by reaching with your arm or leg, by reaching with a suitable object, and by throwing lines and objects. Explain why swimming rescues should not be attempted when a reaching or throwing rescue is possible, and explain why and how a rescue swimmer should avoid contact with the victim.

*First Class rank requirements 9a through 9c:*

      - (9a) Tell what precautions must be taken for a safe trip afloat.
      - (9b) Successfully complete the BSA swimmer test.
      - (9c) With a helper and a practice victim, show a line rescue both as tender and as rescuer. (The practice victim should be approximately 30 feet from shore in deep water.)
  - b. Swim continuously for 400 yards using each of the following strokes in a strong manner for at least 50 continuous yards: front crawl, sidestroke, breaststroke, and elementary backstroke.
2. Explain the following:
  - a. Common drowning situations and how to prevent them.
  - b. How to identify persons in the water who need assistance.

- c. The order of methods in water rescue.
  - d. How rescue techniques vary depending on the setting and the condition of the person needing assistance.
  - e. Situations for which in-water rescues should not be undertaken.
3. Demonstrate “reaching” rescues using various items such as arms, legs, towels, shirts, paddles, and poles.
  4. Demonstrate “throwing” rescues using various items such as lines, ring buoys, rescue bags, and free-floating supports. Successfully place at least one such aid within reach of a practice victim 25 feet from shore.
  5. Show or explain the use of rowboats, canoes, or other small craft in performing rescues.
  6. List various items that can be used as rescue aids in a noncontact swimming rescue. Explain why buoyant aids are preferred.
  7. Perform the following *equipment-based rescues for a conscious practice subject* 30 feet from shore. Use a proper entry and a strong approach stroke. Speak to the subject to determine his condition and to provide instructions and encouragement.
    - a. Present a rescue tube to the subject, release it, and escort the victim to safety.
    - b. Present a rescue tube to the subject and use it to tow the victim to safety.
    - c. Present a buoyant aid other than a rescue tube to the subject, release it, and escort the victim to safety.
    - d. Present a buoyant aid other than a rescue tube to the subject and use it to tow the victim to safety.
    - e. Remove street clothes in 20 seconds or less and use a nonbuoyant aid, such as a shirt or towel, to tow the subject to safety. Explain when it is appropriate to remove heavy clothing before attempting a swimming rescue.
  8. Explain the importance of avoiding contact with an active victim and describe lead-and-wait tactics.
  9. Perform the following *nonequipment rescues for a conscious practice subject* 30 feet from shore. Begin in the water from a position near the subject. Speak to the subject to determine his condition and to provide instructions and encouragement.
    - a. Provide a swim-along assist for a calm, responsive, tired swimmer moving with a weak forward stroke.
    - b. Perform an armpit tow for a calm, responsive, tired swimmer resting with a back float.

- c. Perform a cross-chest carry for an exhausted, passive victim who does not respond to instructions to aid himself.
10. In deep water, show how to escape from a victim's grasp on your wrist. Repeat for front and rear holds about the head and shoulders.
11. Perform the following rescues for an *unconscious practice subject* at or near the surface 30 feet from shore. Use a proper entry and strong approach stroke. Speak to the subject and splash water on him to determine his condition before making contact. Remove the victim from the water, with assistance if needed, and position for CPR.
  - a. Perform an equipment assist using a buoyant aid.
  - b. Perform a front approach and wrist tow.
  - c. Perform a rear approach and armpit tow.
12. Describe how to respond if a victim submerges before being reached by a rescuer, and do the following:
  - a. Recover a 10-pound weight in 8 to 10 feet of water using a feetfirst surface dive.
  - b. Repeat using a headfirst surface dive.
13. Demonstrate knowledge of resuscitation procedures:
  - a. Describe how to recognize the need for rescue breathing and CPR.
  - b. Demonstrate proper CPR technique for at least 3 minutes using a mannequin designed to simulate ventilations and compressions.
14. Demonstrate management of a spinal injury:
  - a. Explain the signs and symptoms of a spinal injury.
  - b. Support a faceup victim in calm, shallow water.
  - c. Turn a subject from a facedown to a faceup position while maintaining support.
15. Show that you know first aid for other injuries or illnesses that could occur while swimming or boating, including hypothermia, heat reactions, muscle cramps, sunburn, stings, and hyperventilation.

# Lifesaving Resources

## Scouting Literature

*Boy Scout Journal; Backpacking, Boy Scout Handbook; Fieldbook; Deck of First Aid; Emergency First Aid pocket guide; Canoeing, First Aid, Motorboating, Rowing, Small-Boat Sailing, Swimming, Water Sports, and Whitewater merit badge pamphlets*

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

## Books

- Graver, Dennis. *Aquatic Rescue and Safety: How to Recognize, Respond to, and Prevent Water-Related Injuries*. Human Kinetics 2004.
- Raatma, Lucia. *Water Safety*. Children's World, 2004.
- U.S. Lifesaving Association. *Open Water Lifesaving: The United States Lifesaving Association Manual*. Pearson Custom Publishing, 2003.
- YMCA of the USA. *On the Guard II: The YUCA Lifeguard Manual*. Human Kinetics, 2001.

## Organizations and Websites

### American Canoe Association

Website: <http://www.americancanoe.org>

### American Red Cross

Toll-free telephone: 800-733-2767  
Website: <http://www.redcross.org>

### American Whitewater

Website:  
<http://www.americanwhitewater.org>

### International Life Saving Federation

Website: <http://www.ilsf.org>

### Lifesaving Society of Canada

Website: <http://www.lifesaving.ca>

### National Safety Council

Telephone: 630-285-1121  
Website: <http://www.nsc.org>

### Royal Life Saving Society of Australia

Website:  
<http://www.royallifesaving.com.au>

### Royal Life Saving Society of the United Kingdom

Website: <http://www.lifesavers.org.uk>

### Safe Kids USA

Telephone: 202-285-1121  
Website: <http://www.usa.safekids.org>

### Surf Life Saving Australia Ltd.

Website: <http://www.slsa.asn.au>

### Surf Life Saving New Zealand

Website: <http://www.lifesaving.org.nz>

**U.S. Coast Guard**

Website: <http://www.uscgboating.org>

**U.S. Lifesaving Association**

Website: <http://www.usla.org>

**YMCA of the USA**

Telephone: 312-977-0031

Website: <http://www.ymca.net>

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Roy Jansen—page 92

John McDearmon—  
all instructional illustrations

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