



Collections

Scouts BSA · Hobbies

Name

Started

Completed

Whether you collect rocks, cards, patches, or something unusual, this badge celebrates your collection (stamps and coins have badges of their own). You'll learn to organize, care for, and display it, and think about where it might go next. It's a chance to share what you love with others.

Requirements

Every official requirement, in plain language. Check the official wording when you sign off (scouting.org/merit-badges/collections/). Tips and examples are ideas, not extra requirements.

- ☐ **1** Write a short report or outline for your counselor describing your collection in detail: a brief history, why you enjoy it, what collecting has taught you, and why you picked this type of collection or way of collecting

Tip: Write about why you started collecting and how your collection has changed. Include photos if you like.

Example: Open your report with a story: "I traded for my first council patch at a camporee when I was ten, and I've been trading ever since." Then explain what the items are, where they come from, and some history, like when a patch design or card series first appeared.

- ☐ **2** Explain how your collection has grown and developed over time

Tip: Think about how you've added to your collection over time, through trades, gifts, or purchases.

3 Preserving and displaying your collection

Tips for this section: Show how you protect items from dust, light, and damage. Set up a small display at home.

Example for this section: Show a real setup: rocks in an egg carton with a numbered label in each cup, postcards in acid-free sleeves handled by the edges, cards in hard sleeves in a box kept out of the sun. Explain what damages your items (light, humidity, fingerprints) and how your setup protects them.

- ☐ **3a** Explain the precautions you take to preserve your collection, including how you handle, clean, and store it

- ☐ **3b** Explain the best way to display your collection while still protecting it

- ☐ **3c** Explain to your counselor the events open to hobbyists who collect what you do, such as conventions, shows, contests, seminars, and museum exhibits and programs

- ☐ **3d** Tell your counselor how you track your collection and describe your method for cataloging it

4 Collecting and investing

Tips for this section: Think about whether you collect for fun, value, or both. Talk honestly about what matters most to you.

Example for this section: Be ready to talk about both sides: "Most of my cards are worth a few cents, and I collect them because I like the players. A few might gain value, but prices go up and down, so I don't treat them like savings."

- ☐ **4a** Discuss with your counselor how investing and speculation could apply to your collection

- ☐ **4b** Discuss with your counselor what you'd look for when buying other collections like yours

- ☐ **4c** Discuss with your counselor how much money you'd expect back if you sold some or all of your collection

5 Knowing your collection

Tips for this section: Learn the terms collectors of your type use. Ask a club member or shop owner how items are graded and valued.

Example for this section: Learn the words for your type. Card collectors talk about rookie cards, parallels, and grades like "Near Mint." Rock collectors group by mineral and hardness. Bring two groups of items and explain how you sorted them and how each piece would be graded.

- ☐ **5a** Define at least 10 common terms used for your kind of collection and discuss them with your counselor

- ☐ **5b** Show your counselor two groups of items from your collection and explain how you organized it and why you chose that method (photos are fine if the collection can't be brought or seen in person)

- ☐ **5c** Explain what your collection is worth in money and where you learned those values

- ☐ **5d** Explain how items in your collection are graded by value, physical defects, size, and age, and show the classifications or ratings used

- ☐ **5e** List the national, state, or local associations connected to your type of collection

- ☐ **5f** Explain to your counselor the purpose of any identification number, series, brand name, and other special identifying marks on your items

- ☐ **6** Discuss with your counselor your plans for continuing your collection

Tip: Set a goal for your collection, like finishing a set or learning more about one area.

Example: A future plan can be small and specific: "Get a patch from every camp in our council," or "Label every rock with where I found it and get a streak plate to test them."

- ☐ **7** Learn about careers in collecting; pick one, find out the education, training, and experience it requires, and discuss with your counselor why it might interest you

Tip: Look into jobs like museum curator, appraiser, or archivist, and what each one does.