



Hiking

Scouts BSA · Outdoors · Eagle-required

Name

Started

Completed

Hiking is about building endurance and confidence one trail at a time. You'll prepare your body, learn to hike safely and responsibly, and work up to some long days on the trail. It's one of the Eagle-required choices, and the views make it worth every step.

Requirements

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

1 Safety and first aid

Tips for this section: Learn first aid for things hikers see most, like blisters, sprains, heat, cold, and dehydration.

Example for this section: Practice a scenario: halfway through a hot hike, a buddy is sweating heavily, pale, and dizzy. Explain how you'd spot heat exhaustion, get them into shade, cool them down, give water, and send for help.

- ☐ **1a** Explain to your counselor the hazards you're most likely to face on a hike and how to anticipate, prevent, reduce, and respond to them

- ☐ **1b** Show you know first aid for hiking injuries and illnesses, including blisters, sprained ankle, sunburn, dehydration, heat exhaustion, heatstroke, hypothermia, frostbite, hyperventilation, altitude sickness, insect stings, tick bites, and snakebite

2 Good hiking practices

Tips for this section: Practice Leave No Trace and the Outdoor Code on every outing, not just the long hikes.

Example for this section: Show your trip plan: route, a map, water sources, the weather forecast, when you'll be back, and who at home has a copy. Then explain how your group will stay on the trail and pack out every wrapper.

- ☐ **2a** Explain and, where you can, demonstrate good hiking habits: outdoor ethics, safety on day and night hikes, courtesy to others, picking footwear, and caring for your feet and footwear

- ☐ **2b** Say from memory or read aloud the Seven Principles of Leave No Trace, and talk about why each one matters on the trail

- ☐ **2c** Recite or read aloud the Outdoor Code and give examples of following it on a hike

- ☐ **3** Explain why hiking counts as aerobic exercise. Make a plan to get in shape for 10-mile hikes, and describe how you'll build fitness for longer ones

Tip: Make a plan that builds up gradually, like longer walks and stair climbing a few times a week.

Example: A conditioning plan might start with three 30-minute walks a week, add stairs or hills in week two, and a 5-mile weekend hike in week three, building toward 8 miles before your first 10-miler.

- ☐ **4** Hike 10 miles on four separate days and 20 miles on another day, each one of continuous miles. Before each, write a hike plan (map route, clothing and gear list, trail lunch items) and get it approved by your counselor or a designee. Short rests and one meal are fine; no overnight stops

Tip: Plan routes with your counselor and hike with a buddy and adult. Start with the 10-mile hikes to get ready for the 20.

Example: A 10-mile hike might be a loop trail in a state park: start by 8 a.m., take a 10-minute break every hour, eat lunch at the halfway point, and check feet for hot spots at every stop.

- ☐ **4a** First 10-mile hike

- ☐ **4b** Second 10-mile hike

- ☐ **4c** Third 10-mile hike

- ☐ **4d** Fourth 10-mile hike

- ☐ **4e** 20-mile hike

- ☐ **5** After each requirement 4 hike (or during it, if done as one continuous trek), write a short report: date, route description or map, weather, interesting sights, and challenges and how you met them. It may include what you learned about yourself, nature, or your fellow hikers. Share it with your counselor

Tip: Write your report soon after each hike while it's fresh. Include the route, the weather, and what you learned.

Example: Each report can be short: date, route and distance, weather, who went, the hardest moment, something you saw, and one thing you'd do differently. Add a map or photo of the trail if you like.