



Rifle Shooting

Scouts BSA · Sports

Name

Started

Completed

Rifle Shooting teaches safe, responsible firearm handling and marksmanship. You'll learn the safety rules first, then build your skills on the range with a certified instructor. It takes focus, patience, and respect.

Requirements

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

1 Safety, laws, and resources

Tips for this section: Learn the safety rules until you know them by heart, and always wear eye and ear protection on the range.

Example for this section: Explain the safety rules and what each prevents, the range commands like "cease fire," why rifles are stored unloaded and locked with ammunition stored separately, and why eye and ear protection are worn every time.

- ☐ **1a** Explain what a projectile is, and why anything that fires one at high speed needs careful, respectful handling and should be used only where approved

- ☐ **1b** Explain the basic safe gun-handling rules that apply to every firearm

- ☐ **1c** Describe how you'd respond if a friend at your house asked to see a gun that belongs to you or your family

Tip: Talk with your family about what responsible gun handling means at home, on the range, and in the field.

Example: Practice what you'd say if a friend at your house asked to see a gun that belongs to your family: "No, we don't touch those," then change the activity and tell a parent or guardian. Talk about why that's the right call even if your friend pushes.

- ☐ **1d** Explain why eye and hearing protection are needed, the types available, and how to use them

- ☐ **1e** Explain the key points of your community's and state's laws on owning and using guns

- ☐ **1f** Explain how hunting ties in with managing renewable wildlife resources wisely

- ☐ **1g** Pass a state hunter education course or get a copy of your state's hunting laws, then do 1g1 and 1g2

- ☐ **1g1** Explain the key points of your state's hunting laws, including any special rules on guns and ammunition

- ☐ **1g2** List the kinds of wildlife that may be hunted legally in your state

- ☐ **1h** Explain to your counselor the hygiene practices to follow while shooting

- ☐ **1i** Find local places where you can take part in or join range and target activities

- ☐ **1j** Discuss with your counselor a list of places you could contact to learn about firearms and how to use them

2 Shooting option: Choose 1 of 3

Tips for this section: Work with your certified range supervisor and practice your position and breathing to improve your shots.

Example for this section: On the range with a certified instructor, practice one position at a time. Focus on breathing out and pausing before a slow, steady trigger squeeze, and keep notes on each target so you can see your groups tighten.

2a Option A: modern cartridge rifle

- ☐ **2a1** Identify a rifle's three main parts and tell how each works

- ☐ **2a2** Identify and demonstrate the rules for storing and handling a rifle safely

- ☐ **2a3** Identify the two kinds of cartridges, their parts, and how they work

- ☐ **2a4** Explain to your counselor what misfires, hangfires, and squib fires are and what to do for each

- ☐ **2a5** Explain and demonstrate the five fundamentals of rifle shooting: aiming, controlling your breath, your hold, and the trigger, and follow-through

- ☐ **2a6** Show you have the knowledge, skill, and attitude to shoot a rifle safely on a range, including following range procedures and commands

- ☐ **2a7** Explain the basic safety rules for rifle cleaning and name the materials you need

- ☐ **2a8** Demonstrate cleaning a rifle correctly and safely

- ☐ **2a9** Discuss what you would think about when choosing a rifle

- ☐ **2a10** With a bolt-action .22 rimfire rifle at 50 feet, shooting from a benchrest or a supported prone position, fire five 3-shot groups that a quarter can touch, then use them to explain how to zero a rifle by adjusting its sights

- ☐ **2a11** Adjust sights to center your group and shoot five 5-shot groups (if the instructor says adjusting isn't practical, explain it instead and shoot five 5-shot groups a quarter can touch). Minimum score per shot: A-32 target 9; A-17 or TQ-1 target 7; A-36 target 5. Other suitable NRA targets may be used

2b Option B: air rifle (BB or pellet)

- ☐ **2b1** Identify an air rifle's three main parts and explain how each works

- ☐ **2b2** Identify and demonstrate the rules for storing and handling an air rifle safely

- ☐ **2b3** Identify the two most common kinds of air rifle ammunition

- ☐ **2b4** Explain and demonstrate the five fundamentals of air rifle shooting: aiming, controlling your breath, your hold, and the trigger, and follow-through

- ☐ **2b5** Show you have the knowledge, skill, and attitude to shoot safely on a range, including following range procedures and commands

- ☐ **2b6** Explain the basic safety rules for air rifle cleaning and name the materials you need

- ☐ **2b7** Demonstrate cleaning an air rifle correctly and safely

- ☐ **2b8** Discuss what you would think about when choosing an air rifle

- ☐ **2b9** With a BB gun (15 feet) or pellet rifle (33 feet), from a benchrest or supported prone position, shoot five 3-shot groups that a quarter can touch

- ☐ **2b10** Adjust sights to center your group and shoot five 5-shot groups (if adjusting isn't practical, explain it and shoot five 5-shot groups a quarter can touch). Minimum per shot: BB at 15 ft/5 m on TQ-5, 8; pellet at 25 ft on TQ-5, 8; pellet at 33 ft/10 m on AR-1, 6. Other suitable NRA targets OK

2c Option C: muzzleloading rifle

- ☐ **2c1** Discuss with your counselor a short history of how muzzleloading rifles developed

- ☐ **2c2** Identify the main parts of a muzzleloading rifle and discuss what each does

- ☐ **2c3** Identify and demonstrate the rules for storing and handling a muzzleloading rifle safely

- ☐ **2c4** Identify the grades of black powder and explain how to use each correctly and safely

- ☐ **2c5** Discuss safe procedures for storing black powder

- ☐ **2c6** Discuss the right components of a load

- ☐ **2c7** Identify the correct steps and accessories for loading a muzzleloading rifle safely

- ☐ **2c8** Identify why a muzzleloader might fail to fire, and explain misfires, hangfires, and squib fires. Explain and demonstrate how to prevent them and what to do for each

- ☐ **2c9** Show you have the knowledge, skill, and attitude to shoot a muzzleloading rifle safely on a range, including following range procedures and commands

- ☐ **2c10** Explain the basic safety rules for muzzleloader cleaning and name the materials you need

- ☐ **2c11** Demonstrate cleaning a muzzleloading rifle correctly and safely

- ☐ **2c12** Discuss what you would think about when choosing a muzzleloading rifle

- ☐ **2c13** With a .45 or .50 caliber muzzleloader at 50 feet, shooting from a benchrest or a supported prone position, fire three 3-shot groups small enough for the base of a standard soft drink can to cover

- ☐ **2c14** Adjust sights to center your group and shoot three 5-shot groups (if adjusting isn't practical, explain it and shoot three 5-shot groups a soft drink can base covers). Minimum per shot: 25 yards on NRA A-23 or NMLRA 50-yard target, 7; 50 yards on NRA A-25 or NMLRA 100-yard target, 7. Other NRA targets OK

- ☐ **3** Identify how the safe, responsible firearm skills from this badge could lead to a career or hobby. Research the extra training, experience, costs, and organizations involved, then discuss what you learned and your short- and long-term goals with your counselor

Tip: Look into youth programs, like a 4-H shooting sports club or a high school or college rifle team, and think about goals you could set for the next year and beyond.

Example: Explore a path like competitive smallbore or air rifle shooting: find a local club or junior program, what coaching and equipment cost, and what you'd like to reach in a year. Or look into a job like range safety officer, conservation officer, or gunsmith and the training each takes.