



# Swimming

## Merit Badge Workbook

This workbook can help you but you still need to read the merit badge pamphlet (book). No one can add or subtract from the Boy Scout Requirements #33215. Merit Badge Workbooks and much more are below: [Online Resources](#).

Send comments to: [craig@craiglincoln.com](mailto:craig@craiglincoln.com). Requirements revised: 2002, Workbook updated: February 2008.

Scout's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Counselor's Ph #: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Show that you know first aid for injuries or illnesses that could occur while swimming, including  
hypothermia, \_\_\_\_\_  
dehydration, \_\_\_\_\_  
heat reactions, \_\_\_\_\_  
muscle cramps, \_\_\_\_\_  
stings and bites, \_\_\_\_\_  
cuts and scrapes, \_\_\_\_\_  
spinal injuries, \_\_\_\_\_  
and hyperventilation. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do the following:  
A. Identify the conditions that must exist before performing CPR on a person. Explain how to recognize such conditions.

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B. Demonstrate proper technique for performing CPR using a training device approved by your counselor. \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Before doing the following requirements, successfully complete Second Class rank requirements 7a-7c and First Class rank requirements 9a-9c.

*Second Class Rank Requirements 7a-7c*

(7A) Tell what precautions must be taken for a safe swim. \_\_\_\_\_

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(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-9c*

(9A) Tell what precautions should be taken for a safe trip afloat. \_\_\_\_\_

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(9B) Before doing the following requirements, successfully complete the BSA swimmer test:

Jump feet first into water over your head in depth, swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy, resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be swum continuously and include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating.

(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.

4. Demonstrate survival skills by leaping into deep water wearing clothes (shoes, socks, swim trunks, long pants, belt, and long-sleeved shirt). Remove shoes and socks, remove and inflate the shirt, and show that you can float using the shirt for support. Remove and inflate the pants for support. Swim 50 feet using the inflated pants for support, then show how to reinflate the pants while using them for support.

5. Swim continuously for 150 yards using the following strokes in good form and in a strong manner: front crawl or trudgen for 25 yards, back crawl for 25 yards, sidestroke for 25 yards, breaststroke for 25 yards, and elementary backstroke for 50 yards.

6. Do the following:

A. Float faceup in a resting position for at least one minute.

B. Demonstrate survival floating for at least five minutes.

C. While wearing a properly fitted personal flotation device (PFD), demonstrate the HELP and huddle positions. Explain their purposes.

D. Explain why swimming or survival floating will hasten the onset of hypothermia in cold water.

7. In water over your head, but not to exceed 10 feet, do each of the following:

A. Use the feet first method of surface diving and bring an object up from the bottom.

B. Do a headfirst surface dive (pike or tuck), and bring the object up again.

C. Do a headfirst surface dive to a depth of at least 5 feet and swim underwater for 3 strokes. Come to the surface, take a breath, and repeat the sequence twice.

8. Do ONE of the following:

A. Demonstrate snorkeling and scuba diving knowledge:

1. Demonstrate selection and fit of mask, snorkel, and fins; discuss safety in both pool and open-water snorkeling.

2. Demonstrate proper use of mask, snorkel, and fins for underwater search and rescue.

3. Describe the sport of scuba diving, and demonstrate your knowledge of BSA policies and procedures relating to the sport.

-OR-  B. Demonstrate the following competitive swimming skills:

1. Racing dive from a pool edge or dock edge (no elevated dives from racing platforms or starting blocks)

2. Racing form for 25 yards on one competitive stroke (front crawl, back crawl, breaststroke, or butterfly)

3. Racing turns for the stroke that you chose in 8b(2), OR, if the camp facilities cannot accommodate the racing turn, repeat 8b(2) with an additional stroke.

4. Describe the sport of competitive swimming.

9. In water at least 8 feet deep, show a headfirst dive (kneeling start, bent-knee start, or standing dive) from a dock or pool deck. Show a long shallow dive, also from the dock or pool deck. If a low board (not to exceed 40 inches above water at least 9 feet deep) is available, show a plain front dive.

10. Do the following:

A. Explain the health benefits of regular aerobic exercise, and explain why many people today do not get enough of the beneficial kinds of exercise. \_\_\_\_\_

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B. Discuss why swimming is favored as both a fitness and a therapeutic exercise. \_\_\_\_\_

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C. Write a plan for a swimming exercise program that will promote aerobic/vascular fitness, strength and muscle tone, body flexibility, and weight control for a person Scout age. Identify resources and facilities available in you home community that would be needed for such a program. \_\_\_\_\_

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D. Discuss with your counselor the incentives and obstacles for adherence to the fitness program you created in requirement 10c.

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Explain the unique benefits that could be gained from this program, and discuss how personal health awareness and self -discipline would relate to your willingness and ability to pursue such a program.

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**Online Resources** (Use any Internet resource with caution and only with your parent's or guardian's permission.)

**Merit Badge Workbooks:** [usscouts.org](http://usscouts.org) -or- [meritbadge.org](http://meritbadge.org)      ► **Merit Badge Books:** [www.scoutstuff.org](http://www.scoutstuff.org)

- Boy Scouts of America: <http://www.scouting.org/>      ► [Requirements](#)      ► [Intro to Merit Badges](#)
- [Guide to Safe Scouting](#)    [Safe Swim Defense](#)    [Safety Afloat](#)    [Blood Borne Pathogens](#)    [Youth Protection Training](#)
- [ExpertVillage First Aid Videos](#)    [Make a First Aid Kit](#)    [Basics](#)    [Basics2](#)    [CPR Basics](#)    [Venomous Snake Bite](#)
- [ExpertVillage Swimming Lesson Videos](#)    [Tread Water](#)    [Basics](#)    [Freestyle](#)    [Breaststroke](#)    [Backstroke](#)
- American Red Cross: <http://www.redcross.org>      YMCA: <http://www.ymca.net/>
- International Swimming Hall of Fame: <http://www.ishof.org>      United States Diving Inc.: <http://www.usdiving.org>
- USA Swimming: <http://www.usswim.org>

## Safe Swim Defense

Before a BSA group may engage in swimming activities of any kind, a minimum of one adult leader must complete Safe Swim Defense training, have a commitment card (No. 34243) with them, and agree to use the eight defenses in this plan. One of the best opportunities for Safe Swim Defense training is in summer camp. The eight defenses are:

### 1. Qualified Supervision

All swimming activity must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult age 21 or older who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of youth members in his or her care, who is experienced in the water and confident of his or her ability to respond in the event of an emergency, and who is trained in and committed to compliance with the eight points of BSA Safe Swim Defense. (It is strongly recommended that all units have at least one adult or older youth member currently trained as a BSA Lifeguard to assist in the planning and conduct of all swimming activity.)

### 2. Physical Fitness

Require evidence of fitness for swimming activity with a complete health history from physician, parent, or legal guardian. The adult supervisor should adjust all supervision, discipline, and protection to anticipate any potential risks associated with individual health conditions. In the event of any significant health conditions, an examination by a physician should be required by the adult supervisor. Those with physical disabilities can enjoy and benefit from aquatics if the disabilities are known and necessary precautions are taken.

### 3. Safe Area

When swimming in areas not regularly maintained and used for swimming activity, have lifeguards and swimmers systematically examine the bottom of the swimming area to determine varying depths, currents, deep holes, rocks, and stumps. Mark off the area for three groups: not more than 3 1/2 feet deep for nonswimmers; from shallow water to just over the head for beginners; deep water not over 12 feet for swimmers. A participant should not be permitted to swim in an area where he cannot readily recover and maintain his footing, or cannot maintain his position on the water, because of swimming ability or water flow. When setting up a safe swimming area in natural waters, use poles stuck in the bottom, or plastic bottles, balloons, or sticks attached to rock anchors with twine for boundary markers. Enclose nonswimmer and beginner areas with buoy lines (twine and floats) between markers. Mark the outer bounds of the swimmer's area with floats. Be sure that clear-water depth is at least 7 feet before allowing anyone to dive into the water. Diving is prohibited from any height more than 40 inches above the water surface; feet-first entry is prohibited from more than 60 inches above the water. For any entry from more than 18 inches above the water surface, clear-water depth must be 10 to 12 feet. Only surface swimming is permitted in turbid water. Swimming is not permitted in water more than 12 feet deep, in turbid water where poor visibility and depth would interfere with emergency recognition or prompt rescue, or in whitewater, unless all participants wear appropriate personal flotation devices and the supervisor determines that swimming with personal flotation equipment is safe under the circumstances.

### 4. Lifeguards on Duty

Swim only where there are lifeguards on duty. For unit swims in areas where lifeguards are not provided by others, the supervisor should designate two capable swimmers as lifeguards. Station them ashore, equipped with a lifeline (a 100-foot length of 3/8-inch nylon cord). In an emergency, one carries out the line; the other feeds it out from shore, then pulls in his partner and the person being helped. In addition, if a boat is available, have two people, preferably capable swimmers, take it out?one rowing and the other equipped with a 10-foot pole or extra oar. Provide one guard for every 10 people in the water, and adjust the number and positioning of guards as needed to protect the particular area and activity.

### 5. Lookout

Station a lookout on the shore where it is possible to see and hear everything in all areas. The lookout may be the adult in charge of the swim and may give the buddy signals.

### 6. Ability Groups

Divide into three ability groups: Nonswimmers, beginners, and swimmers. Keep each group in its own area. Nonswimmers have not passed a swimming test. Beginners must pass this test: jump feetfirst into water over the head in depth, level off, swim 25 feet on the surface. Stop, turn sharply, resume swimming as before and return to the starting place. Swimmers must pass this test: jump feet first into water over the head in depth. Level off and swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be completed in one swim without stops and must include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating. These classification tests should be renewed annually, preferably at the beginning of the season.

### 7. Buddy System

Pair every youth with another in the same ability group. Buddies check in and out of the swimming area together. Emphasize that each buddy lifeguards his buddy. Check everyone in the water about every 10 minutes, or as needed to keep the buddies together. The adult in charge signals for a buddy check with a single blast of a whistle or ring of a bell, and call "Buddies!" The adult counts slowly to 10 while buddies join and raise hands and remain still and silent. Guards check all areas, count the pairs, and compare the total with the number known to be in the water. Signal two blasts or bells to resume swimming. Signal three blasts or bells for checkout.

### 8. Discipline

Be sure everyone understands and agrees that swimming is allowed only with proper supervision and use of the complete Safe Swim Defense. The applicable rules should be presented and learned prior to the outing, and should be reviewed for all participants at the water's edge just before the swimming activity begins. Scouts should respect and follow all directions and rules of the adult supervisor. When people know the reason for rules and procedures they are more likely to follow them. Be strict and fair, showing no favoritism.