

Sports & Fitness

Eagle Required (or Swimming or Cycling)

Hiking Merit Badge

A series of hikes building toward a 20-mile hike — a land-based alternative to Swimming.

Typical time to complete: **2–4 months**

GOOD FIT IF YOU LIKE

Outdoors & Nature

Sports & Fitness

Tips for Earning This Badge

- 1 Do not skip the shorter hikes — they build the stamina you need for the 20-miler and are required anyway.
- 2 Start in spring or fall to avoid summer heat on the longer hikes.
- 3 Keep a simple hike log from your very first hike: date, trail, miles, conditions, and who you went with.
- 4 The 20-mile hike in a day requires conditioning. Most scouts who struggle on it skipped the buildup hikes.
- 5 Counselors want to see a real log with some texture to it — weather, terrain, how you felt — not just distances copied into a spreadsheet after the fact.
- 6 A common pitfall: scheduling the 20-mile hike solo. It needs planning around daylight, water resupply, and often a second adult or buddy — treat it like a real expedition, not a long walk.

Official Requirements

We keep this page focused on tips and what to expect, not a copy of the requirement text — requirements get revised periodically, and scouts are generally held to whichever version was current when they started the badge (the same reason Scoutbook lets you filter by pamphlet version). For the exact, current wording, check your Scoutbook record for this badge or the official page below.

Hiking on [scouting.org](https://www.scouting.org) 

Finding a Counselor

Ask your Scoutmaster for the council's merit badge counselor list. For popular badges, a parent in your troop may already be registered as a counselor. If your troop doesn't have one, your council's advancement chair can help connect you.