

Sports & Fitness

Eagle Required (or Hiking or Cycling)

Swimming Merit Badge

Swimming strokes, water safety, and rescue basics — one of three options for this Eagle requirement.

Typical time to complete: **4–6 weeks**

GOOD FIT IF YOU LIKE

Water & Swimming

Sports & Fitness

Before You Start

! Confirm you can swim 100 yards continuously before scheduling your first counselor session — that is tested right at the start, not worked up to.

Tips for Earning This Badge

- 1 You must be able to swim 100 yards continuously before your first counselor session. Practice all four strokes — the counselor will test each one.
- 2 Summer camp is the most common place to earn this badge with pool access and qualified counselors available together.
- 3 The rescue and reaching assist requirements are tested separately from the swimming — practice them specifically.
- 4 If you are a strong swimmer, consider Lifesaving as an extension of this badge.
- 5 Counselors are evaluating stroke technique and endurance together — swimming the distance sloppily is treated differently than swimming it with correct form.
- 6 A common pitfall: scouts who can swim casually but have never actually swum 100 continuous yards. Time yourself in a pool before assuming you are ready.

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.

[Swimming on 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.