REQUIREMENTS BY SKILL

Physical Fitness & Health Requirements by Rank

Baseline tests and three back-to-back activity periods.

Fitness is the area where timing matters most. Each requirement starts a clock that has to finish before the next one can begin. There's a 30-day improvement period for Tenderfoot, then four weeks of daily activity for Second Class, then another four weeks for First Class. That adds up to about three months minimum, back to back. If a new scout doesn't start the Tenderfoot fitness test in their first few weeks, fitness will likely be the requirement that delays First Class.

> Requirements are paraphrased for planning, and numbers follow the current Scouts BSA Requirements book. Verify wording at scouting.org before signing off.

How Physical Fitness & Health Builds Across the Ranks

Tenderfoot

6a Record your best in push-ups, sit-ups or curl-ups, the back-saver sit-and-reach, and a 1-mile walk/run.

Sign-off: A leader observes and records the baseline numbers, with the date.

6b Make a plan to improve in each activity and track your practice for at least 30 days.

6c Show improvement of any amount in each activity after 30 days of practice.

Sign-off: Any improvement counts. This isn't a pass/fail fitness standard.

Second Class

7a After finishing Tenderfoot 6c, be physically active at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week, for four weeks, and keep a log.

Sign-off: Ask to see the log. Sports practice, biking, swimming, and active play all count.

7b Share your challenges and successes from 7a, and set a goal and plan for staying active.

7c Take part in a program on the dangers of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and other harmful practices; discuss it with your family; and relate it to the Scout Oath and Law with a leader.

Sign-off: School health programs often qualify. The family discussion and the leader conversation are both part of it.

First Class

8a After finishing Second Class 7a, be physically active at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week, for another four weeks, and keep a log.

8b Share your challenges and successes from 8a, and set a goal for keeping physical activity part of your life.

After First Class

Personal Fitness merit badge is Eagle-required and has its own 12-week program, so scouts who built the habit through the rank logs are well prepared. Swimming, Hiking, or Cycling fill another Eagle-required slot.

Personal Fitness EAGLE — Eagle-required. Has its own 12-week program, which builds on the rank activity logs.

Athletics — A good elective for scouts in school sports.

Hiking EAGLE — Eagle-required option that combines fitness with outdoor skills.

Can rank work count toward a merit badge? Sometimes. Under the Guide to Advancement (4.2.3.6), one activity can count for both when the two requirements match exactly and have the same purpose, like camping nights for the ranks and the Camping merit badge. For safety skills such as first aid and CPR, the counselor should be satisfied the Scout still remembers what was learned. When requirements only look alike, the Scout still does each one's own work. The unit leader or merit badge counselor makes the call.

Fitness Kickoff and Check-In Plan

One active troop meeting to start, then short check-ins every few weeks.

1. **Fitness test night**
   Run the four Tenderfoot tests for every new scout (T 6a). Have older scouts record results and cheer them on. Do this within a new scout's first month.

2. **Hand out logs**
   Give each scout a simple activity log with start dates written in: 30 days for Tenderfoot, four weeks each for Second Class and First Class.

3. **30-day retest**
   Put the retest on the calendar now, about five weeks out (T 6c). The day it's passed, the Second Class 4-week clock can start.

4. **Check-ins**
   Every few weeks, scouts show their logs to a leader. Use the end of a log period for the "challenges and successes" conversation (SC 7b, FC 8b).

5. **Health program**
   Ask families whether a school drug and alcohol awareness program is coming up (SC 7c). If not, plan a troop program with a guest speaker.

Signing It Off

The fitness clocks run in sequence: the Second Class 4 weeks can't start until Tenderfoot 6c is done, and the First Class 4 weeks can't start until Second Class 7a is done.

Track start dates. A scout who's missing only fitness logs at a First Class review is a common, avoidable delay.

Scouts with physical disabilities can request alternative requirements through the council's official process.

Common Mistakes

Waiting to start Tenderfoot fitness until the scout has finished everything else.

Accepting a log filled in from memory the night before the review.

Treating the Tenderfoot retest as pass/fail. Any improvement counts.