



Cooking

Merit Badge Workbook

Read the [merit badge pamphlet](#). [View helpful video resources](#).

This Workbook can help you organize your thoughts as you prepare to meet with your merit badge counselor

Merit Badge Counselors may not require the use of this or any similar workbooks.

You still must satisfy your counselor that you can demonstrate each skill and have learned the information. You should use the work space provided for each requirement to keep track of which requirements have been completed, and to make notes for discussing the item with your counselor, not for providing full and complete answers.

If a requirement says that you must take an action using words such as "discuss", "show", "tell", "explain", "demonstrate", "identify", etc, that is what you must do.

No one may add or subtract from the official requirements found on [Scouting.org/meritbadges/](https://scouting.org/meritbadges/). The requirements were last revised in 2025 • This workbook was updated in November 2025.

Scout's Name: _____ Unit _____ Date Started _____

Counselor's Name: _____ Phone No.: _____ Email: _____

1. **Health and Safety** – Do the following:

- a. Explain to your counselor the most likely hazards you may encounter while participating in cooking activities and what you should do to anticipate, help prevent, mitigate, and respond to these hazards.

Hazard	How to anticipate, help prevent, mitigate, and respond

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- b. Show that you know first aid for and how to prevent injuries or illnesses that could occur while preparing meals and eating, including burns and scalds, cuts, choking, and allergic reactions.

Burns and scalds

Cuts

Choking

Allergic reactions

- c. Describe how meat, fish, chicken, eggs, dairy products, and fresh vegetables should be stored, transported, and properly prepared for cooking.

Meat	
Fish	
Chicken	
Eggs	
Dairy Products	
Fresh Vegetables	

Explain how to prevent cross-contamination.

- d. Discuss with your counselor food allergies, food intolerance, and food-related illnesses and diseases.

Food allergies	
Food-related illnesses	

Food
intolerance

Food-related
diseases

Explain why someone who handles or prepares food needs to be aware of these concerns.

- e. Discuss with your counselor why reading food labels is important.

Explain how to identify common allergens such as peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, wheat, soy, and shellfish.

Peanuts

--

Tree nuts

--

Milk

--

Eggs

--

heat

--

Soy

--

Shellfish

--

2. Nutrition. Do the following:

- a. Using the MyPlate food guide or the current USDA nutrition model, give five examples for EACH of the following food groups, the recommended number of daily servings, and the recommended serving size:

	Example	Daily servings	Serving Size
1. Fruits			
2. Vegetables			
3. Grains			
4. Proteins			
5. Dairy			

- b. Explain why you should limit your intake of oils and sugars.

- c. Track your daily level of activity and your daily caloric need based on your activity for five days.

Then, based on the MyPlate food guide, discuss with your counselor an appropriate meal plan for yourself for one day.

- d. Discuss your current eating habits with your counselor and what you can do to eat healthier, based on the MyPlate food guide.

- e. Discuss the following food label terms: calorie, fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrate, dietary fiber, sugar, protein.

Calorie

Fat

Saturated fat

Trans fat

Cholesterol

Sodium

Carbohydrate

Dietary fiber

Sugar

Protein

Explain how to calculate total carbohydrates and nutritional values for two servings, based on the serving size specified on the label.

3. **Cooking Basics.** Do the following:

- a. Discuss the following cooking methods. For each one, describe the equipment needed, how temperature control is maintained, and name at least one food that can be cooked using that method: baking, boiling, broiling, pan frying, simmering, steaming, microwaving, grilling, foil cooking, and use of a Dutch oven.

Method	Food	Equipment needed	How is food cooked and temperature maintained?
Baking			
Boiling			
Broiling			

Pan frying		
Simmering		
Steaming		
Microwaving		
Grilling		
Foil cooking		
Use of a Dutch oven		

- b. Discuss the benefits of using a camp stove on an outing vs. a charcoal or wood fire.

- c. Describe for your counselor how to manage your time when preparing a meal so components for each course are ready to serve at the correct time.

- d. Explain and give examples of how taste, texture and smell impact what we eat.

Taste

Texture

Smell

4. **Cooking at home.** (a) Using the MyPlate food guide or the current USDA nutrition model, plan menus for three full days of meals (three breakfasts, three lunches, and three dinners) plus one dessert. Your menus should include enough to feed yourself and at least one adult, keeping in mind any special needs (such as food allergies) and how you keep your foods safe and free from cross-contamination. List the equipment and utensils needed to prepare and serve these meals.

Day 1	Menu	Quantity	Equipment	Utensils
BREAKFAST	Fruits			
	Vegetables			
	Grains			
	Proteins			
	Dairy			
LUNCH	Fruits			
	Vegetables			
	Grains			
	Proteins			
	Dairy			
DINNER	Fruits			
	Vegetables			
	Grains			
	Proteins			
	Dairy			

Day 2	Menu	Quantity	Equipment	Utensils
BREAKFAST	Fruits			
	Vegetables			
	Grains			
	Proteins			
	Dairy			
LUNCH	Fruits			
	Vegetables			
	Grains			
	Proteins			
	Dairy			
DINNER	Fruits			
	Vegetables			
	Grains			
	Proteins			
	Dairy			

Day 3	Menu	Quantity	Equipment	Utensils
BREAKFAST	Fruits			
	Vegetables			
	Grains			
	Proteins			
	Dairy			
LUNCH	Fruits			
	Vegetables			
	Grains			
	Proteins			
	Dairy			
DINNER	Fruits			
	Vegetables			
	Grains			
	Proteins			
	Dairy			
DESSERT				

- b. Find recipes for each meal. Create a shopping list for your meals showing the amount of food needed to prepare for the number of people you will serve. Determine the cost for each meal.

Breakfast 1

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Breakfast 1 Total Cost			

Breakfast 2

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Breakfast 2 Total Cost			

Breakfast 3

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Breakfast 3 Total Cost			

Lunch 1

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Lunch 1 Total Cost			

Lunch 2

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Lunch 2 Total Cost			

Lunch 3

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Lunch 3 Total Cost			

Dinner 1

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Dinner 1 Total Cost			

Dinner 2

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Dinner 2 Total Cost			

Dinner 3

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Dinner 3 Total Cost			

Dessert

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Dessert Total Cost			

- c. Share and discuss your meal plan and shopping list with your counselor.

- d. Using at least five of the 10 cooking methods from requirement 3, prepare and serve yourself and at least one adult (parent, family member, guardian, or other responsible adult) one breakfast, one lunch, one dinner, and one dessert from the meals you planned.*

Cooking methods used:

- ☐ Baking ☐ Boiling ☐ Broiling ☐ Pan frying ☐ Simmering
- ☐ Steaming ☐ Microwaving ☐ Grilling ☐ Foil Cooking ☐ Dutch oven

- e. Time your cooking to have each meal ready to serve at the proper time. Have an adult verify the preparation of the meal to your counselor.

- ☐ Breakfast No. _____ Date: _____ Adult's verification: _____

- ☐ Lunch No. Date: Adult's verification:

- ☐ Dinner No. Date: Adult's verification:

- ☐ Dessert Date: Adult's verification:

- f. After each meal, ask a person you served to evaluate the meal on presentation and taste, then evaluate your own meal. Discuss what you learned with your counselor, including any adjustments that could have improved or enhanced your meals. Tell how planning and preparation help ensure a successful meal.

[illegible]

***The meals for requirement 4 may be prepared on different days, and they need not be prepared consecutively. The requirement calls for Scouts to plan, prepare, and serve one breakfast, one lunch, one dinner, and one dessert to at least one adult; those served need not be the same for all meals.**

Note: The meals prepared for Cooking merit badge requirements 4, 5, and 6 will count only toward fulfilling those requirements and will not count toward rank advancement or other merit badges. Meals prepared for rank advancement or other merit badges may not count toward the Cooking merit badge. You must not repeat any menus for meals actually prepared or cooked in requirements 4, 5, and 6.

5. **Camp Cooking.** Do the following.

- a. Using the MyPlate food guide or the current USDA nutrition model, plan a menu that includes four meals, one snack, and one dessert for your patrol (or a similar size group of up to eight youth, including you) on a camping trip. These four meals must include two breakfasts, one lunch, and one dinner. Additionally, you must plan one snack and one dessert. Our menus should include enough food for each person, keeping in mind any special needs (such as food allergies) and how you keep your foods safe and free from cross-contamination. List the equipment and utensils needed to prepare and serve these meals.

Meal 1
Breakfast

Menu		Quantity	Equipment	Utensils
Fruits				
Vegetables				
Grains				
Proteins				
Dairy				

Meal 2
Lunch

Menu		Quantity	Equipment	Utensils
Fruits				
Vegetables				
Grains				
Proteins				
Dairy				

Meal 3
Dinner

Menu		Quantity	Equipment	Utensils
Fruits				
Vegetables				
Grains				
Proteins				
Dairy				

Meal 4
Breakfast

Fruits				
Vegetables				
Grains				
Proteins				
Dairy				

Snack

Menu		Quantity	Equipment	Utensils
Fruits				
Vegetables				
Grains				
Proteins				
Dairy				

Dessert

Fruits				
Vegetables				
Grains				
Proteins				
Dairy				

Shopping Lists:

Meal 1

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Meal 1 Total Cost			

Meal 2

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Meal 2 Total Cost			

Meal 3

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Meal 3 Total Cost			

Meal 4

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Meal 4 Total Cost			

Snack

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Snack Total Cost			

Dessert

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Dessert Total Cost			

- ☐ c. Share and discuss your menu plans and shopping list with your counselor.

- ☐ d. In the outdoors, using your menu plans and recipes for this requirement, cook two of the four meals you planned using either a camp stove OR backpack stove. Use a skillet OR a Dutch oven over campfire coals for the third meal, and cook the fourth meal in a foil pack OR on a skewer. Serve all of these meals to your patrol or a group of youth. **

- ☐ Meal 1 _____ Heat Source: _____ Method: _____ Date: _____
- ☐ Meal 2 _____ Heat Source: _____ Method: _____ Date: _____
- ☐ Meal 3 _____ Heat Source: _____ Method: _____ Date: _____

Cooking

Scout's Name: _____

- e. In the outdoors, prepare a dessert OR snack and serve it to your patrol or a group of youth. **

Dessert or Snack: _____ Date: _____

- f. After each meal, have those you served evaluate the meal on presentation and taste, and then evaluate your own meal.

Meal	Evaluation by those served		Self Evaluation	
	Presentation	Taste	Presentation	Taste
Meal 1				
Meal 2				
Meal 3				
Meal 4				
Meal 5				
Snack				

Discuss what you learned with your counselor, including any adjustments that could have improved or enhanced your meals. Tell how planning and preparation help ensure successful outdoor cooking.

- g. Lead the clean-up of the equipment, utensils, and the cooking site thoroughly after each meal. Properly store or dispose unused ingredients, leftover food, dishwater and garbage.

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Explain how you properly disposed of dishwater and of all garbage.

- h. Discuss how you followed the Outdoor Code and no-trace principles when preparing your meals.

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6. **Trail and backpacking meals.** Do the following.

- a. Using the MyPlate food guide or the current USDA nutrition model, plan a **meal** (sic – should be “**menu**”) for trail hiking or backpacking that includes one breakfast, one lunch, one dinner, and one snack. These meals must not require refrigeration and are to be consumed by three to five people (including you). List the equipment and utensils needed to prepare and serve these meals.

Breakfast	Menu	Quantity	Equipment	Utensils
	Fruits			
	Vegetables			
	Grains			
	Proteins			
	Dairy			

Lunch

Menu		Quantity	Equipment	Utensils
Fruits				
Vegetables				
Grains				
Proteins				
Dairy				

Dinner

Menu		Quantity	Equipment	Utensils
Fruits				
Vegetables				
Grains				
Proteins				
Dairy				

Snack

Menu		Quantity	Equipment	Utensils

- b. Create a shopping list for your meals showing the amount of food needed to prepare and serve each meal, and the cost for each meal.

Breakfast

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Total Cost			

Lunch

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Total Cost			

Dinner			
Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Total Cost			

Snack

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Total Cost			

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Dinner	Total Cost		

Menu Item	Components to purchase	Quantity	Cost
Snack	Total Cost		

- c. Share and discuss your meal plan and shopping list with your counselor. Your plan must include how to repackage foods for your hike or backpacking trip to eliminate as much bulk, weight, and garbage as possible.

- d. While on a trail hike or backpacking trip, prepare and serve two meals and a snack from the menu planned for this requirement. At least one of those meals must be cooked over a fire, or an approved trail stove (with proper supervision).**

☐ Meal 1 _____ Heat Source: _____ Date: _____

☐ Meal 2 _____ Heat Source: _____ Date: _____

☐ Snack _____ Heat Source: _____ Date: _____

- e. After each meal, have those you served evaluate the meal on presentation and taste, and then evaluate your own meal.

Meal	Evaluation by those served		Self Evaluation	
	Presentation	Taste	Presentation	Taste
Meal 1				
Meal 2				
Snack				

Discuss what you learned with your counselor, including any adjustments that could have improved or enhanced your meals. Tell how planning and preparation help ensure successful trail hiking or backpacking meals.

- f.. Explain to your counselor how you should divide the food and cooking supplies among the patrol in order to share the load. Discuss how to properly clean the cooking area and store your food to protect it from animals.

7.. **Food-related careers.** Find out about three career opportunities in cooking.

- ☐ (a) Identify three career opportunities that would use skills and knowledge in cooking.

1.
2.
3.

Pick one and research the training, education, certification requirements, experience, and expenses associated with entering the field. Research the prospects for employment, starting salary, advancement opportunities, and career goals associated with this career. Discuss what you learned with your counselor and whether you might be interested in this career

Career: _____

Training	
Education	
Certification Requirements	
Experience	
Expenses associated with entering field	
Prospects for employment	
Starting salary	
Advancement opportunities	
Career goals associated with this career	

- ☐ Discuss what you learned with your counselor and whether you might be interested in this career.

Notes:

(b) Identify how you might use the skills and knowledge in cooking to pursue a personal hobby and/or healthy lifestyle. Research the additional training required, expenses, and affiliation with organizations that would help you maximize the enjoyment and benefit you might gain from it. Discuss what you learned with your counselor and share what short-term and long-term goals you might have if you pursued this.

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When working on merit badges, Scouts and Scouters should be aware of some vital information in the current edition of the *Guide to Advancement* (BSA publication 33088). Important excerpts from that publication can be downloaded from <http://usscouts.org/advance/docs/GTA-Excerpts-meritbadges.pdf>.

You can download a complete copy of the *Guide to Advancement* from <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/33088.pdf>.