



Crime Prevention

Merit Badge Study Guide

- Organize thoughts to prepare
- Take notes
- Keep track of progress

Merit badge counselors may not require the use of this or any other workbook. Scouts must still demonstrate that have learned the material and can perform each required skill. If a requirement directs you to discuss, show, "tell, explain, demonstrate, identify, or anything similar, the requirement must be completed as written. No one may add to or remove anything from the official requirements listed in Scoutbook or on scouting.org/skills/merit-badges.

The requirements were revised in 2025 • This guide was updated in December 2025.

Scout's Name: _____ Unit: _____

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

Read the [merit badge pamphlet](#).

1. Laws and Society. Discuss the following with your counselor:

- (a) Why we have criminal laws.

- (b) What are types of crimes, including property crimes, crimes against people, white collar crime, and environmental crime.

- (c) Why people commit crimes.

- (d) Why everyone should follow the law even when no one is watching.

- (e) What is the meaning of crime prevention.

2. Groups Working to Prevent Crime. Research how the following groups contribute to crime prevention and share your findings with your counselor:

Citizens, including youth	
Schools	
Neighborhood, social and civic groups, including youth groups	
Private security	
Law enforcement agencies	
Courts	
Corrections and rehabilitation programs	

3. Crime in Your Community, State, and Nation. Do the following:

- (a) With your parent or guardian's permission and the approval of your counselor, research local, state, or national news coverage of three crimes of different types. Research how common these types of crimes are in your state or in the United States.

- (b) Record notes on which law enforcement agencies and courts were involved in the pursuit of justice for the victims and the accused person, why you think these crimes were committed, and what could be done to prevent similar crimes. Review your research with your counselor.

4. Home and Neighborhood Crime Prevention. Do the following:

- (a) Discuss the following with your counselor:
 - (1) How participation in activities of families, churches, sports teams, and clubs prevents crime.

- (2) How designs of houses, neighborhoods, public buildings, stores, streets, and parks prevent crime.

- (b) Conduct a security survey of a home, a neighborhood, a park, or a camp building with adult supervision and following youth protection guidelines using a security checklist in the *Crime Prevention* merit badge pamphlet or one approved by your counselor.

- (c) Use information from your survey for requirement 4(b) and the EDGE method to develop a lesson about how a family or Scouts can protect themselves from crime. Review your teaching plan with your counselor, then present your lesson to your family or to Scouts.

5. Retail Crime Prevention. Research the following topics and review them with your counselor:

- (a) The impact of shoplifting and employee theft (also known as shrinkage) and loss prevention on retail finances, customer service, and reputation.

- (b) Techniques used by retail stores to prevent shoplifting.

6. Reporting Crime. Discuss the following with your counselor:

- (a) When and how to report a crime or an impending crime.

- (b) The warning signs for child abuse and domestic violence and how to report these situations.

- (c) The three R's of personal safety and protection and how to apply them.

- (d) How reporting a crime can help law enforcement provide resources for crime victims.

7. Peers and Crime. Discuss the following with your counselor:

- (a) The role that peers play in crime, crime prevention, and experiencing crime.

- (b) How to resist peer influence.

- (c) Bullying and hazing behaviors and signs that a friend may be bullying you or someone else.

- (d) Explain the impact of gangs on communities.

8. Substance Use and Crime. Discuss the following with your counselor:

- (a) The legal and health consequences of using alcohol, tobacco and vaping products, illegal drugs, and diverted prescription drugs.

- (b) How substance use contributes to violence and property crime and increases a person's risk of becoming a victim of crime.

- (c) How drug abuse awareness, prevention, and recovery programs help prevent crime.

- (d) How to get help if you or someone you know needs help with drugs or alcohol.

9. Online Crime and You. Discuss the following with your counselor:

- (a) How to avoid being the victim of online crimes.

- (b) Common online financial scams.

- (c) Effective online security.

- (d) Identity theft and how to prevent it.

- (e) How criminals use social media to target victims.

□ 11. Careers. Do ONE of the following:

- (a) Identify three career opportunities that would use skills and knowledge in the field of crime prevention.

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:

Crime Prevention Merit Badge Sample Home Security Checklist

Scout's Name: _____

Here are some things to consider with your parent or guardian and counselor. See your Crime Prevention Merit Badge Pamphlet for explanations about each item on the checklist.

- 1. Do you keep a list of all valuable property? Is at least one copy kept outside your home?
- 2. Do you have a list of the serial numbers of your valuable property (watches, cameras, computers, TVs, etc.)?
- 3. Do you have descriptions/photographs of valuable property from each room in your home (and closets)?
- 4. Do you keep excess cash and other valuables in a bank? Consider renting a safe deposit box for important papers.
- 5. Do you plan so that you don't need to "hide" a house key under the doormat or in a similar location?
- 6. Do your family members know what to do if they discover a burglar in your home? Don't go in! Dial 911!
- 7. Do family members know to leave everything undisturbed and call the sheriff or police if they discover a burglary?
- 8. Are trees and shrubs trimmed to eliminate hiding places?
- 9. Do you have a security closet with a solid-core door, non-removable hinges, and a deadbolt lock? For items of value.
- 10. Do you have emergency telephone numbers listed on your phone? In most areas of the country it is 911.
- 11. Is the outside of your home well lit? Do you have working porch lights? Is your yard well illuminated?
- 12. Is your house number easily visible from the street at any hour? Police need to see your number in an emergency.
- 13. Are ladders locked up and trellises and drainpipes eliminated that can be used as ladders to reach upper floor?
- 14. Are your exterior doors of solid-core construction? Hollow core wood doors offer little protection from break in.
- 15. Do your entry doors have wide-angle viewers? Needed so you can see out before opening the door.
- 16. Are your door's locks secure from being opened if a burglar breaks out a pane of glass or a panel of lightweight wood?
- 17. Do exterior doors have cylinder-type deadbolt locks with at least a one-inch throw and a beveled cylinder guard?
- 18. Do doors without cylinder locks have a heavy deadbolt or similar security that can be operated only from the inside?
- 19. Can all of your doors (basement, porch, sliding, French, balcony) be securely locked?
- 20. Do your basement doors have locks that allow you to isolate that part of your home?
- 21. Are all of your locks in good repair?
- 22. Are the door strike-plates installed with three-inch screws? Three-inch screws will reach the stud inside the wall.
- 23. Do you know everyone who has a key to your home? Did you change the locks when you moved in?
- 24. Do all out-swinging doors in your home have non-removable pins?
- 25. Do sliding doors have a lock that locks both the door panels together or locks the active side to the frame?
- 26. Is the garage door secured with a padlock, hasp, or other good lock? Even doors with electric openers need locks.
- 27. Do you lock your garage door at night?
- 28. Do you make sure your garage door is locked when you're away from home?
- 29. Do you lock your car and take out the keys even when it is parked in your garage?
- 30. Are all windows in your home equipped with key locks, or pinned?
- 31. Are your window locks properly and securely mounted?
- 32. Do you keep your windows locked when they are shut?
- 33. Do you use locks that let you lock a window that is partly open?
- 34. Have you replaced or secured louvered windows?

Crime Prevention Merit Badge Sample Home Security Checklist

Scout's Name: _____

- 35. In high-crime areas, do you use window bars or ornamental grilles? Make sure bars or grilles don't block fire escape.
- 36. Do you have secure locks on garage windows?
- 37. Do you cover garage windows with curtains or shades?
- 38. Are you as careful to secure basement and second-story windows as you are to secure windows on the first floor?
- 39. Do you use good telephone security procedures?
 - Never give personal information (name, age, address, etc.) to a stranger on the telephone.
 - Never let a stranger know that you are home alone.
 - Never let a stranger on the telephone know when you will or will not be home.
- 40. When planning a trip, do you secure your telephone? Consider call forwarding or at least check messages daily.
- 41. When you go on a trip, do you arrange for friends or neighbors to pick up newspapers, mail, packages, etc.?
- 42. Do you arrange to make your home look lived-in while you are away? Ask friends to pick up newspapers, mail, etc. daily. Consider light timers. Ask neighbors to park in your driveway and to put out your trash cans on garbage day.
- 43. Do you notify a neighbor that you'll be gone? Leave a key with a friend. Ask that your home be checked every so often.
- 44. Do you notify you police or sheriff that you'll be gone?
- 45. Do you store all your valuables in a secure place while you're gone, such as a safe deposit box in a bank?