

Merit Badge Organization

It's so exciting coming home from a Court of Honor with all of those earned merit badges tucked neatly inside their envelope. However, it is not too uncommon for them to quickly find new hiding places before you get the chance to sew them on to your sash. Here are some tips to keep everything organized.

1. Sash: Consider buying a large sash, even though the scout will be swimming in it at first. You can easily tuck in the bottom end and baste it down until he grows into it. The small sashes end up being too small by the time most scouts make Eagle. Label the sash with his name on the inside.
2. Before the scout submits his signed blue merit badge card in the wooden box, be sure he keeps his portion of it for his records.
3. Buy a three-ring binder and a pack of plastic baseball card pocket style insert pages. Staples, Office Depot, Michael's Craft and Target sell both. Put the completed blue cards in their own plastic pocket of the binder.
4. When he gets the merit badge, he should put both the accompanying title card and the badge in the same pocket as the corresponding blue card. This will keep everything organized until you are ready to put the badge on to the sash.
5. Do not throw away the signed blue cards or the title cards that come with the badge. After a few years, the scouts forget what they have earned or get them confused with similar badges. If there ever is a dispute about earning a certain badge, you have proof.
6. There is no specific order to putting badges on the sash, except that only true merit badges go on the front of the sash. Mile swim and memento badges can be put on the back of the sash. Some scouts display their Eagle-required badges down the center row of the sash; others have them separated out at the top of the sash. Many just have them sewed on in no particular order.
7. Beacon Adhesives makes a fantastic fabric glue called "Fabri-Tac, Permanent Adhesive" that is ideal for adhering merit badges or to use as a paste. It is washing machine durable, but may come off with dry cleaning. Do not use this for rank badges on the shirt, as it does not come off. The 2-oz bottle lasts a long time and can be purchased from Michael's Craft or Jo Anne's sewing supply stores. The Scout Shop also sells Badge-Magic adhesive.
8. When your scout makes Eagle, the merit badge book can be displayed along with his other scouting memorabilia.