



Kayaking Merit Badge at Riverbend Park

Welcome to the Kayaking Merit Badge program at Riverbend Park. This program is held at the Riverbend Visitor Center located at 8700 Potomac Hills Street, Great Falls, VA 22066. Alternate FCPA locations maybe used, which may be communicated to you prior or during the class. Please review your confirmation email or call the park at 703-759-9018 for location.

Important general Merit Badge information for parents:

Be sure that you are familiar with the requirements for the merit badge your scout has selected. Some badges may take considerable time and planning to complete and may not be appropriate for younger scouts. Blue cards must be signed by your Troop Leader prior to attending the merit badge class. Park staff will not sign off on any blue cards missing this signature.

Most merit badges are not designed to be completed in a single session with an instructor, so it is not always possible to walk away with a completed and signed blue card at the end of a program. Every badge requires some independent work by your scout.

FCPA-Riverbend Park will provide staff, meeting BSA Youth Protection guidelines for male and female scouts, and supervision ratios. Parent/guardian **MUST** sign-in, and sign-out each participant(s) from the class. If you provided your own transportation, you may sign-in and sign-out yourself from the class. There is no fee if adults wish to stay during the class.

Below is the recommended homework to be completed before the program:

There are some useful links at the end of some questions; however, scouts are encouraged to find their own sources (library, internet etc.).

You **MUST** provide proof of your **BSA SWIMMER TEST** at the beginning of the class. Riverbend merit badge counselors are not able to assess the skills required for the BSA Swimmer Test at the venue. Scout(s) will **NOT** be able to enter or go out on the water without a **COMPLETED** BSA Swimmer Test.

1. Do the following:
 - a. Explain to your counselor the most likely hazards you may encounter while participating in kayaking activities, including weather and water-related hazards, and what you should do to anticipate, help prevent, mitigate, and respond to these hazards.
 - b. Review prevention, symptoms, and first-aid treatment for the following injuries or illnesses that can occur while kayaking: blisters, cold-water shock and hypothermia, heat-related illnesses, dehydration, sunburn, sprains, and strains.

- c. Review the BSA Safety Afloat policy. Explain to your counselor how this applies to kayaking activities.
2. Before doing requirements 3 through 8, successfully complete the BSA swimmer test: Jump feetfirst into water over the head in depth. Level off and swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy, resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be completed in one swim without stops and must include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating.
3. Do the following:
 - a. Review the characteristics of life jackets most appropriate for kayaking and why one must always be worn while paddling. Then demonstrate how to select and fit a life jacket for kayaking.
4. Do the following:
 - a. Name and point out the major parts of a kayak.
 - b. Review the differences in the design between recreational, whitewater, and sea or touring kayaks. Include how length, width, stability, and rocker are involved in the design of each type.
 - c. Explain the care, maintenance, and storage of a kayak.
5. Discuss the following:
 - b. Parts of a paddle.

Requirements to be demonstrated, practiced and assessed during the class by counselors

5. Discuss the following:
 - a. How to use a kayak paddle
 - b. Parts of a paddle.
 - c. The care and maintenance of a paddle
6. Using a properly equipped kayak with an open cockpit, a sit-on-top, or an inflatable kayak, do the following:
 - a. Safely capsize and perform a wet exit.
 - b. Reenter the kayak with assistance from a buddy boat.
 - c. Demonstrate a kayak-over-kayak rescue.
 - d. Demonstrate the HELP position.
 - e. Capsize the kayak, swim it, and then paddle to shore, and empty water from the kayak with assistance if needed.
7. As a solo paddler, use a properly equipped kayak to demonstrate the following:
 - a. Forward stroke
 - b. Reverse stroke
 - c. Forward sweep
 - d. Reverse sweep
 - e. Draw stroke
 - f. Stern draw
8. As a solo paddler, use a properly equipped kayak to demonstrate the following:
 - a. Paddle a straight line for 15 to 20 boat lengths using appropriate strokes while maintaining trim and balance of the kayak.
 - b. Spin or pivot from a stationary position 180 degrees (half circle) to the right and left within two boat lengths.
 - c. Move abeam to the right 10 feet and to the left 10 feet.
 - d. Stop the boat in one boat length.
 - e. While maintaining forward motion, turn the kayak 90 degrees to the right and left.

- f. Move the kayak backward three to four boat lengths using appropriate and effective reverse strokes
- g. Paddle the kayak in a buoyed figure 8 course around markers three to four boat lengths apart.

What to bring to the program:

- Bring your completed homework. It is OK if you cannot complete the homework before class. You can bring completed homework in at a later date for sign-off.
- Come prepared to discuss and present your homework. As we move from one topic to the next during class, scouts will be asked to present homework elements completed. It will be more important to prove that you have understood a requirement orally rather than just presenting written information.
- Bring your blue card signed off by your Troop Leader. (Riverbend does not have blue cards.)
- Sunscreen, hat, synthetic quick drying clothing, ready for full immersion, insulating layers (fleece, wool, neoprene), rain jacket, closed toed footwear which strap to feet (NO FlipFlops or Crocs)
- Dry clothing to change into afterclass
- Bring/wear weather appropriate clothing/outerwear.
- Bring a pencil and pen.
- Bring a flashlight, if the program is held after dusk.
- Download the merit badge worksheets from meritbadge.com and bring these worksheets to class.
- Bring a food, snacks, or drinks and waterbottle. Bring more substantial food if your program is longer than four hours.

Work completed after the program:

During the program, the merit badge counselor will do a demonstration or explain the process for completing the final merit badge requirements. Your scout must provide evidence of completion in order to obtain blue card sign-off. Digital photographs of your scout doing the element and a picture of the completed requirement will be sufficient evidence, unless otherwise stated.

If your scout needs blue card sign-off after the class date, please call 703-759-9018 to arrange a time to meet with a merit badge counselor.

We're looking forward to working with your scout.

Riverbend Park

703-759-9018

8700 Potomac Hills Street

Great Falls, VA 22066

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/>