



## KAYAKING MERIT BADGE AT RIVERBEND PARK

### 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 pre-work to be completed before the program:

Please record the responses to these questions in your merit badge workbook or on a separate piece of paper **AND BRING THIS PREWORK TO CLASS.** Please attach photo evidence or any supplementary data sheets if the question requires you to provide this information. Merit badge worksheets may be downloaded from [Kayaking Merit Badge \(usscouts.org\)](http://usscouts.org) and brought to class. These worksheets help scouts organize their homework and classwork.

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. Kayaking Merit Badge at Riverbend Park
- 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.

4. Do the following:
- Name and point out the major parts of a kayak.
  - 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.
  - Explain the care, maintenance, and storage of a kayak.

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

3. Do the following:
- 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.
5. Discuss the following:
- How to use a kayak paddle
  - Parts of a paddle.
  - 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:
- Safely capsize and perform a wet exit.
  - Reenter the kayak with assistance from a buddy boat.
  - Demonstrate a kayak-over-kayak rescue.
  - Demonstrate the HELP position.
  - 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:
- Forward stroke
  - Reverse stroke
  - Forward sweep
  - Reverse sweep
  - Draw stroke
  - Stern draw
8. As a solo paddler, use a properly equipped kayak to demonstrate the following:
- Paddle a straight line for 15 to 20 boat lengths using appropriate strokes while maintaining trim and balance of the kayak.
  - Spin or pivot from a stationary position 180 degrees (half circle) to the right and left within two boat lengths.
  - Move abeam to the right 10 feet and to the left 10 feet.
  - Stop the boat in one boat length.
  - While maintaining forward motion, turn the kayak 90 degrees to the right and left.
  - Move the kayak backward three to four boat lengths using appropriate and effective reverse strokes
  - Paddle the kayak in a buoyed figure 8 course around markers three to four boat lengths apart.

## What to bring to the program:

- Your completed homework. It is OK if you cannot complete the homework before class. You can email completed homework 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.
- Your blue card signed off by your Troop Leader
- Wear weather appropriate clothing/outerwear. In the case of heavy rain or thunderstorms, this class will be canceled or rescheduled
- Sunscreen, hat, synthetic quick drying clothing (ready for full immersion) closed toed footwear which strap to feet (NO Flip Flops or Crocs)
- A towel and dry clothing to change into after class
- You may wear your scout uniform but it is NOT required.
- Pencil, pen, or some sort of writing utensil.
- Download the merit badge worksheets from [meritbadge.com](http://meritbadge.com) and bring these worksheets to class with your prework written in them. We usually will not require the scouts to fill out every part of this workbook during the merit badge but they can use it to take notes while listening to the lecture.
- Flashlight, if the program is held after dusk.
- Bring a water and snack and a lunch if you think you may need it as many of these sessions are very long and run past normal lunch hours.

## WHAT NOT TO BRING:

Merit badges are a place for learning and require the same attention and respect as would be expected in a school setting. In order for your scout to be successful and stay on task, the following items should stay at home or in backpacks and will not be permitted during the program:

- Weapons of any kind are strictly prohibited and will be confiscated and may or may not be returned. Depending on the type of weapon, further disciplinary or legal action may be pursued. Exceptions include camping or fishing tools/knives as long as they stay concealed and are used appropriately.
- Vapes, E-cigarettes, & other nicotine products are illegal for anyone under 21 years of age to possess. They are strictly prohibited and will be confiscated and not returned.
- Handheld gaming systems such as a DS or a Switch are not permitted and will be confiscated and given back at the close of the program.
- Cell phones ARE PERMITTED for emergency use and/or contacting parents & guardians but if they become a distraction they may be confiscated.
- Toys, books, games, or anything deemed a distraction during the program will be confiscated and returned at the end. Exceptions include quiet and inconspicuous fidget toys. If your scout has accommodations that would require them to use fidget toys to focus please let us know before the program.

- Headphones/Air pods are not allowed but we understand that these devices can be helpful for some people with sensory processing disorders. Again, if your scout has accommodations that would require them to use headphones please let us know before the program.

**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, your merit badge counselor will let you know how to contact them with remaining requirements. Please call the park at 703-759-9018 to arrange a time to meet with a merit badge counselor or email your counselor directly.

Thank you and we look forward to working with your Scout!

**Casey Tinius**

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