

Experience Tells Us

In years past, one of the comments made by Scoutmasters in their evaluation suggested the need for a section telling about "experience has shown us that..." this is a collection of what experience has taught us regarding merit badges and advancement.

- Summer camp is NOT a merit badge mill, where you pay a fee and get badges, automatically. Instead, camp offers merit badges as one portion of the overall program.
- The first year Scout, generally speaking, should try to earn not more than two – four merit badges (and one of these should be a handicraft badge). Others will argue this point. We won't argue: we'll let the boy earn as many badges as he wants, but experience shows us that.
- You should plan on a maximum of four merit badges per week per Scout.
- The most difficult merit badges to earn are those requiring a great deal of physical skill, coordination and stamina: lifesaving, rifle/shotgun and archery.
- Complete all advance written work at home. Camp is not an ideal classroom for written work and the prepared Scout comes to camp with all written work already done and prerequisites already met such as CPR for lifesaving.
- Boys should try doing something new at camp and get a well-rounded experience. Try a handicraft badge, a nature badge and an aquatic or Scoutcraft badge combination.
- Plan time for your Scouts and yourself to enjoy the South Florida area. We highly recommend that you visit Jupiter Lighthouse, or the House of Refuge in Stuart, Florida. See the Program Director for detailed touring information.
- You should come to camp prepared. Have patrols already organized. Work on ideas as patrols and have the senior patrol leaders represent the group at camp. Come with your own activities planned and let us aid you where you need help.
- Your campsite is your home for the week so work at making it comfortable by bringing banners and flags to dress it up.
- You should schedule time for rest! That's right. Too often, you don't take time to sit and enjoy the beauty of camp around you. Don't keep such a pace that you miss the trees, the nature, and the clean, fresh air.
- Top troops show spirit--the troop that comes to camp with ideas and spirit, challenges the rest of the camp to come alive. Bring your troop cheer to camp and show everyone that you're number one.
- Be flexible. Each week, up to 400 Scouts attend camp and while the staff is there to meet everyone's needs, we all must practice the Scout law in camp when dealing with others.

- Communicate: If you have a special need or want to do something spectacular, tell us about it and we'll give it our best shot. Remember some things take time and you may need to call ahead.
- Advise Scouts to leave valuables with a leader. Watches, spending money, etc. should not be left in the shower room or in an unattended campsite. Forewarned is forearmed!
- Scoutmasters should bring a footlocker or other lockable container to protect both Scouts and leaders valuables.
- One last thing, we want to make this the best camp in the state. If you have any questions, we'll gladly listen to you and your ideas.