

Personal Management Merit Badge

Updated: 9/7/26

- **ALL requirements except for requirement 2 must be handed in prior to the first class.**

Important information about how to prepare for the merit badge

Parents, please review the content of a merit badge prior to registering your Scout: some badges may be challenging for younger Scouts. Also, the class discussions are more interesting if Scouts review *all* the requirements for the badge before the program. The chances of your scout completing all the work for the badge increases dramatically when they are properly motivated and the badge content is age-appropriate. Personal Management is complex and academic in nature and will be easier for Scouts older than 13 years of age to complete.

Merit badges are not designed to be completed in a day and require independent work on the part of the Scout outside of the workshop. We call these prerequisites. We suggest this is done prior to the badge program date, but we realize this is not always practical or possible, in these cases we will credit the badge as a partial and accept the assignments after the program. More information on prerequisites is on the following page(s).

Parents and Leaders: The Scout must individually do the requirements. They may not answer the requirements as a group and copying from others will result in the requirements not being accepted. You may assist with resources, but you nor anyone else may not answer any of the requirements for the Scout.

It is the Scout's responsibility to answer the requirements. NOT THE PARENT

A Scout may use a parent's email account to submit requirement answers BUT:

It is NOT the parent's responsibility to scan in a Scout's work and send it to me

That is the Scout's responsibility

Parents are not to act as an agent of the Scout. All assignments must be completed by the Scout and if there are issues, the Scout must communicate those to me.

The Internet may be needed for this badge: Always be sure to have proper permission before using the internet. To learn about appropriate behavior and etiquette while online, View the Personal Safety Awareness "Digital Safety" video (with your parent or guardian's permission). Follow this link to the Personal Safety Awareness videos. <https://www.scouting.org/training/youth/scouts-bsa/>

IMPORTANT: For full credit for the badge, evidence of the requirements, as explained below, must be sent to: bill.nelson@scouting.org

The merit badge will be held in two sessions about 2 hours long each.

All Scouts should be working on the requirements now, and send requirement 2a and 2b to me immediately Please carefully follow the instructions here on how to complete the prerequisites.

Watch this video on how to get some of the prerequisites done correctly before attempting the prerequisites:

https://youtu.be/UI4os7LN_Qw

Though not required, Scout workbooks are very useful and we prefer that Scouts use the workbook during the program. A workbook can be found at: https://scoutingevent.com/Download/010133869/OR/Personal_Management_MB_Workbook_with_Templates.pdf **HINT, this badge is much easier for you if you use the workbook at the bottom of the page that is linked, and you will give me what I am looking for.**

About blue cards: We will utilize Scoutbook.com and record requirement completion online. Blue cards can be printed by parents and unit leaders in Scoutbook by clicking on the Scout, the Scout's advancement, the merit badge, and print blue cards.

Personal Management Requirements

TYPE OR WRITE LEGIBLY AND WHERE NOT ASKED FOR A LIST, IN COMPLETE SENTENCES.

PUT YOUR NAME IN EMAILS TO ME AND IN ALL ATTACHMENTS

READ THE REQUIREMENTS CAREFULLY, YOU MUST ANSWER THE REQUIREMENTS AND PROVIDE WHAT IS BEING ASKED FOR.

COPY A PARENT OR GUARDIAN IN ALL CORRESPONDENCE

1. Do the following:

- (a) Choose an item that your family might want to purchase that is considered a major expense. (discuss in the workbook or a word document)

What Is a Major Expense?

Major purchases require careful thought because they involve a large amount of money and affect the whole family. Before buying something expensive, families must decide what is truly needed, what can wait, and how the purchase fits into their overall financial situation.

A major expense is something that:

- Costs a significant amount of money
- Requires saving over time
- Is not a daily need like food or basic clothing

Examples of a Major Expense

- Home
- Television
- Family computer
- Appliance (washer, refrigerator)
- Vacation or trip
- Car

- (b) Write a plan that tells how your family would save money for the purchase identified in requirement 1a. (discuss in the workbook or a word document, **and be prepared to discuss in class.**)

- (1) Discuss the plan with your merit badge counselor.
- (2) Discuss the plan with your family.
- (3) Discuss how other family needs must be considered in this plan.

- (c) Develop a written shopping strategy for the purchase identified in requirement 1a.

- (1) Determine the quality of the item or service (using consumer publications or ratings systems). (discuss in the workbook or a word document)
- (2) Comparison shop for the item. Find out where you can buy the item for the best price. (Provide prices from at least two different price sources.) Call around; study ads. Look for a sale or discount coupon. Consider alternatives. Can you buy the item used? Should you wait for a sale? (discuss in the workbook or a word document)

2. Do the following:

The purpose of this requirement is that you predict what your income and expenses will be in the next 13 weeks; this is called a budget. Then after I approve your budget, you track your actual income and expenses for 13 weeks. Finally, at the end, you determine how well you predicted. Budgeting well is a life skill that will allow you to accurately predict how much money you will need for your needs in the future.

- (a) **THIS SHOULD BE DONE PRIOR TO BEGINNING THE 13 WEEK TRACKING (2c):** Prepare a budget reflecting your expected income (allowance, gifts, wages), expenses, and savings **for a period of 13 consecutive weeks**. This is your expectation of what will happen in the next 13 weeks, not the past. **HINT: Use the Budget Plan template at the bottom of the workbook:**

https://scoutingevent.com/Download/010133869/OR/Personal_Management_MB_Workbook_with_Templates.pdf

A budget is like a plan for your money. It's a way to figure out how much money you're going to get, how much you're going to spend, and how much you can save over a specific time—like the next 13 weeks for your Personal Merit Badge requirement 2a. Think of it like making a game plan before you play a video game: you're guessing what's coming and planning how to use your resources.

Since this budget is for the future (the next 13 weeks), you're not using real numbers yet because those things haven't happened. Instead, you're making your best guess about what you expect to happen. These are called projections, not actuals, because you're predicting what you think will go down.

Here's what you need to include:

- **Expected Income:** This is all the money you think you'll get over the 13 weeks. Include everything, like:
 - **Allowance:** If your parents give you \$10 a week, that's income.
 - **Gifts:** If you know you're getting birthday cash or holiday money, add that in.
 - **Wages:** If you mow lawns or do chores for neighbors, estimate how much you'll earn.
 - **Lunch Money:** If your parents give you money for lunch at school, that counts as income when you get it. (But when you spend it on lunch, it becomes an expense—more on that below.)
- For example, if you get \$10 a week for allowance and \$5 a week for lunch, that's \$15 a week total. Over 13 weeks, that's $\$15 \times 13 = \195 of income.*

- **Expenses:** This is the money you plan to spend. Think about what you usually spend money on, like:
 - **Lunch Money:** If you spend that \$5 a week on lunch, that's an expense.
 - **Snacks or Drinks:** Maybe you buy a soda or candy sometimes.
 - **Games or Hobbies:** If you're saving up for a new video game or buying stuff for a hobby, include that.
 - **Other Stuff:** Maybe you go to the movies or buy clothes. Estimate what you'll spend.

So, if you spend \$5 a week on lunch, that's $\$5 \times 13 = \65 in expenses over 13 weeks.

- **Savings:** This is what's left after you subtract your expenses from your income. It's the money you can put aside for something big later, like a new phone or just to have some extra cash. For example, if you expect \$195 in income and \$65 in expenses, your savings would be $\$195 - \$65 = \$130$.

Key Points to Remember:

- **It's a Prediction:** Since you're planning for the next 13 weeks, you're guessing based on what usually happens. If you're not sure, ask your parents or think about what you've spent money on before.
- **Track Everything:** Don't forget little things like lunch money—it's both income (when you get it) and an expense (when you spend it).
- **Be Realistic:** If you usually get \$10 a week, don't put down \$50 unless you know you're getting extra cash from somewhere.

To make your budget, grab a notebook or use a spreadsheet. List out:

- Month 1 to Month 3.
- For each month, write down your expected income (like allowance or lunch money), expenses (like lunch or snacks), and what's left for savings.
- Add it all up at the end to see the big picture for the 13 weeks (3 months.)

Need more help on what a budget is? See the short video here: <https://youtu.be/CbhjhWleKGE?si=ps8y-y-L0FD1hoQm>
It looks something like the following:

Example Budget Plan

	Month 1			Month 2			Month 3		
Income Sources	Budget	Actual	Over/Under	Budget	Actual	Over/Under	Budget	Actual	Over/Under
Allowance	20.00			20.00			20.00		
Gifts	16.00								
Wages	80.00			80.00			80.00		
Other	10.00			12.00			12.00		
Income Totals	126.00			112.00			112.00		
Expenses									
Savings-pay yourself 1st	25.00			42.00			42.00		
Donations/Charity	15.00			10.00			10.00		
Food/Meals out	20.00			25.00			25.00		
Clothing	30.00								
Entertainment/Movies	16.00			10.00			10.00		

(b) THIS SHOULD BE DONE PRIOR TO THE 13 WEEK TRACKING Compare expected income with expected expenses.

- (1) If expenses exceed budget income, determine steps to balance your budget.
- (2) If income exceeds budget expenses, state how you would use the excess money (new goal, savings).

(c) **Track and record your actual income, expenses, and savings for 13 consecutive weeks (the same 13-week period for which you budgeted).** (You may use the forms provided in this pamphlet, devise your own, or use a computer-generated version.) When complete, present the records showing the results to your merit badge counselor. (record in the workbook or a word document) **Hint: Use the Table for tracking your actual income, expenses, and savings at the end of the workbook, it looks like this:**

Personal Management

Scout's Name: _____

Example of tracking actual income, expenses, and savings

Date	Description of Daily Income or Expense	Category	Income	Expense	Balance
Week 1			Opening Balance		15.00
6/20/2020	Movie with friends	Entertainment		8.50	6.50
6/22/2020	Lunch at school	Food		4.25	2.25
6/24/2020	3 hours working at restaurant last week	Job	18.00		20.25
6/25/2020	Money from mom	Allowance	5.00		25.25
Week 2					
6/29/2020	Lunch at school	Food		4.25	21.00

(d) Compare your budget with your actual income and expenses to understand when your budget worked and when it did not work. With your merit badge counselor, discuss what you might do differently the next time. (discuss in the workbook or a word document)

3. Discuss with your merit badge counselor FIVE of the following concepts:

- (a) The emotions you feel when you receive money.
- (b) Your understanding of how the amount of money you have with you affects your spending habits.
- (c) Your thoughts when you buy something new and your thoughts about the same item three months later. Explain the concept of buyer's remorse. (Buyer's remorse is a feeling of regret or anxiety after making a purchase, often a significant one like a car or home.)
- (d) How hunger affects you when shopping for food items (snacks, groceries).
- (e) Your experience of an item you have purchased after seeing or hearing advertisements for it. Did the item work as well as advertised?
- (f) Your understanding of what happens when you put money into a savings account.
- (g) Charitable giving. Explain its purpose and your thoughts about it.
- (h) What you can do to better manage your money.

(Discuss in the workbook or a word document) **BE PREPARED TO ALSO DISCUSS IN THE FIRST CLASS.**

4. Explain the following to your merit badge counselor:

- a. The differences between saving and investing, including reasons for using one over the other. See video here: <https://youtu.be/DcFKLOWsSRg?si=iOOnZTJwZqcgY7w7>
- b. The concepts of return on investment and risk and how they are related. See the video here: <https://youtu.be/Zv8j1noeu-A?si=qQe-8tgQeNRm2xXI>
- c. The concepts of simple interest and compound interest. See the video here: https://youtu.be/wf91rEGw88Q?si=7d6C_DUcRQnKOLWC
- d. The concept of diversification in investing. See the video here: <https://youtu.be/dvWj31UwjpA?si=LP2C4wq2Z4FIERSE>
- e. Why it is important to save and invest for retirement. See video here: https://youtu.be/AyGuf03upTU?si=A11EtUIP7ir_Li17

(Discuss in the workbook or a word document) **BE PREPARED TO ALSO DISCUSS IN THE FIRST CLASS.**

5. Explain to your merit badge counselor what the following investments are and how each works:

- a. Common stocks,
see video here: <https://youtu.be/JrGp4ofULzQ?si=YxeqlzIF501OJjo5>
- b. Mutual funds
see video here: https://youtu.be/TPS22HRRY1k?si=IEplt_MaSDb6hw9m
- c. Life insurance
see the video here: <https://youtu.be/Fw4CaHUYAvU?si=JyURk99PKFhQapwK>
- d. A certificate of deposit (CD)
see the video here: <https://youtu.be/re5OdNEXwtk?si=hZy1x3MePIYTuMda>
- e. A savings account
see the video here: <https://youtu.be/iZGlicA3G24?si=a-hVJNwZBAxNRI-c>
- f. A U.S. savings bond
see the video here: <https://youtu.be/zguHA04OYIk?si=HuF4J0BzLBVY0JOY>

(Discuss in the workbook or a word document) **BE PREPARED TO ALSO DISCUSS IN THE FIRST CLASS.**

6. Explain to your counselor why people might purchase the following types of insurance and how they work:

- a. Automobile
see information here: <https://youtu.be/yh7QbUxOApY?si=FOTaGfxOxYH78U>
- b. Health – see information here: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/nsa-health-insurance-basics.pdf>
- c. Homeowner's/renter's
Homeowners insurance info: <https://youtu.be/a18d456Y0RQ?si=YI2jxUyxdydy6vHU>
Renters - <https://youtu.be/4OqTHCOHWhc?si=S0dgtxbx7DZUIFLc>
- d. Whole life and term life - <https://youtu.be/LkRZdPvFpsi?si=kqXQWYrwSthdIsL1>

(Discuss in the workbook or a word document) **BE PREPARED TO ALSO DISCUSS IN THE FIRST CLASS.**

7. Explain to your merit badge counselor the following:

- a. What a loan is, what interest is, and how the annual percentage rate (APR) measures the true cost of a loan.
see video: <https://youtu.be/OO6Wg1CPgPw?si=xuUjkmDWNhDECP6j>
- b. The different ways to borrow money. See the video here: <https://youtu.be/L7zXxgEZ1pg?si=CSmN7YP1ddFGyJkt>

- c. The differences between a charge card, debit card, and credit card. What are the costs and pitfalls of using these financial tools? Explain why it is unwise to make only the minimum payment on your credit card.
See video here: <https://youtu.be/sm0FzHMIInig?si=P3stfSmdRRo6MfMb>
charge card info here: <https://youtu.be/wqcqQrW2q7U?si=5e6Je1UZvDzn8VU>
- d. Credit reports and how personal responsibility can affect your credit report.
see video here: <https://youtu.be/dwIGfhgKOc?si=H0jouu6yR25JJaNN>
- e. Ways to reduce or eliminate debt.
see video here: <https://youtu.be/CHiOBzqcMV8?si=1nVr9mtJK2cUglzE>

(Discuss in the workbook or a word document) **BE PREPARED TO ALSO DISCUSS IN THE FIRST CLASS.**

8. In this requirement you will make a 7 day schedule of your activities, and then track your activities for 7 days to see how well you planned out your time. This is called time management. Being able to create good schedules and stick to them is a life skill that will help make your life more organized and alleviate a lot of the last minute stress that can be a part of everyone's life.

Demonstrate to your merit badge counselor your understanding of time management by doing the following: (discuss in the workbook or a word document) **ALSO BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR MERIT BADGE COUNSELOR.**

- (a) Write a "to do" list of tasks or activities, such as homework assignments, chores, and personal projects, that must be done in the coming week. List these in order of importance to you.
- (b) Make a seven-day calendar or schedule. Put in your set activities, such as school classes, sports practices or games, jobs or chores, and/or Scout or place of worship or club meetings, then plan when you will do all the tasks from your "to do" list between your set activities.

Actual Results	TotalTime	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Homework	4 hrs		2 hrs	1 hr	1 hr			
Home chores	3 hrs						3 hrs	
Personal Mgmt MB	2 hrs	30 min		15 min	15 min	20 min		15 min
Work at Corkys	3.5 hrs					3.5 hrs		
Science Project	1 hr				1 hr			
Movie with friends	5 hrs	5 hrs						

- (c) Follow the one-week schedule you planned. Keep a daily diary or journal during each of the seven days of this week's activities, writing down when you completed each of the tasks on your "to do" list compared to when you scheduled them. **I need to see a diary or a journal, not just hash marks on a table! A daily diary or journal is a narrative for each day on how you met your schedule.**



- (d) With your merit badge counselor, review your "to do" list, one-week schedule, and diary/journal to understand when your schedule worked and when it did not work. Discuss what you might do differently the next time. (Discuss in the workbook or a word document) **BE PREPARED TO ALSO DISCUSS IN CLASS.**

9. Prepare a written project plan demonstrating the steps below, including the desired outcome. This is a project on paper, not a real-life project. Examples could include planning a camping trip, developing a community service project or a school or religious event, or creating an annual patrol plan with additional activities not already included in the troop annual plan. Discuss your completed project plan with your merit badge counselor. [NOTE: You do not have to actually conduct the project. This is a planning exercise only.] (discuss in the workbook or a word document) **HINT: See the examples at the end of the workbook**

- (a) Define the project. What is your goal?
- (b) Develop a timeline for your project that shows the steps you must take from beginning to completion.
- (c) Describe your project.
- (d) Develop a list of resources. Identify how these resources will help you achieve your goal. (your list should include supplies, materials, people, tools, and transportation items.
- (e) Develop a budget for your project.

(Discuss in the workbook or a word document)

10. Do the following: (discuss in the workbook or a word document)

In this requirement you will look into the future and select a carrier you might want to have after school. You will look at how much money you might need to get started in that carrier, and think about how you might be able to pay for it.

(a) Choose a career you might want to enter after high school or college graduation. Discuss with your counselor the needed qualifications, education, skills, and experience.

(b) Explain what the associated costs might be to pursue this career, such as tuition, school or training supplies, and room and board. **Break out the individual costs, in dollars, and give a total for all years needed.** Explain how you could prepare for these costs and how you might make up for any shortfall.

For Personal Management Merit Badge 10b, you need to estimate the costs of preparing for a career (like education or training) and explain how to pay for the costs. Let's use becoming a software engineer (4-year college degree) as an example.

Costs (4-Year Public College, In-State):

- Tuition/Fees: \$11,260/year = \$45,040 total
- Supplies (books, laptop): \$1,750/year = \$7,000 total
- Room/Board (dorm, meals): \$12,680/year = \$50,720 total
- Other (transport, personal): \$3,200/year = \$12,800 total
- Total for 4 Years: \$115,560

How to Prepare:

- Save Early: Save allowance or job money (\$3,000 by college start).
- Scholarships/Grants: Apply for scholarships (\$5,000/year) and grants (\$7,000/year).
- Part-Time Job: Earn \$3,000/year working summers or part-time.
- Family Help: Parents might cover \$5,000/year.

Covering Shortfalls:

- Loans: Borrow \$8,140/year (\$32,560 total) if needed, but repay with interest.
- Cut Costs: Use used books, share housing, cook meals.
- More Scholarships: Apply for local or tech-related scholarships.

Total Covered: Scholarships (\$20,000) + Grants (\$28,000) + Savings/Job (\$15,000) + Family (\$20,000) = \$83,000. Shortfall: \$32,560 (cover with loans or extra work).

Tips: Start saving now, research cheaper schools (like community college), and talk to your family about costs. Adjust numbers for your career!

(Discuss in the workbook or a word document)