

Trail to First Class Participant Guide 2026

Pioneer Express District • Merit Badge Saturday

Welcome! This course gives Scouts an opportunity to learn, practice, and demonstrate essential Scouting skills while working toward advancement from Scout Rank through First Class. Each participant will receive a Trail to First Class scorecard listing applicable rank requirements. Course staff will initial or sign the scorecard as Scouts successfully complete requirements during the course.

Please remember: Completing a skill or activity during Trail to First Class does not automatically mean that every requirement can be signed off. Some requirements specifically require a Scout to complete an activity during an actual campout, hike, outing, or other qualifying Scouting experience. Your Scoutmaster or another leader authorized by your troop will make the final determination and record advancement according to your troop's advancement program. Most importantly, have fun, ask questions, practice your skills, and enjoy the opportunity to learn

Requirements that will be covered:

Scout rank: 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1f, 4a, 4b, 5

Tenderfoot rank: 1c, 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 4a, 4b, 4c, 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d

Second Class Rank: 1b, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2f, 2g, 3a, 3c, 3d, 6a, 6b, 6c, 6d, 6e, 8b

First Class Rank: 1b, 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 4a, 4b, 7a, 7b, 7c, 7d, 7e, 7f

What to Bring

- Scout Handbook
- Pen or pencil
- Camp chair
- Water bottle
- Compass
- Personal first-aid kit
- Pocketknife **AND** Totin' Chip
- Firem'n Chit
- A positive attitude and willingness to participate

Participants will work on and learn the following as needed:

Knots & Lashings

- Square knot
- Two half-hitches
- Taut-line hitch
- Sheet bend
- Bowline
- Whipping and fusing rope
- Timber hitch
- Clove hitch
- Square lashing
- Shear lashing
- Diagonal lashings

Knife, Saw & Axe

- Safe pocketknife use
- Safe saw use
- Safe axe/hatchet use
- Proper carrying and handling
- Establishing a safety circle
- Cutting safely
- Choosing the correct tool
- Tool care
- Sharpening

Reminder: Scouts must bring their Totin' Chip and personal pocket knife for this station. Scouts may not participate at this station without their Totin' Chip.

Fire & Stoves

- When a fire is appropriate
- Fire restrictions and safety
- Selecting tinder, kindling, and fuel
- Building a minimum-impact fire
- Safely extinguishing a fire
- Lightweight stove operation
- Propane stove operation

Reminder: Fire activities are always subject to current fire restrictions, site rules, and Scouting America safety requirements. Fireman's Chit is required for this station. Scouts must have this with them in order to participate at this station.

First Aid & Emergency Preparedness

- Treating common injuries
- Burns, bites, and wounds
- Severe bleeding
- Shock
- Heat and cold emergencies
- Choking
- Emergency communication
- Bandaging
- Splinting
- Emergency transport
- CPR
- Vehicle accident response
- Utility emergencies
- Emergency preparedness

And Navigation

- Reading a map
- Orienting a map
- Using a compass
- Identifying map symbols
- Taking directions
- Navigating with a map and compass
- Recognizing hiking hazards
- Finding directions without electronics
- Using GPS

Outdoor Ethics & Safety

- Outdoor Code
- Leave No Trace
- Buddy system
- What to do if you become lost
- Safe hiking practices
- Choosing durable surfaces
- Reducing environmental impact

Flags, Citizenship & Scout Skills

- Scout salute
- Proper flag handling
- Raising and lowering the flag
- Folding the U.S. flag
- Showing proper respect for the flag
- Scout Oath and Law
- Scout Motto and slogan
- Scout sign, salute, and handshake
- First Class badge
- Teaching EDGE

Questions? Contact: Chelsea Carlson, District Program Chair
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