

Bugling Merit Badge Requirements and Recommendations

Experience Requirement – Due to the one-day format, Scouts must meet at least one of the following:

- B♭ Trumpet/cornet player: 2+ years' experience. Ability to comfortably and consistently play G above the staff repeatedly throughout a 30-minute practice session.
- F horn player: 3+ years' experience. Ability to comfortably and consistently play A above the staff repeatedly throughout a 30-minute practice session.

Equipment Requirement – Must have or obtain a trumpet, cornet, or bugle to use for practice in advance and must bring it to the merit badge class. School band directors may be able to help with loaner or rental options. If a Scout wants to purchase a bugle, the counselor recommends the [Scoutbugle Centennial](#). It includes a soft case and a trumpet-style mouthpiece that is easier to play than a bugle mouthpiece for \$235 including shipping. Please contact the counselor in accordance with Youth Protection requirements before purchasing a bugle other than a Scoutbugle to verify whether it is a suitable instrument.

Practice Requirement – 4-6 weeks of practice before the merit badge class is strongly recommended. Scouts should be able to play the first ten calls we'll be learning (see Calls below) at an average of 75-80% accuracy at reduced speed, with 90-100% accuracy for the easier calls, by the start of class. Music and a recommended practice schedule will be emailed to Scouts after registering.

The written notation is for bugles in G (C – G – C – E – G). B♭ Trumpet and cornet players should play all notes with 1-2 fingering (normally written A – E – A – C♯ – E for B♭ instruments) to match the G bugle. The Army M1892 specification bugle, which was adopted as the design for the official BSA bugles in 1925, is a G bugle. Note that many of the recordings linked to on [Bugling Merit Badge Requirements](#) are played on B♭ bugles. A Scout with a trumpet or cornet would need to play with open valves to match the key. This pushes the range 1.5 steps higher, increasing difficulty and lip fatigue. Unless a Scout can comfortably and consistently play up to the G note above the staff, I recommend practicing in G, keeping valves 1-2 pressed. We will be playing in G in class for consistency and ease of learning.

Recommended Books – [Five-Minute Guaranteed Bugle Course](#) – Includes good instruction and practice exercises. [Bugling for Scouts: A Guide for Troop Buglers](#) – includes history, blank staff pages for requirement 2b, practical information on the Bugler role in Scouting, how to serve as a bugler in ceremonies, and the best information on care and cleaning. These books have better information than the Music and Bugling merit badge pamphlet.

Prerequisites – 2b, 6. Note that for 6, the Scouts BSA Handbook states that a troop Bugler must know the required bugle calls. A Scout who can't play the calls can't perform the functions expected of a Bugler and therefore shouldn't serve as at troop Bugler until after learning the calls. Unless a Scout can already play at least 10 calls accurately, the Scout should wait to begin serving as Bugler until completion of the merit badge class. Once the Scout has served as Bugler for three months, contact the counselor in accordance with Youth Protection requirements to document completion.

Calls - We will learning the following calls in class: Assembly, Mess Call, Drill Call, Taps, Officers Call, Fatigue Call, Fire Call, Recall, First Call, and Reveille. We will use The Scouts' Call as part of warm ups. We will work on To the Color and Retreat if time permits.

If a Scout wants to substitute Call to Quarters, Church Call, or Swimming for any of the calls we'll be working on in class, that is allowed. However, the Scout should come prepared to play the call accurately without group practice.

Bugling Merit Badge – Tier 1: Easiest

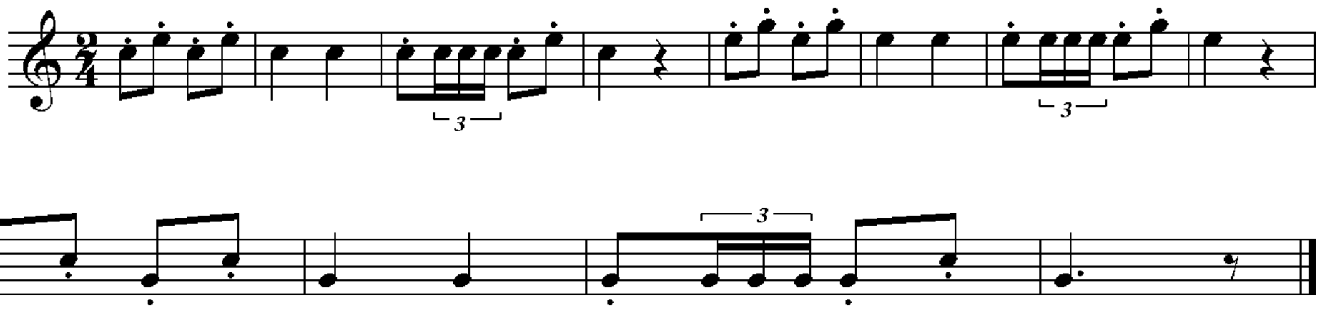
The Scouts' Call – Historic call no longer included in Bugling requirements



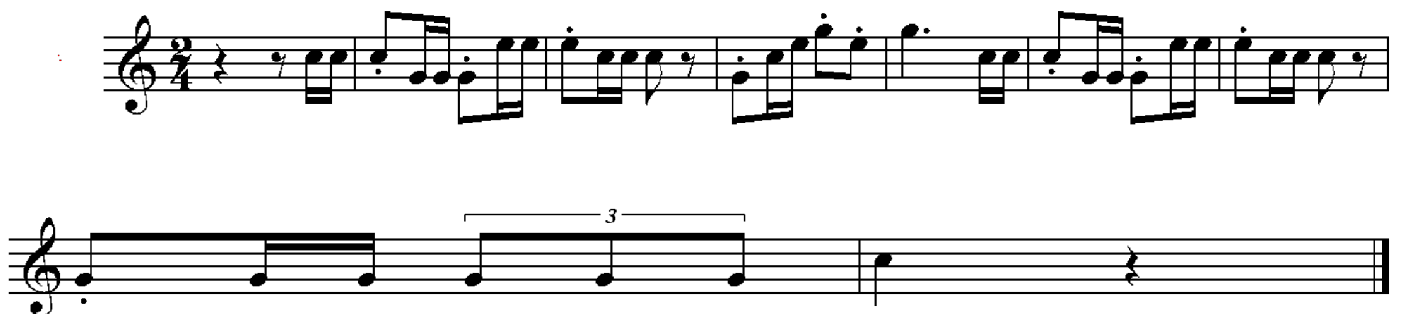
Assembly



Mess Call



Drill Call



Bugling Merit Badge – Tier 2: Simple but Structured

Taps



Officers Call

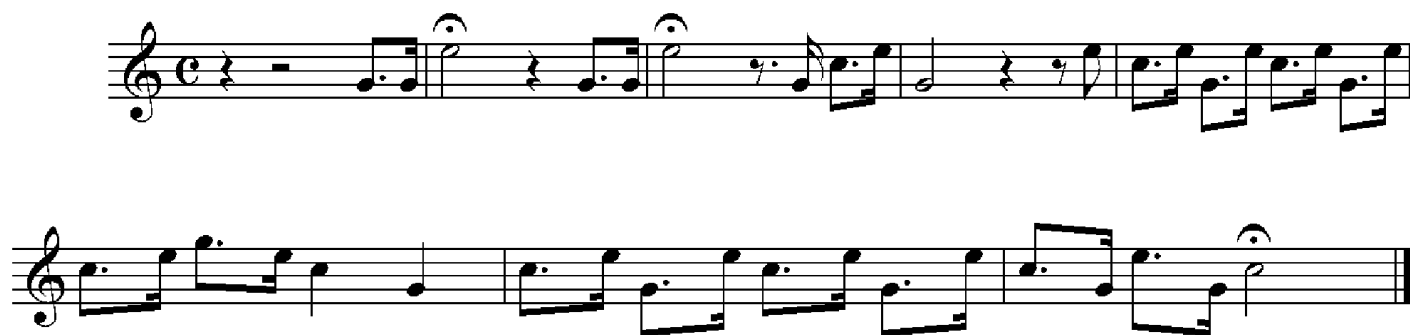


Fatigue Call



Bugling Merit Badge – Tier 3: Moderate Difficulty

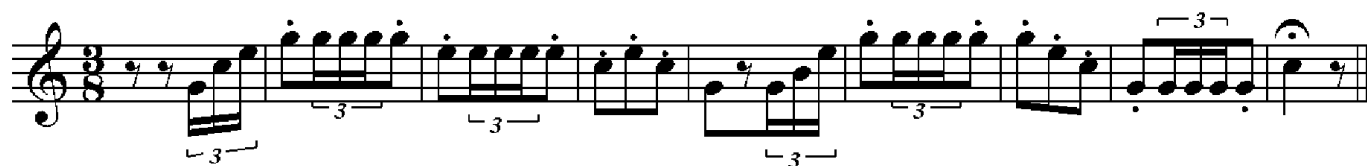
Fire Call



Recall

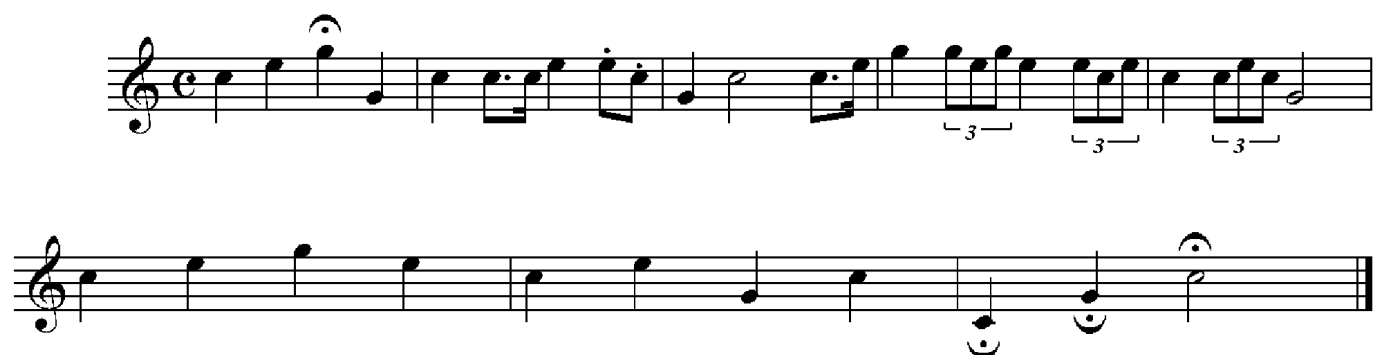


First Call

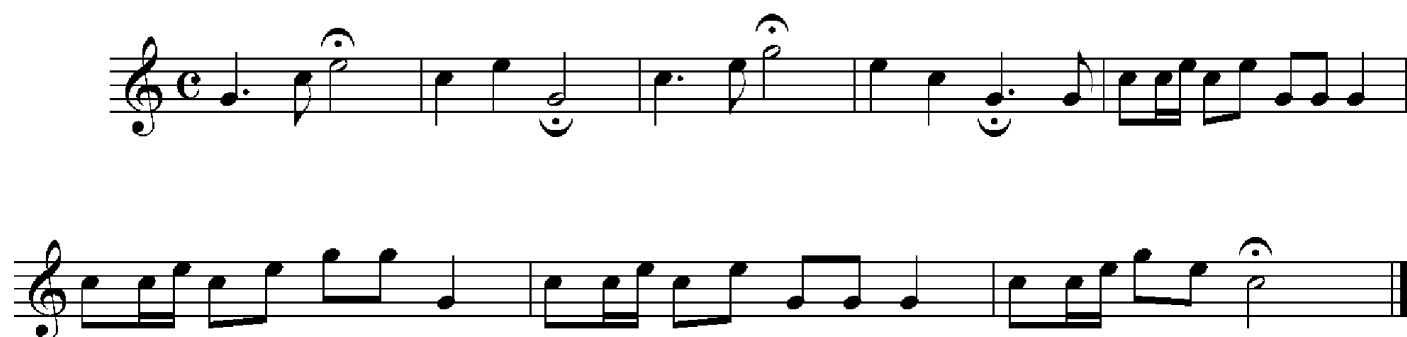


Bugling Merit Badge – Tier 4: Upper Moderate Difficulty

Call to Quarters



Church Call



Swimming



Bugling Merit Badge – Tier 5: Advanced Difficulty

Retreat



Reveille



Bugling Merit Badge – Tier 6: Capstone

To the Color

