

# Feast your eyes on the new requirements for Cooking merit badge

18 December 2013



The sound of the kitchen timer can only mean one thing: The new Cooking merit badge requirements are done.

For the new Cooking merit badge, which becomes Eagle-required on Jan. 1, 2014, Scouts will prepare meals using the MyPlate food guide, understand and explain food allergies, and learn about cooking food indoors.

This is important: there are two big, separate changes to Cooking merit badge as you know it. The first is that Cooking merit badge will become Eagle-required beginning Jan. 1, 2014. The second is the new requirements, found below, which become mandatory for Scouts who begin the merit badge on or after Jan. 1, 2015.

The new Cooking pamphlets will be in Scout Shops by the end of January 2014. From now until Dec. 31, 2014, a Scout may use the old or new requirements — his choice. All Scouts beginning Cooking merit badge on or after Jan. 1, 2015, must use the new requirements.

Let me break it down:

- **Scouts who already started Cooking MB using old requirements:** They're fine and may finish with the old requirements. They *will not* need to re-earn the merit badge with the new requirements, but they may switch to the new ones if they choose. There is no time limit between starting and completing a badge, although a counselor may determine so much time has passed since any effort took place that the new requirements must be used.
- **Scouts who already earned Cooking MB:** They may purchase or be presented with the new, silver-bordered Cooking MB patch (regardless which requirements were involved). They don't need to re-earn it now that it's Eagle-required. But they can't wear both the green- and the silver-bordered versions.
- **Scouts who begin Cooking MB in 2013 or 2014:** They may use the old or new requirements — their choice.
- **Scouts who begin Cooking MB in 2015 or beyond:** They must use the new requirements.

Make sense? Think of 2014 as a transition period for the merit badge. During this time, you'll find both pamphlets in Scout Shops, and a boy may choose which to use. It's easy to tell them apart:



## The new Cooking merit badge requirements

### Requirements

1. Do the following:
  1. Explain to your counselor the most likely hazards you may encounter while participating in cooking activities and what you should do to anticipate, help prevent, mitigate, and respond to these hazards.
  2. Show that you know first aid for and how to prevent injuries or illnesses that could occur while preparing meals and eating, including burns and scalds, cuts, choking, and allergic reactions.
  3. Describe how meat, fish, chicken, eggs, dairy products, and fresh vegetables should be stored, transported, and properly prepared for cooking. Explain how to prevent cross-contamination.
  4. Describe the following food-related illnesses and tell what you can do to help prevent each from happening:
    1. Salmonella
    2. Staphylococcal aureus
    3. Escherichia coli (E. coli)
    4. Clostridium botulinum (Botulism)
    5. Campylobacter jejuni
    6. Hepatitis
    7. Listeria monocytogenes
    8. Cryptosporidium
    9. Norovirus
  5. Discuss with your counselor food allergies, food intolerance, food-related diseases, and your awareness of these concerns.
2. Do the following:
  1. Using the MyPlate food guide or the current USDA nutrition model, give five examples for EACH of the following food groups, the recommended number of daily servings, and the recommended serving size:
    1. Fruits
    2. Vegetables
    3. Grains
    4. Proteins
    5. Dairy

2. Explain why you should limit your intake of oils and sugars.
  3. Determine your daily level of activity and your caloric need based on your activity level. Then, based on the MyPlate food guide, discuss with your counselor an appropriate meal plan for yourself for one day.
  4. Discuss your current eating habits with your counselor and what you can do to eat healthier, based on the MyPlate food guide.
3. Do the following:
    1. Discuss the following food label terms: calorie, fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrate, dietary fiber, sugar, protein. Explain how to calculate total carbohydrates and nutritional values for two servings, based on the serving size specified on the label.
    2. Refer to “How to Read a Food Label” in the Cooking merit badge pamphlet, and name ingredients that help the consumer identify the following allergens: peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, wheat, soy, and shellfish.
  4. Do the following:
    1. Discuss EACH of the following cooking methods. For each one, describe the equipment needed and name at least one food that can be cooked using that method: baking, boiling, pan frying, simmering, steaming, microwaving, and grilling.
    2. Discuss the benefits of using a camp stove on an outing vs. a charcoal or wood fire.
    3. Discuss how the Outdoor Code and no-trace principles pertain to cooking in the outdoors.

**Note:** The meals prepared for Cooking merit badge requirements 5, 6, and 7 will count only toward fulfilling those requirements and will not count toward rank advancement. Meals prepared for rank advancement may not count toward the Cooking merit badge. You must not repeat any menus for meals actually prepared or cooked in requirements 5, 6, and 7.

5. Using the MyPlate food guide or the current USDA nutrition model, plan a menu for three full days of meals (three breakfasts, three lunches, and three dinners) plus one dessert. Your menu should include enough to feed yourself and at least one adult, keeping in mind any special needs (such as food allergies) of those to be served. List the equipment and utensils needed to prepare and serve these meals. Then do the following:
  1. Create a shopping list for your meals showing the amount of food needed to prepare and serve each meal, and the cost for each meal.
  2. Share and discuss your meal plan and shopping list with your counselor.
  3. Using at least five of the seven cooking methods from requirement 4, prepare and serve yourself and at least one adult (parent, family member, guardian, or other responsible adult) one breakfast, one lunch, one dinner, and one dessert from the meals you planned.\*
  4. Time your cooking to have each meal ready to serve at the proper time. Have an adult verify the preparation of the meal to your counselor.
  5. After each meal, ask a person you served to evaluate the meal on presentation and taste, then evaluate your own meal. Discuss what you learned with your

counselor, including any adjustments that could have improved or enhanced your meals. Tell how better planning and preparation help ensure a successful meal.

6. Explain how you kept foods safe and free from cross-contamination.
6. Using the MyPlate food guide or the current USDA nutrition model, plan a menu for your patrol (or a similar size group of up to eight youth, including you) for a camping trip. Include five meals AND at least one snack OR one dessert. List the equipment and utensils needed to prepare and serve these meals. Then do the following:
  1. Create a shopping list for your meals showing the amount of food needed to prepare and serve each meal, and the cost for each meal.
  2. Share and discuss your meal plan and shopping list with your counselor.
  3. In the outdoors, cook two of the meals you planned in requirement 6 using either a lightweight stove or a low-impact fire. Use a different cooking method for each meal.\*\* The same fireplace may be used for both meals. Serve this meal to your patrol or a group of youth.
  4. In the outdoors, cook one of the meals you planned in requirement 6. Use either a Dutch oven, OR a foil pack, OR kabobs. Serve this meal to your patrol or a group of youth.\*\*
  5. In the outdoors, prepare a dessert OR a snack and serve it to your patrol or a group of youth.\*\*

\* The meals for requirement 5 may be prepared on different days, and they need not be prepared consecutively. The requirement calls for Scouts to plan, prepare, and serve one breakfast, one lunch, and one dinner to at least one adult; those served need not be the same for all meals.

\*\* Where local regulations do not allow you to build a fire, the counselor may adjust the requirement to meet the law. The meals in requirements 6 and 7 may be prepared for different trips and need not be prepared consecutively. Scouts working on this badge in summer camp should take into consideration foods that can be obtained at the camp commissary.

6. After each meal, have those you served evaluate the meal on presentation and taste, and then evaluate your own meal. Discuss what you learned with your counselor, including any adjustments that could have improved or enhanced your meals. Tell how better planning and preparation help ensure successful outdoor cooking.
7. Explain how you kept foods safe and free from cross contamination.
8. Using the MyPlate food guide or the current USDA nutrition model, plan a menu for trail hiking or backpacking that includes one breakfast, one lunch, one dinner, and one snack. These meals must not require refrigeration and are to be consumed by three to five people (including you). List the equipment and utensils needed to prepare and serve these meals. Then do the following:
  6. Create a shopping list for your meals, showing the amount of food needed to prepare and serve each meal, and the cost for each meal.
  7. Share and discuss your meal plan and shopping list with your counselor. Your plan must include how to repackage foods for your hike or backpacking trip to eliminate as much bulk, weight, and garbage as possible.

8. While on a trail hike or backpacking trip, prepare and serve two meals and a snack from the menu planned for requirement 7. At least one of those meals must be cooked over a fire, or an approved trail stove (with proper supervision).\*\*
  9. For each meal prepared in requirement 7c, use safe foodhandling practices. Explain how you kept foods safe and free from cross-contamination. Clean up equipment, utensils, and the site thoroughly after each meal. Properly dispose of dishwater, and pack out all garbage.
  10. After each meal, have those you served evaluate the meal on presentation and taste, then evaluate your own meal. Discuss what you learned with your counselor, including any adjustments that could have improved or enhanced your meals. Tell how better planning and preparation help ensure successful trail hiking or backpacking meals.
9. Find out about three career opportunities in cooking. Select one and find out the education, training, and experience required for this profession. Discuss this with your counselor, and explain why this profession might interest you.