

Troop 542 Cooking Merit Badge Plan



The Cooking Merit Badge is now required for the rank of Eagle Scout. Most of its requirements can be covered in a classroom setting, but three of them require logistical planning due to the need for each individual to do a significant amount of meal preparation all by himself for a group of people. Troop 542 has worked on the below plans to assist Scouts working to complete the merit badge. Scouts who have completed the classroom requirements can fulfill the cooking requirements as follows:

Requirement 4 Plan, prepare, and serve meals at home – Study requirement 4 before you start. You'll do it with your family at home. Be sure to address all the sub-requirements of requirement 4, and document the work done (such as: a shopping list, menu, notes during the cooking process, etc). A note from a parent, some photos of the finished meal, and the planning documentation will satisfy the counselor that you've met this requirement. Remember that requirement "4e" is a key part to the process so have something in writing for this requirement.

Requirements 5 Plan, prepare, and serve meals for your patrol – To meet this requirement, you must take responsibility for all phases of meal planning and preparation for your patrol on a designated camping trip. Only one Scout per patrol can do this on a given trip. That Scout will need to:

- Use the Troop's menu planning form, based on the MyPlate guidelines, to lead his patrol in planning a menu that meets the requirements and create a shopping list (Req. 5a & b). Be aware that the requirement asks for 5 meals to be planned, even though only 4 will be cooked on the trip.
- Review the menu packet with a counselor (may be an adult in the Troop) (Req. 5c)
- Do the shopping for the patrol
- Use safe food handling practices to store the food and bring it on the outing
- By himself (or with up to 2 assistants), cook all three of Saturday's meals for the patrol while on the trip (Req. 5d)
 - Two of the meals must be cooked on a camp stove or low impact fire (charcoal is OK), and different cooking methods must be used for each of them
 - The main course of the third meal must be prepared either in a Dutch Oven, OR by being wrapped in foil and cooked in the fire, OR as kabobs
 - One meal must include a dessert which requires some effort to "prepare" (Req. 5e)
- Gather feedback from the patrol about the meal and write a self-evaluation to share with your counselor (Req. 5f)
- Lead the patrol in the proper cleaning of all implements and the patrol area (Req. 5g)

Requirement 6 Plan, prepare, and serve meals for backpacking – Our Troop typically holds a requirements make-up day for first year Scouts at least 3 times a year. Sometimes these make-up days will provide the opportunity to meet this requirement. Our annual backpacking trip may also provide the opportunity to complete this requirement (pre-approval required). The Scout will need to:

- Plan a complete backpacking menu and shopping list as described in requirement 6a & b. Be sure to include a breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack. Each meal must be able to serve 3-5 people. Consider closely the types of foods that should be used on a backpacking trip (no refrigeration; minimal packaging; high in quality calories to maintain energy; etc).
- Share this menu plan with your counselor (Req. 5c)
- Procure the food for at least 2 meals and a snack for 3-5 hikers (himself, other Scouts and/or adults). The Troop can provide dehydrated meal packages by request. All other food must be purchased and packaged in meal bags by the Scout (funds provided by the Troop).
- If completing the requirement at a requirement make-up day:

- Come to the Troop's "Make-up Day" with the food and gear needed to prepare and serve it in a backpack that you'll carry on the trail hike. Stoves are available from the Troop supply by request.
- Upon arrival, prepare the breakfast for 3 to 5 people. This works best as a cold breakfast.
- Join the younger Scouts on their trail hike carrying the backpack with everything needed to prepare and serve the snack and the lunch
- While on the hike serve the snack, and at the end of the hike prepare and serve a cooked backpacking style lunch/dinner.
- Be sure to collect feedback from those you serve to fulfill requirement 6e with your counselor. Also, consider how you will complete clean-up while on the hike (should be minimal).

Requirement 6 Resources

Philmont Scout Ranch Breakfast Meal Ingredients

http://philmontscoutranch.org/filestore/philmont/zip/TrailMeals_BreakfastIngredients.pdf

Philmont Scout Ranch Lunch Meal Ingredients

http://philmontscoutranch.org/filestore/philmont/zip/TrailMeals_LunchIngredients.pdf

Philmont Scout Ranch Dinner Ingredients

http://philmontscoutranch.org/filestore/philmont/zip/TrailMeals_DinnerIngredients.pdf

REI Meal Planning Tips

<https://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/planning-menu.html>

Strongly consider the caloric intake during hiking and the weight and size of the meals. Each meal should be no more than about 1 lb of food per person and a daily calorie intake of 2500-3000 (as opposed to a standard 2000 calorie diet at home).

A resource supplement is available from the Troop upon request to further help in the backpacking planning.

2016 Requirements

4. **Cooking at home.** 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) and how you kept your foods safe and free from cross-contamination. List the equipment and utensils needed to prepare and serve these meals.

Then do the following:

- a. 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.
 - b. Share and discuss your meal plan and shopping list with your counselor.
 - c. Using at least five of the 10 cooking methods from requirement 3, 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. *
 - d. 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.
 - e. 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.
5. **Camp cooking.** Do the following:
- a. 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. Your menu should include enough food for each person, keeping in mind any special needs (such as food allergies) and how you keep your foods safe and free from cross-contamination. These five meals must include at least one breakfast, one lunch, one dinner, AND at least one snack OR one dessert. List the equipment and utensils needed to prepare and serve these meals.
 - b. 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.
 - c. Share and discuss your meal plan and shopping list with your counselor.
 - d. In the outdoors, using your menu plan for this requirement, cook two of the five meals you planned using either a lightweight stove or a low-impact fire. Use a different cooking method from requirement 3 for each meal. You must also cook a third meal using either a Dutch oven OR a foil pack OR kabobs. Serve all of these meals to your patrol or a group of youth. **
 - e. In the outdoors, prepare a dessert OR a snack and serve it to your patrol or a group of youth.**
 - f. 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 planning and preparation help ensure successful outdoor cooking.
 - g. Explain to your counselor how you cleaned the equipment, utensils, and the cooking site thoroughly after each meal. Explain how you properly disposed of dishwater and of all garbage.
 - h. Discuss how you followed the Outdoor Code and no-trace principles when preparing your meals.
6. **Trail and backpacking meals.** Do the following:
- a. 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). Be sure to keep in mind any special needs (such as food allergies) and how you will keep your foods safe and free from cross-contamination. List the equipment and utensils needed to prepare and serve these meals.
 - b. 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.
 - c. 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.
 - d. While on a trail hike or backpacking trip, prepare and serve two meals and a snack from the menu planned for this requirement. At least one of those meals must be cooked over a fire, or an approved trail stove (with proper supervision).**
 - e. 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 planning and preparation help ensure successful trail hiking or backpacking meals.
 - f. Discuss how you followed the Outdoor Code and no-trace principles during your outing. Explain to your counselor how you cleaned any equipment, utensils, and the cooking site after each meal. Explain how you properly disposed of any dishwater and packed out all garbage.