

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
MERIT BADGE SERIES

TRAFFIC SAFETY



"Enhancing our youths' competitive edge through merit badges"



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Requirements

Always check www.scouting.org for the latest requirements.

1. Do the following:
 - a. Describe the top 10 mistakes new drivers frequently make. Name the two items you are required by law to carry with you whenever you operate a motor vehicle.
 - b. Describe how alcohol and other drugs affect the human body and why a person should never drink and drive, or drive while under the influence of any mind-altering substances including prescription drugs, cold medications, and illicit drugs. For the state where you live, find out what is the legal blood alcohol concentration and the consequences for driving while intoxicated or driving under the influence. Find out what the open-container law is in your state.
 - c. Explain why new drivers are at a significantly higher risk of being involved in a collision than other drivers and name three (3) steps you can take that will reduce this risk.
 - d. Explain why a driver who is fatigued or distracted should not operate a motor vehicle. List five common distractions, explain how driver distractions contribute to traffic accidents, and tell how drivers can minimize distractions. Describe how volunteer drivers can plan to be alert when transporting Scouting participants.
2. Do the following:
 - a. Demonstrate how to wear a lap and shoulder belt properly. Explain why it is important for the driver and all passengers always to wear their seat belts.
 - b. List five safety features found in motor vehicles besides occupant restraint systems. Describe each safety feature, how each works, and how each contributes to safety.

3. Do the following:

- a. Using a vehicle that you have access to, demonstrate that all marker lights, parking lights, brake lights, turn signals, and headlights are clear and operational. Explain when you would use these lights, where the switches are to operate these lights and how these lights contribute to safe and courteous driving.
- b. Using a vehicle that you have access to, demonstrate how to check the vehicle's tire pressure and where to locate the correct tire pressure rating. Explain why proper tire pressure is important to the safe operation and fuel economy of the vehicle.
- c. Explain why proper tire tread depth is important to safe driving. On the same vehicle you checked the tire pressure on, demonstrate a method to check for adequate tire tread depth.
- d. Explain issues that might affect the driver's ability to see through the front, rear, and side windows. Demonstrate with a smear-and-clear test if the windshield wiper blades will clear the windshield completely or need to be replaced. Describe instances in good and bad weather when windshield wipers are important to safe driving.

4. Do the following:

- a. In a location away from traffic hazards, measure with a tape measure—not in a car—and mark off with stakes the distance that a car will travel during the time needed for decision and reaction, and the braking distances necessary to stop a car traveling 30, 50, and 70 miles per hour on dry, level pavement. Discuss how environmental factors such as bad weather and road conditions will affect the distance.
- b. As a driver, describe the difference in nighttime visibility between a properly lit bicycle and rider (or a pedestrian) wearing reflective material and a bicycle and rider with no lights (or a pedestrian) dressed in dark clothing, without reflective material.
- c. Explain how color and shape are used to help road users recognize and understand the information presented on traffic and roadway signs. Explain the purpose of different types of signs, signals, and pavement markings.

- d. Describe at least three examples of traffic laws that apply to drivers of motor vehicles and that bicyclists must also obey.
5. Do ONE of the following:
- a. Interview a traffic law enforcement officer in your community to identify what three traffic safety problems the officer is most concerned about. Discuss with your merit badge counselor possible ways to solve one of those problems.
 - b. Write a personal traffic safety pledge, addressing three (3) of your most concerning issues relating to traffic safety. Show your pledge to your merit badge counselor and discuss your commitment to traffic safety.
 - c. Initiate and organize an activity or event to demonstrate the importance of traffic safety.



Traffic Safety Resources

Scouting Literature

Automotive Maintenance, Citizenship in the Community, Cycling, Emergency Preparedness, Engineering, First Aid, Railroading, Safety, and Truck Transportation merit badge pamphlets

With your parent's permission, visit the Boy Scouts of America's official retail website, www.scoutshop.org, for a complete listing of all merit badge pamphlets and other helpful Scouting materials and supplies.

Books

- Aaseng, Nathan. *Teens and Drunk Driving*. Lucent Books, 2000.
- Alliance for Safe Driving. *License to Drive*, 2nd ed. Cengage Learning, 2005.
- Berardelli, Phil. *Safe Young Drivers: A Guide for Parents and Teens*, 4th ed. Mountain Lake Press, 2008.
- Booley, Theresa Anne. *Alcohol and Your Liver: The Incredibly Disgusting Story*. Rosen, 2000.
- Burke, Edmund R. *Serious Cycling*, 2nd ed. Human Kinetics, 2002.
- Drive Right*, 11th ed. Prentice Hall, 2008.
- Elkins, Brett, and Bruce Elkins. *Teach Your Teen to Drive ... and Stay Alive*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012.
- Goodman, Karen, and Kirk Simon. *Safe Road Home: Stop Your Teen From Drinking and Driving*. Sterling, 2005.
- Hewitt, Ben, ed. *New Cyclist Handbook*. Rodale Inc., 2005.
- James, Leon, and Diane Nahl. *Road Rage and Aggressive Driving: Steering Clear of Highway Warfare*. Prometheus Books, 2000.
- Pavelka, Ed, and Editors of *Bicycling Magazine*. *Bicycling Magazine's Complete Book of Road Cycling Skills*. Rodale Inc., 1998.
- Pease, Robert A. *How to Drive Into Accidents and How Not To*. Pease Publishing, 1998.
- Scotti, Anthony J. *Professional Driving Techniques: The Essential Guide to Operating a Motor Vehicle With Confidence and Skill*, 4th ed. PhotoGraphics Publishing, 2007.
- Smith, Timothy C. *Crash-Proof Your Kids: Make Your Teen a Safer, Smarter Driver*. Touchstone, 2006.
- Wallack, Roy M., and Bill Katovsky. *Bike for Life*. Da Capo Press, 2014.

Organizations and Websites

Information is also available from your local police department (traffic division), sheriff's department (traffic division), state police or highway patrol, city or county prosecutor's office, traffic court, emergency medical services (EMS), and state highway safety office. Check your local telephone directory for non-emergency phone numbers and addresses.

American Automobile Association Foundation for Traffic Safety

607 14th St. NW, Suite 201
Washington, DC 20005
Telephone: 202-638-5944
www.aaafoundation.org

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
Washington, DC 20590
Toll-free telephone: 888-327-4236
www.nhtsa.gov

National Safety Council

1121 Spring Lake Drive
Itasca, IL 60143-3201
Telephone: 630-285-1121
www.nsc.org/safety_road

Online Study Guide for Student Drivers

www.golocalnet.net/drive/

Road Ready Teens

www.roadreadyteens.org

Safe Kids Worldwide

1255 23rd St., NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20037-1151
Telephone: 202-662-0600
www.safekids.org

Teendriving.com

www.teendriving.com

Texting & Driving: It Can Wait

www.itcanwait.com

Your state department of motor vehicles will also be a good resource. Look in the telephone book or, with your parent's permission, search the internet.