



## Citizenship in the Nation Merit Badge Guide

### Preparing for your Citizenship in the Nation Merit Badge Class

Scouts are not permitted to use **cell phones** in any way during class or in small group discussions.

Step 1: Read the merit badge requirements included in this Guide.

Step 2: Scouts must read the BSA merit badge book or pamphlet **before** class. A Scout might borrow a copy from their troop library or from another Scout. The latest editions are stocked and are for sale at the Mecklenburg County Council Scout Shop at 1410 East 7th Street Charlotte, NC 28204  
704 333 5471

[www.mccscouting.org](http://www.mccscouting.org)

Scouts may order printed copies from [www.scoutshop.org](http://www.scoutshop.org).

Scouts may order digital copies for Kindle devices from <https://www.amazon.com/>

Step 3: Read and act on the homework instructions below.

#### **Homework for Citizenship in the Nation Merit Badge before class:**

Scouts should Be Prepared to ask and answer questions in class. Answers do not need to be correct. Often, questions posed in class do not have a single, “correct” answer. However, EACH Scout must actively, thoughtfully, and respectfully participate in order to satisfy requirements. Answering “I don’t know” or some variation of this answer does not qualify as participation. Disrespectful, impertinent remarks do not qualify as participation.

Scouts should view all of these videos before class:

Democratic ideals in the Declaration of Independence | Khan Academy 07:52  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWY8ONwhdLQ>

Personal rights of citizenship | High school civics | Khan Academy 04:58

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AG6SiMEK1tk>

Political rights of citizenship | High school civics | Khan Academy 03:41

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jCP23\\_xNf1A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jCP23_xNf1A)

Economic rights of citizenship | High school civics | Khan Academy 04:28

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j\\_XrGo15iBc&t=11s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j_XrGo15iBc&t=11s)

Responsibilities of citizenship | High school civics | Khan Academy 02:31

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tms0TgD\\_97g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tms0TgD_97g)

Obligations of citizenship | High school civics | Khan Academy 04:10

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjPE5JTGjXE>

For **requirements # 1, 2, 3, and 4**, write out answers and Be Prepared to discuss them in class.

For **requirement # 1**, Scouts should review the document

Citizenship: What Every Scout Must Know

Included in this Guide.

Please Be Prepared to discuss in class.

For **requirement # 4 b about the Bill of Rights**, please review the page at

<https://www.ushistory.org/us/18a.asp>

## Bill of Rights

First Amendment: Freedom of religion, freedom of speech and the press, the right to assemble, the right to petition the government.

Second Amendment: The right to form a militia and to keep and bear arms.

Third Amendment: The right not to have soldiers in one's home.

Fourth Amendment: Protection against unreasonable search and seizure.

Fifth Amendment: No one can be tried for a serious crime unless indicted (accused) by a grand jury. No one can be forced to testify against herself or himself. No one can be punished without due process of law. People must be paid for property taken for public use.

Sixth Amendment: People have a right to a speedy trial, to legal counsel, and to confront their accusers.

Seventh Amendment: People have the right to a jury trial in civil suits exceeding \$20.

Eighth Amendment: Protection against excessive bail (money to release a person from jail), stiff fines, and cruel and unusual punishment.

Ninth Amendment: Because there are so many basic human rights, not all of them could be listed in the Constitution. This amendment means that the rights that are enumerated cannot infringe upon rights that are not listed in the Constitution.

Tenth Amendment: Powers not given to the federal government by the Constitution belong to the states or the people.

## Other Important Amendments

Thirteenth Amendment (1865): Slavery shall not be allowed in the U.S.

Fourteenth Amendment (1868):  
Section 1.

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

The 14th Amendment contained three major provisions:

**The Citizenship Clause** granted citizenship to All persons born or naturalized in the United States. [This clause confirmed that previously enslaved people were citizens.]

**The Due Process Clause** declared that states may not deny any person "life, liberty or property, without due process of law."

**The Equal Protection Clause** said that a state may not deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

<https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/content/14th-amend-doc.html>

Nineteenth Amendment (1920): Women have the right to vote.

Twenty-sixth Amendment (1971): U.S. citizens who are 18 years of age or older have the right to vote. (Previously, they had to be 21 years old.)

**For requirement # 5**, Scouts must follow the NATIONAL news for five days in a row (online or in print), make notes, and be prepared to actively discuss in class.

**Requirement # 6.** With your counselor's approval, choose a speech of national historical importance. Explain:

- a. Who the author was
- b. What the historical context was
- c. What difficulties the nation faced that the author wished to discuss
- d. What the author said
- e. Why the speech is important to the nation's history. Choose a sentence or two from the speech that has significant meaning to you, and tell your counselor why.

For **Requirement # 6**, each Scout must review Washington's farewell address at

<https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=15>

<https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/president-george-washingtons-first-inaugural-speech>

Write out your notes to explain:

- a. Who the author was
- b. What the historical context was
- c. What difficulties the nation faced that the author wished to discuss
- d. What the author said
- e. Why the speech is important to the nation's history. Choose a sentence or two from the speech that has significant meaning to you, and tell your counselor why.

Bring your written notes to class. Be Prepared to discuss your answers.

For **requirement # 7 a**, Scouts must take a virtual tour of the US Capitol, a National Historic Landmark, by viewing the video posted at

[Virtual U.S. Capitol Tour](#) 8:58

and learn about the history of the US Capitol at

[The History of the United States Capitol](#) 5:00

For **requirement # 7 c**, Scouts must take a virtual tour of the Library of Congress, a federal facility, by viewing the videos posted at [The Library of Congress Is Your Library](#) 4:54 and at [Tour the Library of Congress in 360°](#) 2:33.

Please make notes on these videos and Be Prepared to discuss in class.

**Requirement # 8:** Name your representatives in the United States Congress. Write a letter to your representative in Congress explaining your views on a national issue. Show your letter, along with any response you might receive, to your counselor.

For **requirement # 8**, each Scout must look up and write down the names of their two US Senators and of their home US Congressional District Representative.

Scouts can use this link: <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members> to find this information. Please remember that these are FEDERAL representatives serving in the United States Congress in Washington, D.C., not state district or local district legislators.

**Each Scout must write their letter before Spring Camp and bring a draft copy of the letter with them to class.** Scouts must come prepared with the DRAFT of the letter, extra paper, pen, and properly self-addressed, self-stamped envelope to your Congressional Representative. The Merit Badge Counselor will review the letters. Scouts will re-write as needed. We can mail them at a nearby mailbox or post office.

Scouts must use proper etiquette when composing their letters and writing out addresses on envelopes. It is the duty and responsibility of the Scout, not a parent, to write their letter, address their envelope, put a stamp on it, and mail it from home or a post office or a drop box.

Suggested formats for envelopes:

Return address

Scout Joe or Jane Doe  
111 Home Street  
Charlotte, NC 28211

Addresses for US House Representatives:  
The Honorable Mary M. Smith or Representative Mary M. Smith  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Addresses for US Senators  
The Honorable Mary M. Smith or Senator Mary M. Smith  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Suggested format for letters using block style:

Top of page, starting at left margin  
Return (sender) address  
Scout Joe or Jane Doe  
111 Home Street  
Charlotte, NC 28211  
Phone number, if appropriate  
Email address, if appropriate

Date  
December 18, 2021

Inside address (receiver's name and address)  
The Honorable Mary M. Smith or Representative Mary M. Smith  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Salutation  
Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. Smith (last name only),

First paragraph of text, not indented

“Draft your letter using a polite and respectful tone. After you list the salutation, introduce yourself by giving your name, profession, and local district. Then, briefly summarize the issue at hand. You can write your congressional representative if you disagree with a current bill, for instance. Mention why the bill [might harm] your local community, and provide statistics or facts illustrating the damage. Provide thorough support as to why the representative should take action on your concern.

- You can include your contact information for them to follow up with you if you'd like.
- Be sure the purpose of your letter is clearly stated. For instance, if you are referencing a particular bill, provide the number of the bill or resolution date.

- Write something like, "Dear Mr. DeFazio, My name is John Doe, and I am a carpenter in your district. I am deeply saddened by the most recent logging bill proposed last month. I worry that if we keep cutting down trees, there won't be any left. I urge you to please consider voting against this bill."

<https://www.wikihow.com/Address-a-Congressman>

Blank line indicates a new paragraph

Second paragraph of text, not indented

Thank you for your public service.

Sincerely,

Your Signature

Your Name

Your Title, if applicable

<https://penandthepad.com/appropriate-etiquette-addressing-representative-10345.html>

<https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

<https://www.senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm>

<https://gallaudet.edu/student-success/tutorial-center/english-center/writing/how-to-write-letters/business-letter-formats-everyone-should-know/>



## Citizenship in the Nation Merit Badge Requirements

Requirements

[https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/Merit\\_Badge\\_ReqandRes/35871\(22\)\\_Citizenship\\_Nation\\_REQS.pdf](https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/Merit_Badge_ReqandRes/35871(22)_Citizenship_Nation_REQS.pdf)

2023 01 18

1. What is the Constitution of the United States? What does the Constitution do? What principles does it reflect? Why is it important to have a Constitution?
2. List the six purposes for creating the United States Constitution set forth in the Preamble to the Constitution. How do these purposes affect your family and community?

3. List the three branches of the United States government. Explain:
  - a. The function of each branch of government
  - b. Why it is important to divide powers among different branches
  - c. How each branch "checks" and "balances" the others
  - d. How citizens can be involved in each branch of government.
  
4. Discuss the importance of:
  - a. Declaration of Independence
  - b. The Bill of Rights (the first 10 Amendments to the Constitution) and the 14th Amendment
  - c. The traditional United States motto "E Pluribus Unum."
  
5. Watch the national evening news for five days in a row or read the main stories in a national media organization (e.g., a newspaper or news website) for five days in a row. Discuss the national issues that you learned about with your counselor. Choose one issue and explain how it affects you, your family, and community.
  
6. With your counselor's approval, choose a speech of national historical importance. Explain:
  - a. Who the author was
  - b. What the historical context was
  - c. What difficulties the nation faced that the author wished to discuss
  - d. What the author said
  - e. Why the speech is important to the nation's history. Choose a sentence or two from the speech that has significant meaning to you, and tell your counselor why.
  
7. Do TWO of the following:
  - a. Visit a place that is listed as a National Historic Landmark or that is on the National Register of Historic Places. Tell your counselor what you learned about the landmark or site and what you found interesting about it.
  - b. Tour your state capitol building or the U.S. Capitol. Tell your counselor what you learned about the capitol, its function, and the history.
  - c. Tour a federal facility. Explain to your counselor what you saw there and what you learned about its function in the local community and how it serves this nation.
  - d. Choose a national monument that interests you. Using books, brochures, the internet (with your parent's permission), and other resources, find out more about the monument. Tell your counselor what you learned, and explain why the monument is important to this country's citizens.
  
8. Name your representatives in the United States Congress. Write a letter to your representative in Congress explaining your views on a national issue. Show your letter, along with any response you might receive, to your counselor.