



Cub Scout Swimming

Sports Workbook



The work space provided for each requirement should be used by the Cub Scout to make notes for discussing the item with Akela, not for providing the full and complete answers. Each Cub Scout must do each requirement.

No one may add or subtract from the official requirements found in the **Cub Scout Academics and Sports Program Guide** (Pub. 34299)

This workbook was updated in June, 2013.

<http://www.USScouts.Org> • <http://www.MeritBadge.Org>

Please submit errors, omissions, comments or suggestions about this **workbook** to: Workbooks@USScouts.Org

Comments or suggestions for changes to the **requirements** for the **Belt Loop or Pin** should be sent to: Advancement.Team@Scouting.Org

Cub Scout's Name: _____ Pack No. : _____

Webelos Scouts that earn the Swimming Belt Loop while a Webelos Scout also satisfy requirement 8 for the Aquanaut Activity Badge and part of requirement 3 for the Sportsman Activity Badge.

Cub Scout Swimming Belt Loop (See the [Pin Requirements](#) below.)

Complete these three requirements:

1. Explain rules of Safe Swim Defense. Emphasize the buddy system.
(Editor's Note: The rules of [Safe Swim Defense](#) can be found at the end of this workbook.)

2. Play a recreational game in the water with your den, pack, or family.
3. While holding a kick board, propel yourself 25 feet using a flutter kick across the shallow end of the swimming area

Cub Scout Swimming Pin

Earn the Cub Scout Swimming belt loop, and complete five of the following requirements:

- 1. Practice the breathing motion of the crawl stroke while standing in shallow water. Take a breath, place your head in the water, exhale, and turn your head to the side to take a breath. Repeat.
- 2. Learn and demonstrate two of the following strokes: crawl, backstroke, elementary backstroke, sidestroke, or breaststroke.
 - crawl backstroke elementary backstroke
 - sidestroke breaststroke
- 3. Learn and demonstrate two of the following floating skills: prone, facedown float, and back float. The purpose of the float is to provide the swimmer the opportunity to rest in the water.
 - prone facedown float back float
- 4. Using a kickboard, demonstrate three kinds of kicks.
 - 1.

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 - 2.

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 - 3.

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- 5. Pass the "[beginner](#)" or "[swimmer](#)" swim level test.
(Editor's Note: The requirements for these tests are contained in the rules of [Safe Swim Defense](#), which can be found at the end of this workbook.)
- 6. Visit with a lifeguard and talk about swimming safety in various situations (pool, lake, river, ocean). Learn about the training a lifeguard needs for his or her position.

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- 7. Explain the four rescue techniques: Reach, Throw, Row, and Go (with support)

Reach	
Throw	
Row	
Go (with support)	

- 8. Take swimming lessons.
- 9. Attend a swim meet at a school or community pool.
- 10. Tread water for 30 seconds.
- 11. Learn about a U.S. swimmer who has earned a medal in the Olympics. Tell your den or an adult family member what you learned about him or her.

- 12. Demonstrate the proper use of a mask and snorkel in a swimming area where your feet can touch the bottom

Requirement resources can be found here:
http://www.meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Cub_Scout_Swimming#Requirement_resources

BSA groups shall use Safe Swim Defense for all swimming activities. Adult leaders supervising a swimming activity must have completed Safe Swim Defense training within the previous two years. Safe Swim Defense standards apply at backyard, hotel, apartment, and public pools; at established waterfront swim areas such as beaches at state parks and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lakes; and at all temporary swimming areas such as a lake, river, or ocean. Safe Swim Defense does not apply to boating or water activities such as waterskiing or swamped boat drills that are covered by Safety Afloat guidelines. Safe Swim Defense applies to other nonswimming activities whenever participants enter water over knee deep or when submersion is likely, for example, when fording a stream, seining for bait, or constructing a bridge as a pioneering project. Snorkeling in open water requires each participant to have demonstrated knowledge and skills equivalent to those for Snorkeling BSA in addition to following Safe Swim Defense. Scuba activities must be conducted in accordance with the BSA Scuba policy found in the *Guide to Safe Scouting*. Because of concerns with hyperventilation, competitive underwater swimming events are not permitted in Scouting.

Safe Swim Defense training may be obtained from the BSA Online Learning Center at olc.scouting.org, at council summer camps, and at other council and district training events. Confirmation of training is required on local and national tour permits for trips that involve swimming. Additional information on various swimming venues is provided in the Aquatics Supervision guide available from council service centers.

1. Qualified Supervision

All swimming activity must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult age 21 or older who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of those in his or her care, and who is trained in and committed to compliance with the eight points of BSA Safe Swim Defense. It is strongly recommended that all units have at least one adult or older youth member currently trained in BSA Aquatics Supervision: Swimming and Water Rescue or BSA Lifeguard to assist in planning and conducting all swimming activities.

2. Personal Health Review

A complete health history is required of all participants as evidence of fitness for swimming activities. Forms for minors must be signed by a parent or legal guardian. Participants should be asked to relate any recent incidents of illness or injury just prior to the activity. Supervision and protection should be adjusted to anticipate any potential risks associated with individual health conditions. For significant health conditions, the adult supervisor should require an examination by a physician and consult with the parent, guardian, or caregiver for appropriate precautions.

3. Safe Area

All swimming areas must be carefully inspected and prepared for safety prior to each activity. Water depth, quality, temperature, movement, and clarity are important considerations. Hazards must be eliminated or isolated by conspicuous markings and discussed with participants.

Controlled Access: There must be safe areas for all participating ability groups to enter and leave the water. Swimming areas of appropriate depth must be defined for each ability group. The entire area must be within easy reach of designated rescue personnel. The area must be clear of boat traffic, surfing, or other nonswimming activities.

Bottom Conditions and Depth: The bottom must be clear of trees and debris. Abrupt changes in depth are not allowed in the nonswimmer area. Isolated underwater hazards should be marked with floats. Rescue personnel must be able to easily reach the bottom. Maximum recommended water depth in clear water is 12 feet. Maximum water depth in turbid water is 8 feet.

Visibility: Underwater swimming and diving are prohibited in turbid water. Turbid water exists when a swimmer treading water cannot see his feet. Swimming at night is allowed only in areas with water clarity and lighting sufficient for good visibility both above and below the surface.

Diving and Elevated Entry: Diving is permitted only into clear, unobstructed water from heights no greater than 40 inches. Water depth must be at least 7 feet. Bottom depth contours below diving boards and elevated surfaces require greater water depths and must conform to state regulations. Persons should not jump into water from heights greater than they are tall, and should jump only into water chest deep or greater with minimal risk from contact with the bottom. No elevated entry is permitted where the person must clear any obstacle, including land.

Water Temperature: Comfortable water temperature for swimming is near 80 degrees. Activity in water at 70 degrees or less should be of limited duration and closely monitored for negative effects of chilling.

Water Quality: Bodies of stagnant, foul water, areas with significant algae or foam, or areas polluted by livestock or waterfowl should be avoided. Comply with any signs posted by local health authorities. Swimming is not allowed in swimming pools with green, murky, or cloudy water.

Moving Water: Participants should be able to easily regain and maintain their footing in currents or waves. Areas with large waves, swiftly flowing currents, or moderate currents that flow toward the open sea or into areas of danger should be avoided.

Weather: Participants should be moved from the water to a position of safety whenever lightning or thunder threatens. Wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash or thunder before leaving shelter. Take precautions to prevent sunburn, dehydration, and hypothermia.

Life Jacket Use: Swimming in clear water over 12 feet deep, in turbid water over 8 feet deep, or in flowing water may be allowed if all participants wear properly fitted, Coast Guard-approved life jackets and the supervisor determines that swimming with life jackets is safe under the circumstances.

4. **Response Personnel (Lifeguards)**

Every swimming activity must be closely and continuously monitored by a trained rescue team on the alert for and ready to respond during emergencies. Professionally trained lifeguards satisfy this need when provided by a regulated facility or tour operator. When lifeguards are not provided by others, the adult supervisor must assign at least two rescue personnel, with additional numbers to maintain a ratio of one rescuer to every 10 participants. The supervisor must provide instruction and rescue equipment and assign areas of responsibility as outlined in Aquatics Supervision, No. 34346. The qualified supervisor, the designated response personnel, and the lookout work together as a safety team. An emergency action plan should be formulated and shared with participants as appropriate.

5. **Lookout**

The lookout continuously monitors the conduct of the swim, identifies any departures from Safe Swim Defense guidelines, alerts rescue personnel as needed, and monitors the weather and environment. The lookout should have a clear view of the entire area but be close enough for easy verbal communication. The lookout must have a sound understanding of Safe Swim Defense but is not required to perform rescues. The adult supervisor may serve simultaneously as the lookout but must assign the task to someone else if engaged in activities that preclude focused observation.

6. **Ability Groups**

All youth and adult participants are designated as swimmers, beginners, or nonswimmers based on swimming ability confirmed by standardized BSA swim classification tests. Each group is assigned a specific swimming area with depths consistent with those abilities. The classification tests should be renewed annually, preferably at the beginning of the season.

Swimmers pass this test: Jump feetfirst into water over the head in depth. Level off and swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be completed in one swim without stops and must include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating.

Beginners pass this test: Jump feetfirst into water over the head in depth, level off, and swim 25 feet on the surface. Stop, turn sharply, resume swimming and return to the starting place.

Anyone who has not completed either the beginner or swimmer tests is classified as a nonswimmer.

The nonswimmer area should be no more than waist to chest deep and should be enclosed by physical boundaries such as the shore, a pier, or lines. The enclosed beginner area should contain water of standing depth and may extend to depths just over the head. The swimmer area may be up to 12 feet in depth in clear water and should be defined by floats or other markers.

7. **Buddy System**

Every participant is paired with another. Buddies stay together, monitor each other, and alert the safety team if either needs assistance or is missing. Buddies check into and out of the area together.

Buddies are normally in the same ability group and remain in their assigned area. If they are not of the same ability group, then they swim in the area assigned to the buddy with the lesser ability.

A buddy check reminds participants of their obligation to monitor their buddies and indicates how closely the buddies are keeping track of each other. Roughly every 10 minutes, or as needed to keep the buddies together, the lookout, or other person designated by the supervisor, gives an audible signal, such as a single whistle blast, and a call for "Buddies." Buddies are expected to raise each other's hand before completion of a slow, audible count to 10. Buddies that take longer to find each other should be reminded of their responsibility for the other's safety.

Once everyone has a buddy, a count is made by area and compared with the total number known to be in the water. After the count is confirmed, a signal is given to resume swimming.

8. **Discipline**

Rules are effective only when followed. All participants should know, understand, and respect the rules and procedures for safe swimming provided by Safe Swim Defense guidelines. Applicable rules should be discussed prior to the outing and reviewed for all participants at the water's edge just before the swimming activity begins. People are more likely to follow directions when they know the reasons for rules and procedures. Consistent, impartially applied rules supported by skill and good judgment provide stepping-stones to a safe, enjoyable outing.

For more information regarding Safe Swim Defense, go to www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/Aquatics/safe-swim.aspx.

Important excerpts from the [‘Guide To Advancement’](#), No. 33088:

Effective January 1, 2012, the *‘Guide to Advancement’* (which replaced the publication *‘Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures’*) is now the *official* Boy Scouts of America source on advancement policies and procedures.

- **[Inside front cover, and 5.0.1.4] — Unauthorized Changes to Advancement Program**
No council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add to, or subtract from, advancement requirements. (There are limited exceptions relating only to youth members with disabilities. For details see section 10, “Advancement for Members With Special Needs”.)
- **[Inside front cover, and 7.0.1.1] — The [‘Guide to Safe Scouting’](#) Applies**
Policies and procedures outlined in the *‘Guide to Safe Scouting’*, No. 34416, apply to all BSA activities, including those related to advancement and Eagle Scout service projects. [Note: Always reference the online version, which is updated quarterly.]
- **[4.1.0.3] — Who Approves Cub Scout Advancement?**
A key responsibility for den leaders is to implement the core den meeting plans as outlined in the Den & Pack Meeting Resource Guide, No. 34409. For Wolf, Bear, and Webelos advancement, den leaders take the lead in approving requirements, though their assistants, and also parents who help at meetings, may be asked to play the role of “Akela” and assist. Parents sign for requirements that, according to meeting plans and instructions in the handbooks, take place at home. For the Bobcat trail and Tiger Cub achievements, parents (or adult partners) should sign in the boy’s handbook; the den leader then approves as progress is recorded in the den’s advancement record.
- **[4.1.0.4] — “Do Your Best”**
Advancement performance in Cub Scouting is centered on its motto: “Do Your Best.” When a boy has done this—his very best—then regardless of the requirements for any rank or award, it is enough; accomplishment is noted. This is why den leaders, assistants, and parents or guardians are involved in approvals. Generally they know if effort put forth is really the Cub Scout’s best.
- **[4.1.2.2] — Cub Scout Academics and Sports Program**
More than just a recognition opportunity, this program develops new skills, improves those existing, and otherwise enriches Cub Scouting. Details can be found in the Cub Scout Academics and Sports Program Guide, No. 34299. Activities include subjects like science, video games, collecting, and chess; and sports such as baseball, skateboarding, and table tennis. Each has two levels—a belt loop and a pin. Belt loops, which can be earned more than once, are awarded when each of three requirements is met. Cub Scouts may then continue with additional requirements and earn the pin. Archery and BB gun shooting are included, but can only be conducted at a council presented activity with certified supervisors.

Additional notes of interest:

- Tiger Cubs, Cub Scouts, and Webelos Scouts may complete requirements for all Academics and Sports Belt Loops and Pins **(except shooting sports)** in a family, den, pack, school, or community environment. Tiger Cubs must work with their parents or adult partners. Parents and partners do not earn loops or pins.
- **“Akela”** (Pronounced “Ah-KAY-la”) — Title of respect used in Cub Scouting—any good leader is *Akela*. *Akela* is also the leader and guide for Cub Scouts on the advancement trail. The name comes from Rudyard Kipling’s *Jungle Book*. (See “Law of the Pack.”)
- **“Law of the Pack”** —
The Cub Scout follows Akela.
The Cub Scout helps the pack go.
The pack helps the Cub Scout grow.
The Cub Scout gives goodwill.