



## Swimming Merit Badge Workbook

# SCOUTMASTER BUCKY

Scouts participating in a Scoutmaster Bucky merit badge opportunity, whether online or in person, should consider using the Swimming merit badge pamphlet for discovery and knowledge, along with the class preparation pages for clarifications, insights, and expectations.

<https://scoutmasterbucky.com/merit-badges/swimming/swimming-pamphlet.pdf>

<https://scoutmasterbucky.com/merit-badges/swimming/swimming-cpp.pdf>

**REQUIREMENT 1a:** Explain to your counselor how Scouting's Safe Swim Defense plan anticipates, helps prevent and mitigate, and provides responses to likely hazards you may encounter during swimming activities.

1. Qualified Supervision
2. Personal Health Review
3. Safe Area (Controlled Access, Bottom Conditions and Depth, Visibility, Diving and Elevated Entry, Water Temperature, Water Quality, Moving Water, Weather, Life Jacket Use.)
4. Response Personnel (Lifeguards)
5. Lookout
6. Ability Groups (NonSwimmer, Beginner, Swimmer)
7. Buddy System
8. Discipline Rules



## Safe Swim Defense

Notes:



# SCOUTMASTER BUCKY

**REQUIREMENT 1b:** Discuss the prevention and treatment of health concerns that could occur while swimming, including hypothermia, dehydration, sunburn, heat exhaustion, heatstroke, muscle cramps, hyperventilation, spinal injury, stings and bites, and cuts and scrapes.

## HYPOTHERMIA:

Prevention:

Treatment:

## DEHYDRATION:

Prevention:

Treatment:



**SUNBURN:**

Prevention:

Treatment:

**HEAT EXHAUSTION:**

Prevention:

Treatment:



**HEATSTROKE:**

Prevention:

Treatment:

**MUSCLE CRAMPS:**

Prevention:

Treatment:



## HYPERVENTILATION:

Prevention:

Treatment:

## SPINAL INJURY:

Prevention:

Treatment:



**STINGS AND BITES:**

Prevention:

Treatment:

**CUTS AND SCRAPES:**

Prevention:

Treatment:



# SCOUTMASTER BUCKY

**REQUIREMENTS 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 ARE ALL SKILL-BASED REQUIREMENTS. SCOUTS WILL NEED TO SHOW, DEMONSTRATE, PERFORM, AND SWIM CORRECTLY AND SUCCESSFULLY OVERSEEN AND REVIEWED BY A CERTIFIED MERIT BADGE COUNSELOR.**

**SCOUTS NOT ABLE TO PHYSICALLY PERFORM THESE SKILLS WILL FIND IT DIFFICULT TO COMPLETE.**

**THIS MERIT BADGE OPPORTUNITY IS OFFERED AND OUTLINED FOR PROFICIENT SWIMMERS.  
SWIMMING INSTRUCTION AND LESSONS ARE NOT A PART OF THIS OFFERING.**

## REQUIREMENT 2:

Before doing the following requirements, successfully complete the Scouting America swimmer 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.



**This requirement must be reviewed with your merit badge counselor.**

## REQUIREMENT 3a:

Correctly perform and demonstrate the front crawl or the trudgen using good form.

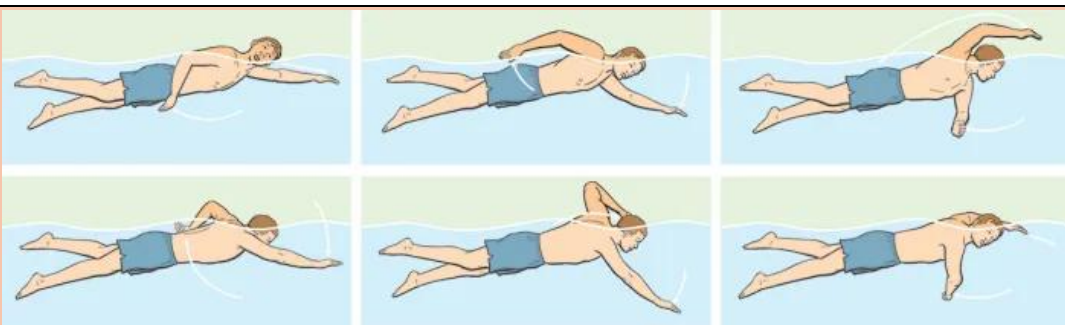




## FRONT CRAWL

The front crawl has three parts: the flutter kick, the rotating arm stroke, and rhythmic breathing. It is the fastest swimming stroke.

**Kick:** The flutter kick begins at the hips and flows to the feet. As one foot moves downward, the other comes up in a fluttering rhythm. Kick from the hip and thigh, not from the knee. During the downward part of the kick, your ankle stays relaxed, toes are pointed behind you, and your knee is slightly bent. As your foot reaches the end of the kick, straighten your leg and allow your foot to snap downward. As your foot moves upward, keep that leg and knee straight. The kick should be smooth and steady, and your feet should stay just under the water with only your heels breaking the surface. Your big toes should almost touch one another as they pass. You can practice the kick by holding the edge of the pool or by supporting yourself on a kick board.

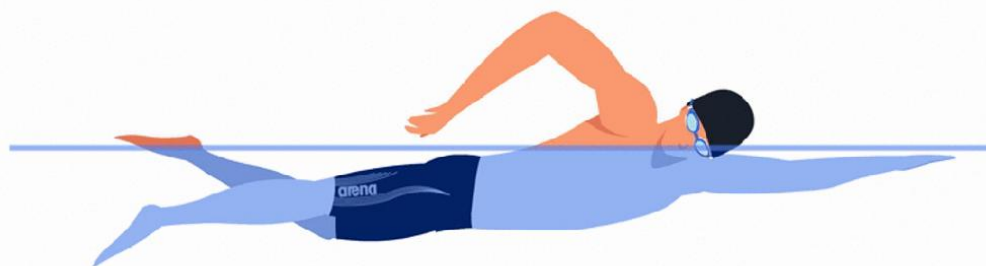


**Arm Stroke:** Most of the forward motion of the front crawl comes from the arm stroke, which has three phases: catch, power, and recovery. To begin the catch, slightly bend your right wrist and elbow as you move the entire arm downward. Have your palm facing away from your body. Keep your elbow, hand, and wrist fixed in this position. Your hand should be directly in line with your shoulder.

For the power phase, straighten your wrist and bend the elbow so your forearm is about 45 degrees from the upper arm. Point your fingers down and inward. Push hard against the water, and sweep your hand and forearm down and back under your chest. Your hand will pass just a few inches from the centerline of your body. Your palm should be flat and should push backward against the water. As your hand becomes level with your shoulder, begin to straighten out your arm as it continues to move back and out to just beside your right hip. Your upper body will roll, with your left hip turning down and toward the centerline. This turns your right hip up toward the top of the water just as your right hand reaches the end of the power phase.

As your hand exits the water, the recovery phase begins. Start by lifting your elbow up and forward. Keep your wrist and hand relaxed and trailing behind or hanging below your elbow. As your hand passes the shoulder, it reaches up and forward to enter the water again when it is at shoulder level. When your thumb is even with your eye and your arm is straightened to about three-quarters of its length, allow your fingertips to smoothly enter the water. Rotate your hand so that your thumb enters first as your arm straightens under the water to its full length.

**Breathing and Coordination:** Swimmers doing the front crawl use a breathing rhythm of one breath for every one, two, three, or more arm cycles. Practice taking a breath for every set of arm cycles on the same side. When your face is in the water, slowly exhale through your nose and mouth. When you need to take a breath, exhale all of the remaining air into the water during the power phase of the arm stroke. As your body rotates during the middle of the power phase, start turning your head so that your mouth is out of the water just as your hand exits by your hip. At the beginning of the recovery phase, inhale quickly and return your head to its former position.







**REQUIREMENT 3b:** Correctly perform and demonstrate the back crawl using good form.

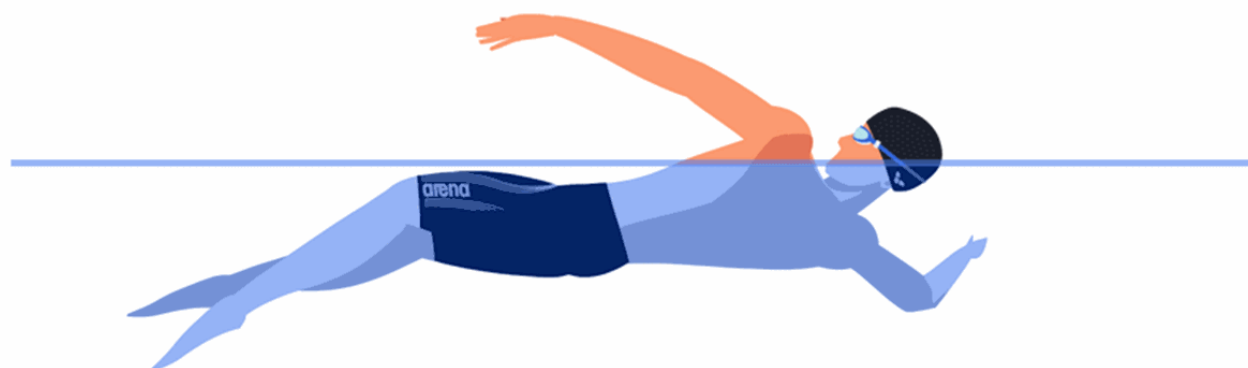
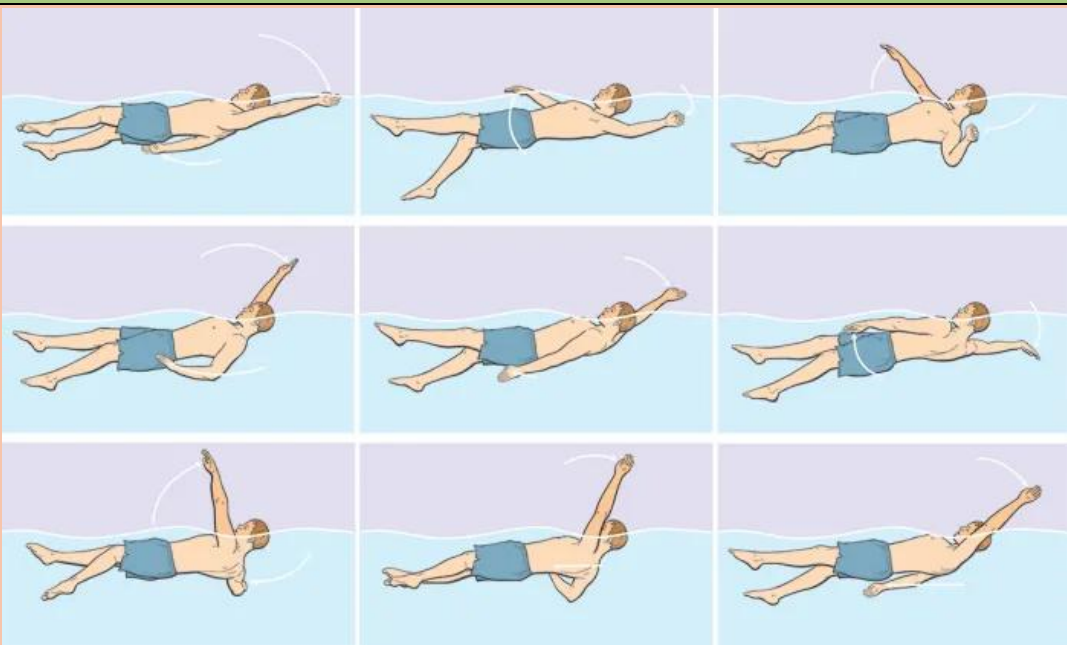
**BACK CRAWL**

The back crawl has two parts: the flutter kick and the rotating arm stroke. It is considered one of the four main competitive swimming strokes, alongside freestyle, breaststroke, and butterfly.

**Kick:** The flutter kick begins at the hips and flows to the feet. As one foot moves downward, the other comes up in a fluttering rhythm. Kick from the hip and thigh, not from the knee. During the downward part of the kick, your ankle stays relaxed, toes are pointed behind you, and your knee is slightly bent. As your foot reaches the end of the kick, straighten your leg and allow your foot to snap downward. As your foot moves upward, keep that leg and knee straight. The kick should be smooth and steady, and your feet should stay just under the water with only your heels breaking the surface. Your big toes should almost touch one another as they pass.

**Arm Stroke:** Most of the backward motion of the back crawl comes from the arm stroke. Alternate which arm takes a stroke. Arms are straight when you're recovering over the water and bent when you're pulling under the water. When your hand enters the water, bend your arms at the elbow and push the water toward your feet; straighten your arm as it leaves the water, but relax your hand, wrist, arm, and back muscles.

**Breathing and Coordination:** Easy breathing, but don't forget to check your direction because you won't be able to see where you're going.





**REQUIREMENT 3c:** Correctly perform and demonstrate the sidestroke using good form.

**SIDESTROKE**

The sidestroke is a good long-distance stroke with a long, restful glide.

**Kick:** The scissors kick is a powerful kick that provides a resting period between arm strokes. To do the scissors kick, bring your knees together and then bend them as you bring your lower legs and heels toward the buttocks. Without pausing, move your legs into the catch position. Move your top leg forward and your bottom leg back until your legs and knees are straight. To move into the power phase, bring both legs back together with a forceful snapping motion like closing a pair of scissors. Keep your legs together during the glide position with toes pointed back.

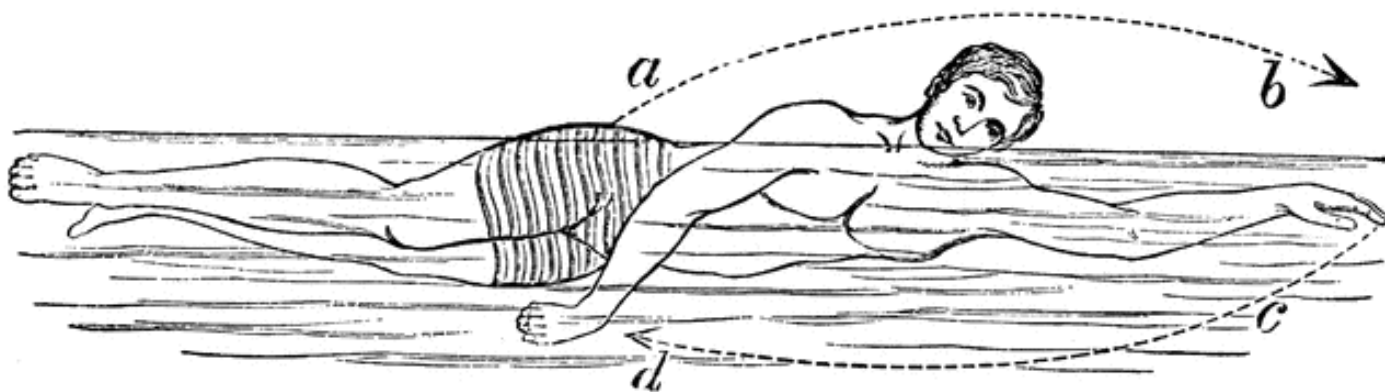


Without pausing, move your legs into the catch position. Move your top leg forward and your bottom leg back until your legs and knees are straight. To move into the power phase, bring both legs back together with a forceful snapping motion like closing a pair of scissors. Keep your legs together during the glide position with toes pointed back.

**Arm Stroke:** Start in the glide position on your side with one ear in the water and the nose, mouth, and other ear out of the water. With your body on its side, straighten the leading (bottom) arm to its full length with your ear resting on your shoulder and your palm facedown. The trailing (top) arm should rest comfortably alongside your body with the hand above the thigh. Turn the palm of the leading arm until it is vertical with the thumb on top. Begin moving the leading arm into a catch position by moving the hand in a downward direction toward the feet.

The power phase is a pull with the hand just below the top of the water and the elbow bent. Move your leading arm until it reaches the middle of your chest, while you move your trailing arm up the side of your body. Both hands should arrive at the same time in front of the upper chest. The trailing arm begins its catch and power phases while the leading arm recovers by moving back into the glide position. Reach out straight out from your shoulder with the trailing arm. Use your hand and arm to push the water toward your feet while they move to the side of your body. Keep both arms straight during the glide, or resting phase of the stroke.

**Breathing and Coordination:** In the sidestroke, the arm strokes and scissors kick are combined so that the legs are drawn up as the leading and trailing arms move toward the chest. To help coordinate your arms and legs in the sidestroke, remember the phrase, "pull, kick, glide." Start by moving your legs into the catch position. With your trailing arm straight and your legs apart for the scissors kick, the power phases for both the trailing arm and kick begin and end at the same time. During this time the leading arm recovers to the glide position. When you have finished both the kick and trailing arm stroke, rest and relax your muscles. Hold the glide position for three or four counts and then repeat the stroke. Breathing is easy with the sidestroke since the mouth is out of the water. Breathe in during the power phase of the leading arm and breathe out during the power phase of the trailing arm.





**REQUIREMENT 3d:** Correctly perform and demonstrate the breaststroke using good form.

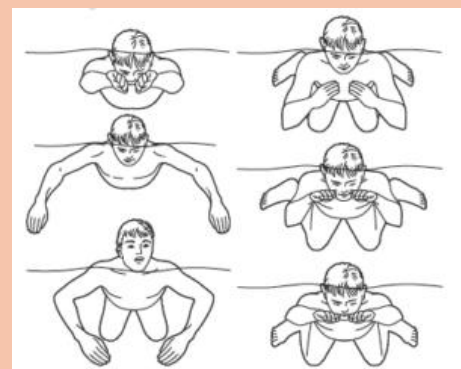
**BREASTSTROKE**

People like the breaststroke because it conserves energy, they can keep their head above water, and it can be done for longer distances. It uses a whip kick, and a shallow arm pull.

**Kick:** The whip kick starts in the glide position. Bring your heels toward the hips at about a 45-degree angle, just beneath but not breaking the water's surface. Keeping your knees bent, spread your knees until they are no farther apart than hip width. Your feet must be farther apart than your knees. Keep your ankles fully flexed and your toes pointed outward. This is the catch position. To begin the power phase, move your feet and lower legs in a whipping motion, pushing outward and backward until your legs and feet are touching in a glide position. At the end of the power phase, your toes should be pointed back and away from your body. The speed of the whip kick should increase rapidly and continue until the end of the kick.

**Arm Stroke:** Start from a prone float with your arms out straight, wrists slightly bent, and fingers pointed downward. Turn your hands to a slightly palms-out position. Then bend your arms a little at the elbows as the palms and arms push out and down until your hands are farther apart than the width of your shoulders. This is the catch position. Begin the power phase by pressing your arms and palms downward until your elbows form a 90-degree angle, with your forearms pointing toward the bottom. During the power phase, your hands and forearms should always be below the elbows, and your elbows should always be below your shoulders.

The arm pull should feel as though you are grabbing the water ahead of you and pulling yourself forward until your head passes your hands. Begin the recovery phase by bringing your hands together under the chin and your elbows to the sides of your body. Finish the recovery by pushing your hands forward just under the surface, fingers leading, until your arms are at their full length in a glide position. For more information, see Aquatics Supervision, No. 34346.



**Breathing and Coordination:** While doing the breaststroke, you should exhale slowly in the water between breaths. Between the catch and the power phase, lift your chin out of the water, finish exhaling, and quickly take a breath. As your arms begin the recovery phase, place your chin and face back in the water. The water level should be right above the eyebrows. Avoid lifting your head and shoulders too far out of the water to prevent bobbing and losing forward momentum.

The breaststroke begins in the prone glide position with both the arms and legs straight. To coordinate the kick, the arm strokes, and the breathing, think of the phrase, "pull, breathe, kick, glide." As your arms complete the power phase, take a breath, and then draw your feet toward the hips. When your arms are about halfway through the recovery phase, begin the whip kick. Time the arm strokes and kick so that the arms and legs are both at their full length as the kick finishes. Rest in the prone position as your body glides through the water. When the glide begins to slow down, it is time to start another stroke.



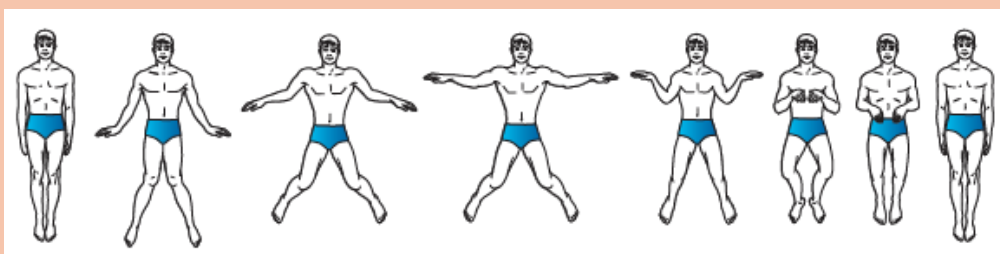


**REQUIREMENT 3e:** Correctly perform and demonstrate the elementary backstroke using good form.

### ELEMENTARY BACKSTROKE

The elementary backstroke is another restful stroke, a good one to use when you need to swim for longer periods of time.

**Kick:** The elementary backstroke uses the whip kick. Floating on your back, spread your knees no farther apart than hip width. Drop your heels by bending your knees, keeping them just below the surface. Turn your feet so your toes are pointing out and your ankles are fully flexed up. This is the catch position. To begin the power phase, move your feet and lower legs in a whipping motion to trace an oval shape. Your feet must move outward wider than the position of your knees and act like paddles to push the water behind you. Then kick with your legs ending up straight with your feet touching. Your toes should be pointed and just below the water's surface. Drop your heels down to begin the recovery phase.



**Arm Stroke:** The arm stroke for the elementary backstroke is simple. Start on your back in the glide position. Keep your legs straight with your toes pointed and have your arms at your sides with your hands along your thighs. Slowly move your hands either up the centerline of your chest or up the sides of your body with your elbows tucked in until your hands reach the shoulders. Without pausing, straighten out your arms with your palms facing your feet. In a single motion, sweep your arms quickly toward your feet, bending your elbows and wrists throughout the stroke to push water backward. Recover the arms by bringing your hands back up toward your shoulders.

**Breathing and Coordination:** In the elementary backstroke, the arms and the legs provide power at the same time. The kick takes less time than the arms because the legs move a shorter distance than the arms, and they are stronger. For these reasons, you should begin the recovery of the arms before the legs. Don't begin the kick until your arms have begun their power phase. With some practice, you should be able to time it so that you finish both the kick and arm stroke together. Strive to make your movements continuous. At the conclusion of the stroke, relax and allow your body to glide through the water for three or four counts. Don't be in a hurry. Remember, this is a resting stroke. As you finish your glide, repeat the process. (To avoid getting water in your mouth and nose, keep your forehead slightly higher than your chin as your arms push toward your feet.)







# SCOUTMASTER BUCKY

**REQUIREMENT 4:** Swim continuously for 150 yards in a strong manner using each of the following strokes in any order; front crawl or trudgen (25 yards); back crawl (25 yards); sidestroke (25 yards); breaststroke (25 yards); and elementary backstroke (50 yards).

**This requirement must be reviewed with your merit badge counselor.**

**REQUIREMENT 5a:** Demonstrate water rescue methods by reaching with your arm or leg, by reaching with a suitable object, and by throwing lines and objects.

**This requirement must be reviewed with your merit badge counselor.**

**REQUIREMENT 5a:** Explain why swimming rescues should not be attempted when a reaching or throwing rescue is possible.

Notes:

**REQUIREMENT 5a:** Explain why and how a rescue swimmer should avoid contact with the victim.

Notes:



**REQUIREMENT 5b:** With a helper and a practice victim, show a line rescue both as tender and as rescuer. The practice victim should be approximately 30 feet from shore in deep water.

**This requirement must be reviewed with your merit badge counselor.**

**REQUIREMENT 6a:** Float faceup in a resting position for at least three minutes with minimal movement.

**This requirement must be reviewed with your merit badge counselor.**

**REQUIREMENT 6b:** Demonstrate survival floating for at least five minutes.

**This requirement must be reviewed with your merit badge counselor.**

**REQUIREMENT 6c:** While wearing a properly fitted U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket, demonstrate the HELP and huddle positions.

**This requirement must be reviewed with your merit badge counselor.**

**REQUIREMENT 6c:** Explain the purposes for the HELP and huddle positions.

Notes:



**REQUIREMENT 6d:** Explain why swimming or survival floating will hasten the onset of hypothermia in cold water.

Notes:

**REQUIREMENT 7a:** In water over your head, but not to exceed 10 feet, use the feetfirst method of surface diving and bring an object up from the bottom.

**This requirement must be reviewed with your merit badge counselor.**

**REQUIREMENT 7b:** In water over your head, but not to exceed 10 feet, do a headfirst surface dive (pike or tuck), and bring the object up again.

**This requirement must be reviewed with your merit badge counselor.**

**REQUIREMENT 7c:** In water over your head, but not to exceed 10 feet, do a headfirst surface dive to a depth of at least 5 feet and swim underwater for three strokes. Come to the surface, take a breath, and repeat the sequence twice.

**This requirement must be reviewed with your merit badge counselor.**

**REQUIREMENT 8:** Following the guidelines set in the Scouting America Safe Swim Defense, in water at least 7 feet deep, show a standing headfirst dive from a dock or pool deck. Show a long shallow dive, also from the dock or pool deck.

**IF YOUR STATE, CITY, OR LOCAL COMMUNITY REQUIRES A WATER DEPTH GREATER THAN 7 FEET, IT IS IMPORTANT TO ABIDE BY THAT MANDATE.**

**This requirement must be reviewed with your merit badge counselor.**



**REQUIREMENT 9:** Explain the health benefits of regular aerobic exercise.

Notes:

**REQUIREMENT 9:** Discuss why swimming is favored as both fitness and therapeutic exercise.

Notes: